



# KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

## Signature Report

### Ordinance 19008

**Proposed No.** 2019-0380.3

**Sponsors** Gossett and Kohl-Welles

1 AN ORDINANCE establishing the King County renters'  
2 commission; amending Ordinance 11955, Section 6, as  
3 amended, and K.C.C. 2.16.130 and adding a new chapter to  
4 K.C.C. Title 2.

5 **STATEMENT OF FACTS:**

6 1. More than forty-two percent of households in King County are renter  
7 households, according to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey.

8 2. The median household income of renters is less than 50 percent of the  
9 median income of homeowners in King County, according to the 2013-  
10 2017 American Community Survey.

11 3. Sixty-two percent of white households in King County own their  
12 homes, compared to twenty-eight percent of African-American and thirty-  
13 four percent of Latino residents, according to the 2013-2017 American  
14 Community Survey.

15 4. The median net worth of renter households in the United States is two  
16 percent of the median net worth of homeowner households, according to  
17 the 2016 Federal Reserve Board's Survey of Consumer Finances.

18 5. A recent study published in the journal Urban Affairs Review found  
19 that low-income renters are nearly twice as likely as homeowners to be

20 displaced by gentrification.

21 6. The renter population is representative of many protected classes,  
22 including people of color, people living with disabilities and LGBTQ  
23 people, as well as young adults, seniors, low-income people, those paying  
24 rent with assistance, those with felony records and renters who have  
25 experienced homelessness.

26 7. Renters in King County are directly impacted by a wide variety of  
27 issues facing the county, such as housing affordability, transportation  
28 access, access to green and other public spaces, land use, renter  
29 protections, public health and safety, education and economic growth.

30 8. King County has sought to include diverse perspectives on housing,  
31 such as with the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force, and a renters'  
32 commission will formalize participation of a group that comprises over  
33 forty percent of the county's households.

34 9. In 2010, Ordinance 16948, also referred to as the "Equity and Social  
35 Justice Ordinance," was enacted and fourteen determinants of equity were  
36 identified as the conditions that lead to the creation of a fair and just  
37 society in King County, which includes housing for all people that is safe,  
38 affordable, high quality and healthy.

39 10. In 2016, Motion 14754 was passed expressing support for regional  
40 planning, coordination and funding efforts to address the challenges of  
41 homelessness and housing affordability in King County.

42 11. The King County Regional Affordable Housing Task Force Five Year

43 Action Plan calls for better engaging local communities and other partners  
44 in addressing the urgent need for and benefits of affordable housing and  
45 expanding supports for low-income renters.

46 12. A renters' commission will offer useful insight and perspective  
47 inclusive of diverse renter voices from across the county that historically  
48 have not had a voice without such intentional and proactive efforts.

49 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

50 SECTION 1. Ordinance 11955, Section 6, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.16.130 are  
51 hereby amended to read as follows:

52 A. The department of community and human services is responsible to manage  
53 and be fiscally accountable for the children and youth services division, the behavioral  
54 health and recovery division, the developmental disabilities and early childhood supports  
55 division, the adult services division and the housing, homelessness and community  
56 development division.

57 B. The duties of the children and youth services division shall include the  
58 following:

59 1. Working in partnership with communities and other funders to develop,  
60 support and provide human services that emphasize prevention, early intervention, and  
61 community education, and that strengthen children, youth and young adults, families and  
62 communities in King County;

63 2. Managing programs that promote healthy childhood development, enhance  
64 youth resiliency, reduce justice system involvement, strengthen families and communities  
65 and ensure all children and youth have the opportunity to achieve their full potentials.

66 The division shall also provide staff to support the King County children and youth  
67 advisory board.

68 C. The duties of the behavioral health and recovery division shall, subject to  
69 available resources and to its exercise of discretionary prioritization, include the  
70 following:

71 1. Managing and operating a comprehensive continuum of behavioral health  
72 services including prevention, mental health, substance use disorder and co-occurring  
73 disorder treatment services for children, youth and adults who meet eligibility criteria;

74 2. Managing and operating a twenty-four-hour crisis response system, including  
75 civil commitment as a last resort;

76 3. Selecting appropriate agencies for the provision of behavioral health services  
77 and developing, implementing and monitoring the provision and outcomes of contracted  
78 services;

79 4. Being responsible for resource management of a comprehensive behavioral  
80 health system including provision of staff support to appropriate advisory boards, and  
81 serving as liaison to federal, state, and other governments and relevant organizations in  
82 carrying out planning and allocation processes;

83 5. Facilitating the continuing availability of appropriate treatment services for  
84 eligible individuals with a diagnosis of a mental illness, substance use or co-occurring  
85 disorder; and

86 6. Developing and maintaining a continuum of appropriate treatment services  
87 for eligible individuals.

