

Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

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Department Overview

The mission of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) is to improve the lives of Seattle's immigrant and refugee families. OIRA works to strengthen immigrant and refugee communities by engaging them in decisions about the City of Seattle's future and improving the City's programs and services to meet the needs of all constituents.

OIRA collaborates with the Immigrant and Refugee Commission, community partners, government agencies, faith-based institutions, the private sector, and City departments to define and achieve desired outcomes for City investments for immigrants and refugees. According to the 2014 American Community Survey, immigrants and refugees comprise approximately 18% of Seattle's population. OIRA helps ensure that these residents can understand and access City services.

OIRA is dedicated to supporting the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative by consistently using the racial equity toolkit analysis, operationalizing racial equity in our workplans, and engaging directly with immigrant and refugee communities. Our racial equity analyses and discussions help us both evaluate our workplans and inform how we enhance strategy and service delivery each new cycle.

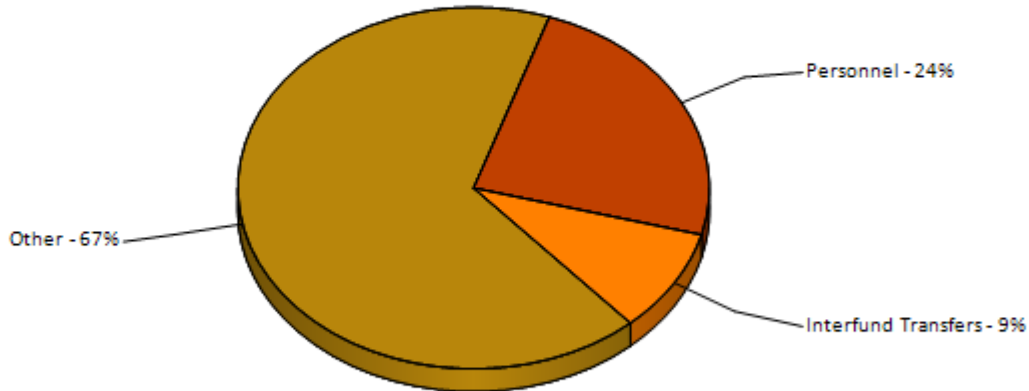
Budget Snapshot

Department Support	2018 Adopted	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed
General Fund Support	\$3,212,009	\$5,277,873	\$5,087,146
Total Operations	\$3,212,009	\$5,277,873	\$5,087,146
Total Appropriations	\$3,212,009	\$5,277,873	\$5,087,146
Full-time Equivalent Total*	9.00	9.50	9.50

* FTE totals are provided for information purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Personnel Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here.

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2019 Adopted Budget - Expenditure by Category



Budget Overview

Mayor Durkan is strongly committed to protecting Seattle immigrants and their families from threats to their well-being and safety. The Mayor envisions a city that is both safe and welcoming for immigrants. The 2019 Adopted and 2020 Endorsed Budget reflects our shared values to help deliver on the promise of America to our immigrant friends and neighbors.

Legal Defense Network

In response to increased federal immigration enforcement against immigrants, including those with legal status, the City stands with King County to protect those in need. In 2017, the City provided \$1 million in one-time funding and the County added \$550,000 in one-time funds to create the Seattle-King County Immigrant Legal Defense Network (LDN) and provide free legal services to qualifying immigrants in Seattle and the County. The program ran from October 2017 through December 2018.

There continues to be a significant need for legal services for people in immigration proceedings. According to the American Immigration Council, immigrants in court proceedings with legal representation are up to ten times more likely to obtain relief than those without a lawyer. However, 35% of immigrants in proceedings at the Seattle immigration court and 92% of detained immigrants at the Tacoma immigration court do not have lawyers. Beyond immigration proceedings, lawyers can help immigrants who fail to realize their legal options simply due to a lack of information and resources. The Legal Defense Network includes various services to help remedy the problem including consultations with immigration lawyers, and legal representation for those facing deportation.

