



DEPARTMENTAL GUIDE

K.C.C. §2.15 – IMMIGRANT, REFUGEE AND LANGUAGE ACCESS ORDINANCE

Ways to Use This Toolkit

The Departmental Toolkit contains information for educational purposes, recommendations for the implementation process, and resources to help your department bring its practices into compliance with the ordinance.

The toolkit is designed to be used in three ways:

- 01** to inform you about K.C.C. §2.15 and the importance of adopting compliant policies to better serve the County;
- 02** to provide you with guidance regarding how to train leadership and staff in the language of the ordinance and how to bring your department into compliance; and
- 03** to connect you with resources to share this information and learn more.



King County

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Overview of Ordinance 18665, K.C.C. §2.15

On February 26th, 2018, the King County Council adopted a new ordinance to ensure that King County's data and limited resources are not used to assist with the federal deportation agenda. The ordinance is consistent with federal laws regarding communications between local jurisdictions and federal immigration authorities. In addition, the ordinance requires free translation services be available at all agencies.

In addition, King County and all its contractors shall provide free interpretation and translation services as required by this chapter to limited-English-proficient persons. When a limited-English-proficient person seeks or receives benefits or services from a local agency, office or contractor, the agency, office or contractor shall make reasonable efforts provide prompt interpretation services in all interactions with the person, whether the interaction is done remotely or in person. King County agencies and offices shall either employ sufficient qualified bilingual employees or contract with remote language services to provide interpretation services in languages spoken by limited-English-proficient county residents.

Part 1: Summary of K.C.C. 2.15.010

Unless otherwise required by state or federal law or by court order:

- No one can be denied county services because of their citizenship or immigration status.
- Employees, agents, or agencies of King County cannot inquire about or request from a member of the public information about citizenship, immigration status, or the nation of origin of any person.
- All agents of King County are prohibited from verbally abusing people by threatening them with calling ICE or with taking other immigration-related action.
- King County agents cannot maintain or share personal information unless it is needed to provide services. However, they are permitted to send information about citizenship or immigration status to other agencies in the process of providing services.
- King County agents cannot spend time, money, or other resources to facilitate the civil enforcement of federal immigration law. However, a county employee is not prohibited from sending to, or receiving from, federal immigration authorities, the citizenship or immigration status of a person. (See KCC 2.15.010(I)).

All King County employees and agents must receive appropriate training on the implementation of the provisions of the ordinance.



PART TWO – The Sheriff’s Office

- The sheriff’s office may not request specific documents relating to a person’s civil immigration status from a member of the public for the sole purpose of determining whether the person has violated federal civil immigration laws.
- The sheriff’s office cannot use stops for minor offenses or requests for voluntary information as a pretext for discovering a person's immigration status.
- The sheriff’s office cannot initiate any inquiry of, or enforcement action against, a member of the public, based solely on a person's civil immigration status, race, or inability to speak English.

PART THREE – County Resources and Immigration

King County and its agents, departments, and employees cannot:

- Spend time, money, or other resources on facilitating the civil enforcement of federal immigration law, except as required by law.
- Enter into any contract, agreement, or arrangement that would grant federal civil immigration enforcement authority over King County agents or law enforcement.
- Honor immigration detainer requests or administrative warrants issued by ICE, CBP, or USCIS unless they are accompanied by a criminal warrant issued by a U.S. District Court.
- Permit civil immigration enforcement authority access to nonpublic areas, facilities, property, databases, or people under the County’s custody unless accompanied by a judicial warrant, or otherwise required by law.
- Provide personal information to federal immigration authorities for the purpose of civil immigration law enforcement, except as required by law.

PART FOUR – Language Access

King County and all its contractors shall:

- Provide free interpretation and translation services to limited-English-proficient persons.
- Employ sufficiently qualified bilingual employees, contract with remote language services, and develop language assistance plans that identify which materials need to be translated.
- Ensure limited-English-proficient persons do not have to wait unreasonably longer for assistance than those who do not require interpretation services.
- A person who has been injured or sustained damages from a violation of this chapter may file a complaint with the King County Office of Civil Rights.¹

¹ In accordance with K.C.C. 12.22.040.



Why is compliance important?

The immigration, refugee and language access ordinance seeks to promote trust and fairness for immigrant communities within King County. It is crucial for all County staff to understand the provisions outlined in this ordinance. Training tools and resources will be made available to staff to support implementation and compliance.

How can I Implement this ordinance in my department?

- Revise new employee training procedures to include knowledge of this ordinance.
- Conduct internal audits to identify potentially vulnerable information or non-compliant practices.
- Hold quarterly meetings or workshops for staff to review ordinance guidelines and answer questions, as well as discuss common service scenarios in which the ordinance may apply.
- Using audit information, implement practices to bring your department into compliance.
- Add translation services to the services provided by your department.
- Seek out input from the [King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission](#) (KCIRC) for feedback on how your department is doing.

Information circulation tools

One way to spread knowledge about the ordinance is to create a posting on your department website. When County residents visit your site, they can both learn about the ordinance and understand how your department has changed its practices to comply with it.

In addition, using social media is an effective, wide-reaching method for publicly disseminating this crucial information. In this toolkit, there are examples of social media graphics informing the public about King County Code 2.15. Feel free to use these or to create your own department-specific graphics.

Tweet Examples



King County

twitter 

“Learn more about how we are implementing K.C.C 2.15 in our department here:
[insert website link]”

twitter 

“You own your own information. According to K.C.C 2.15, King County agencies cannot require people to disclose their immigration or citizenship status, unless required by law. Learn more here:
[insert website link]”

twitter 

“King County Code 2.15 requires agencies to provide free translation and interpretation services. Find out how you can get access to language services here:
[insert website link]”

twitter 

“The King County Sheriff’s Office cannot request specific documents from individuals with the sole purpose of determining whether the person has violated federal civil immigration laws
#KCC215”

twitter 

“It is not King County’s responsibility to facilitate the civil enforcement of federal immigration law. Learn more about K.C.C 2.15 here: [insert website link]”



Additional resources

- King County Office of Equity and Social Justice Immigrant, Refugee and Language Access Page:
<https://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/Immigrant-and-Refugee.aspx>
- Text of Ordinance 18665:
<https://mkcclegisearch.kingcounty.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3209106&GUID=00C3F2DC-3744-4F82-A7FC-0CDB5C44DAFA&FullText=1>
- King County Immigration Ordinance Report:
<https://www.kingcounty.gov/council/news/2018/February/02-26-ImmigrantProtect.aspx>
- ACLU Statement on Ordinance 18665:
<https://www.aclu-wa.org/news/aclu-hails-passage-king-county-immigration-ordinance>
- Seattle-King County Immigrant Legal Defense Network (Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs):
<https://www.seattle.gov/iandraffairs/programs/legal-defense-fund-and-network>
- My Northwest Article on Ordinance 18665 violation (July 12, 2019):
<https://mynorthwest.com/1447866/king-county-ice-protests-7-11-19/>
- Executive Constantine signed an Executive Order to ban ICE detainee flights from publicly-owned King County Airport (April 23, 2019):
<https://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/news/release/2019/April/23-ICE-KCIA.aspx>
- Seattle Times Article on Immigrant Population in King County (January 14, 2019):
<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/data/new-milestone-in-king-county-immigrant-population-tops-500000/>



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Contact information

Thank you for your interest in the process of implementing Ordinance 18665. If you have additional questions, please contact us:

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