88 D. The duties of the developmental disabilities and early childhood supports

89 division shall include the following:

90 1. Managing and operating a system of services for infant mental health, early  
91 childhood development screening and a system of services for persons with  
92 developmental disabilities in accordance with relevant state statutes and county policies  
93 and to provide staff support to the King County board for developmental disabilities; and

94 2. Negotiating, implementing and monitoring contracts with community  
95 agencies for the provision of developmental disabilities and early childhood support  
96 services.

97 E. The duties of the adult services division shall include the following:

98 1. Working in partnership with communities to develop, support and provide  
99 human services and programs that emphasize health and safety, self-sufficiency and  
100 healthy aging. The programs are to include, but not be limited to, providing employment  
101 and training for adults to achieve self-sufficiency, providing supports to survivors of  
102 abuse and trauma, and providing health, socialization and wellness services to promote  
103 healthy aging in place;

104 2. Providing assistance to indigent veterans and their families as authorized by  
105 chapter 73.08 RCW; and

106 3. Providing staff support for the women's advisory board as specified in K.C.C.  
107 2.30.040 and for the veterans, seniors and human services levy advisory board and its  
108 committees consistent with state and county requirements.

109 F. The duties of the housing, homelessness and community development division  
110 shall include the following:

111 1. Managing programs that address housing, homelessness and community

112 development needs, and helping implement improvements identified in subarea and  
113 neighborhood plans for low and moderate income communities;

114           2. Administering the county's federal housing, homelessness and community  
115 development funds and other housing, homelessness and community development  
116 programs; ~~((and))~~

117           3. Developing housing, homelessness and community development policies and  
118 programs to implement the growth management policies throughout King County to  
119 provide affordable housing to low and moderate income residents; and

120           4. Providing staff support for the renters' commission as specified in K.C.C  
121 chapter 2.xx (the chapter created by section 2 of this ordinance).

122           SECTION 2. Sections 3 through 9 of this ordinance should constitute a new  
123 chapter in K.C.C. Title 2.

124           NEW SECTION. SECTION 3.

125           A. There is hereby created a King County renters' commission that shall advise  
126 the executive and council on issues and policies of importance to tenants in residential  
127 rental properties in unincorporated King County.

128           B. This chapter expires ten years after the effective date of this ordinance.

129           NEW SECTION. SECTION 4. The definitions in this section apply throughout  
130 this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

131           A. "Commission" means the King County renters' commission.

132           B. "Landlord" means the owner, lessor or sublessor of the dwelling unit or the  
133 property of which it is a part, and in addition means any person designated as  
134 representative of the owner, lessor or sublessor, including, but not limited to, an agent, a

135 resident manager or a designated property manager.

136 C. "Rental agreement" means all agreements that establish or modify the terms,  
137 conditions, rules, regulations or any other provisions concerning the use and occupancy  
138 of a dwelling unit.

139 D. "Renter" means a tenant in a residential rental property.

140 E. "Residential rental property" means a structure or that part of a structure that is  
141 used as a home, residence or sleeping place, by one person or by two or more persons  
142 maintaining a common household, including, but not limited to, single-family residences  
143 and units of multiplexes, apartment buildings and mobile homes, and that is occupied  
144 primarily for living or dwelling purposes under a rental agreement.

145 F. "Tenant" means any person who is entitled to occupy a rental unit primarily  
146 for living or dwelling purposes under a rental or lease agreement, written or oral, express  
147 or implied. "Tenant" also includes a subtenant who is in occupancy with the consent of  
148 the owner.