The adopted budget continues the City's commitment to LDN, in partnership with King County, which included increasing levels of funding for legal services for immigrants and refugees in its Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy (VSHSL) to run from 2019-2023. Contingent on the availability of VSHSL funds for LDN, the adopted

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budget assumes the County will contribute \$795,000 in 2019 and \$810,000 in 2020 to the Network, while the City contributes \$1 million annually. The 2017-18 program served an even split between Seattle residents and workers and County residents. The City will continue to review its funding level to ensure its share of total funding matches the share of Seattle residents and workers using LDN.

New Citizen Program Database

The adopted budget includes funding for a new database for the New Citizen Program (NCP). NCP is a means-tested program within the New Citizen Campaign that provides free naturalization legal assistance, citizenship classes, and related case management services to low-income immigrants and refugees, many of whom are elderly, illiterate, have limited English proficiency, or are individuals with disabilities. The City receives reimbursement from the State for assisting NCP-eligible clients who receive state Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) benefits. This current database is at the end of its life cycle and will no longer be supported by Seattle Information Technology.

Citywide General Fund Efficiencies

The Mayor called for City departments to meet General Fund reduction targets to prioritize funding for the delivery of essential services. The adopted budget includes efficiencies found because of reductions to consultant contracts and program realignment. The Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) intends to reprioritize or otherwise absorb these functions in-house.

The adopted budget also reallocates funding for the New Citizen Campaign (NCC) mega workshop in favor of more monthly clinics to improve service delivery. NCC is an effort to help naturalize Seattle immigrants who are eligible to become U.S. citizens. The citizenship clinics offers immigrants access to volunteer attorneys, interpreters, and others to assist them in completing their naturalization application through a step-by-step process. This shift helps to increase the rate of application completion.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding

The Human Services Department acts on behalf of all City departments as the custodian and grantee for funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As part of the budget conversion process in 2017, the CDBG fund was dissolved and the appropriations are now spread across multiple funds and departments. The adopted budget for OIRA includes a continuation of the base level of CDBG funding in the amounts of \$400,000 in 2019 and \$400,000 in 2020 for the Ready to Work program, which helps immigrant job-seekers improve their English language skills to earn a better living.

Technical Compensation Adjustments

The office initiated two compensation adjustments and will offset these costs with reductions in their existing budget. Generally, department-initiated compensation adjustments are absorbed within the base budget or requested in the budget process.

City Council Changes to the Proposed Budget

The Council reduced General Fund appropriations across City departments to fund other Council priorities. However, the Council also added General Fund resources to the office to support and expand its that provide legal services for immigrants in need and help immigrants navigate the naturalization process to become United States citizens.

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Incremental Budget Changes

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	2019		2020	
	Budget	FTE	Budget	FTE
2018 Adopted Budget	\$ 3,212,009	9.00	\$ 3,212,009	9.00
Baseline Changes				
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	\$ 311,769	0.00	\$ 229,482	0.00
Proposed Changes				
Legal Defense Network	\$ 1,590,000	0.50	\$ 1,620,000	0.50
New Citizen Program Database Replacement	\$ 109,795	0.00	\$ 8,105	0.00
Citywide General Fund Efficiencies	-\$ 41,000	0.00	-\$ 41,000	0.00
Reduce Discretionary Contracting Resources	-\$ 126,255	0.00	-\$ 126,255	0.00
Proposed Technical Changes				
Compensation Adjustments	\$ 0	0.00	\$ 0	0.00
Council Changes				
General Fund Appropriation Reduction	-\$ 3,445	0.00	-\$ 5,195	0.00
Additional Funding for the Legal Defense Network	\$ 205,000	0.00	\$ 190,000	0.00
Citizenship Programming	\$ 20,000	0.00	\$ 0	0.00
Total Incremental Changes	\$ 2,065,864	0.50	\$ 1,875,137	0.50
2019 Adopted/2020 Endorsed Budget	\$ 5,277,873	9.50	\$ 5,087,146	9.50

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Descriptions of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline Changes

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes - \$311,769

Citywide technical adjustments made in the baseline phase reflect changes to internal services costs, health care, and industrial insurance charges for the department. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process. This technical adjustment also transfers internal services costs for Human Resources, Finance and Administrative Services, and Information Technology from Finance General to the department. With this change, department budgets will better reflect support costs. Previously these costs were included in the Finance General budget.

