



Legislation Text

File #: 2016-0318, **Version:** 2

Clerk 07/06/2016

A MOTION directing the clerk of the council to develop options for how to apply gender-neutral references throughout the King County Code.

WHEREAS, the King County Code was mostly created in the 1970s and 1980s, though some provisions date back to at least the 1940s. Since the creation of the code, it has been subject to many amendments each year, and

WHEREAS, to align with the county's equity and social justice principles, gender-specific language should be corrected because it can reflect a bias for or against certain persons, and

WHEREAS, gender-specific language can also reflect biases, which are detrimental to well-written and effective law, and

WHEREAS, K.C.C. 1.03.120, which was enacted in 2000, requires that ordinances and motions be drafted prospectively in gender-neutral terms, and the council has amended the code to use gender-neutral terms to comply with that requirement, and

WHEREAS, because the council's efforts to update the code have depended on whatever other amendments are proposed, the progress made on creating a fully gender-neutral code has been slow, and

WHEREAS, the Washington state Legislature, in Chapter 218, Laws of Washington 2007, gave similar direction to the state's Office of the Code Reviser to develop and implement a plan make technical changes to the Revised Code of Washington to apply gender-neutral references throughout the Revised Code of Washington, and set a timeline for completion of the revision;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. It is the intent of the council that the King County Code be updated to use gender-neutral language.

B. The clerk of the council, in consultation with the executive branch and separately elected officials, is directed to develop options for how to apply gender-neutral references throughout the King County Code. The options should reflect consideration of the practical implications of updating the code and should include a timeline for completing the update and an estimate of the cost and staff time for each option. One of the options shall be performing the update within existing staff resources. The clerk should present the options to the council for approval no later than September 30, 2016.