149 NEW SECTION. SECTION 5.

150 A. The commission shall be composed of seven members. Appointments should  
151 be made to ensure that varied renter perspectives are represented, including those of  
152 renters who identify with or are affiliated with organizations that use an equity lens or  
153 that work with historically underrepresented groups, such as low-income renters, renters  
154 of color, LGBTQ renters, renters with criminal history, immigrant renters, those paying  
155 rent with assistance and renters who have experienced homelessness. Appointments  
156 should be made, to the extent possible, so that the commission membership is  
157 representative of the county geographically. Each member of the commission must be a

158 renter within unincorporated King County at the time of the member's appointment. A  
159 person may not be a landlord or owner while serving on the commission.

160 B. Members may receive compensation, contingent on budget appropriation.  
161 Member compensation may be provided only as authorized by adopted county policy as  
162 related to the compensation of boards and commissions, and as may be amended after  
163 executive review of compensation for boards and commissions.

164 NEW SECTION. SECTION 6.

165 A. Member positions shall be numbered one through seven. Individuals shall be  
166 appointed into these numbered positions by the executive in consultation with the county  
167 council. All appointments are subject to confirmation by the county council by motion.

168 B. For the initial round of appointments, odd numbered positions will serve one-  
169 year terms and even numbered positions will serve two-year terms. After the conclusion  
170 of initial terms, all subsequent terms of each position shall be for two years. A member  
171 shall not serve more than two consecutive terms. Any vacancy in an unexpired term shall  
172 be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. If a person is appointed to fill  
173 the duration of an unexpired term, then that term shall count as one of the two  
174 consecutive terms only if the portion of the unexpired term actually served is at least one  
175 year.

176 NEW SECTION. SECTION 7. The duties of the commission include the  
177 following:

178 A. Provide information, advice and counsel to the council, the executive, the  
179 department of community and human services, the office of equity and social justice and  
180 other county departments on issues and policies affecting renters, including housing



181 affordability and the intersection of renters with their access to transportation, green and  
182 other public spaces, renter protections, public health and safety, education and economic  
183 growth as they relate to renters in unincorporated King County;

184 B. Monitor the enforcement and effectiveness of legislation related to renters and  
185 renter protections;

186 C. Provide periodic advice on priorities, policies and strategies for strengthening  
187 and enhancing the enforcement and effectiveness of renter protections;

188 D. The executive shall transmit to the council, on an annual basis, a summary of  
189 commission activities and recommendations for future affordable housing committee  
190 work plans, including actions to improve housing affordability in unincorporated King  
191 County. The report shall be filed in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy  
192 with the clerk of the council, who will retain the original and provide an electronic copy  
193 to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff and the lead staff to the mobility and  
194 environment committee or its successor.

195 E. Adopt an annual work plan. The plan shall include a briefing on the  
196 commission's public involvement process for soliciting community and citizen input in  
197 developing the commission's annual work plan and updates on the work plan; and

198 F. Collaborate and consult with other county commissions and committees,  
199 departments, the King County housing authority board of commissioners, the affordable  
200 housing committee of the King County growth management planning council, the Seattle  
201 renters' commission and other community groups and associations, including those  
202 representing rental property landlords, to gather information, feedback and  
203 recommendations related to the King County renters' commission's work.

204           NEW SECTION. SECTION 8. The director of the department of community  
205 and human services or designee shall be responsible for the staffing and operation of the  
206 commission. Before undertaking its other responsibilities, the commission shall elect  
207 officers and adopt administrative procedures.

208           NEW SECTION. SECTION 9. Meetings of the commission shall be open to the  
209 public and the commission shall operate subject to the state Open Public Meetings Act of  
210 1971, in accordance with chapter 42.30 RCW.

211 NEW SECTION. SECTION 10. This ordinance shall take effect upon approved  
212 authority and appropriation of 1 FTE.  
213

Ordinance 19008 was introduced on 9/11/2019 and hearing held/closed and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 11/13/2019, by the following vote:

Yes: 6 - Mr. Gossett, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski, Mr. Upthegrove, Ms. Kohl-Welles and Ms. Balducci  
No: 3 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Ms. Lambert and Mr. Dunn



KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Rod Dembowski, Chair

ATTEST:

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 25 day of NOVEMBER 2019.

Dow Constantine, County Executive

Attachments: None

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CLERK  
KING COUNTY COUNCIL