Proposed Changes

Legal Defense Network - \$1,590,000/.50 FTE

This item maintains and strengthens legal assistance for Seattle and King County's immigrants and their families. The Legal Defense Network (LDN) began in the fall of 2017 as a response to the federal government's increasingly aggressive immigration-related actions, affecting immigrants regardless of legal status. In 2017, the City contributed \$1 million in one-time funding and the County added \$550,000 in one-time funding. By the end of 2018, LDN partners are expected to meet or exceed their target results of 762 screenings and intakes and 318 individuals with legal representation in immigration proceedings. As of November 2018, there were 774 intakes and of those intakes 297 were accepted for legal representation in removal proceedings while 214 were or are currently being reviewed by legal service providers to see what, if any, legal options exist.

The 2019 Adopted and 2020 Endorsed Budget increases the overall funding of this program and provides ongoing funding by both the City and County, which included increasing levels of funding for legal services for immigrants and refugees in its Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy (VSHSL) to run from 2019-2023. Contingent on the availability of VSHSL funds for LDN, the adopted budget assumes the City will contribute \$1 million annually and the County will contribute \$795,000 in 2019 and \$810,000 in 2020. The City will regularly review its funding level to ensure it matches the participation rate of Seattle residents and workers in the program. The funding also supports a part-time Grants and Contracts Specialist position to oversee the grants to various partner agencies. Funding for this position will be three-quarters of the full costs in 2019, at \$44,836, and at full costs, \$57,395, in 2020.

New Citizen Program Database Replacement - \$109,795

To receive reimbursements from the state for serving eligible immigrant participants, the office must provide confirmation that these immigrants meet the state requirements for eligibility, such as being low-income. Verification requires that the office submit unique identifying information to match against the records of the state database. The database is no longer supported by Seattle Information Technology and must be replaced. This General Fund support for a database replacement is one-time but there will be \$8,105 in ongoing General Fund for licensing.

Citywide General Fund Efficiencies - (\$41,000)

This item includes two reductions to help the office meet its General Fund reduction target:

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- The office proposed a service model change to the New Citizen Campaign (NCC) that will improve service delivery for naturalization assistance. The previous annual model included eight monthly clinics, each serving about 30-50 people, and a large mega workshop typically serving between 500 and 1,000 people. Data shows that people who attended the clinics have had a higher rate of completing their naturalization application than those who attended the workshop, on average 75% versus 50%. This is likely due to various factors, including pre-screening that allows partnering agencies to prepare in advance for the language needs of participants, clinics taking place in familiar settings for participants and often led by community partners they know and trust, and a lower ratio of participants to staff so there is typically more consideration and oversight in each case. Further, clinics are relatively cost-effective since workshops require 10 months of preparation to manage various arrangements, including the venue, increased staffing, marketing, and more than 1,000 volunteers. Shifting the program model to providing 12 monthly clinics provides more regular access to participants, more staff time with participants, and improves the readiness of participants to complete their naturalization application due to better preparation and screening. This change also reduces expenditures by \$31,000.
- Also included is the elimination of unnecessary funding for administrative support in the Legal Defense Network program. When the City Council added one-time funding of in 2017 to create the Legal Defense Network it also provided ongoing funding of \$10,000 for administrative support. The adopted budget includes sufficient staffing.

Reduce Discretionary Contracting Resources - (\$126,255)

At the direction of the Mayor, the department pursued budget efficiencies by reviewing resources for discretionary contracts and consultants. The office identified \$126,255 in discretionary contracting reductions. This reduction achieves efficiency in budgeting without service reductions. The reductions include:

- Elimination of \$78,750 for a consultant to provide general support for the office, including program support, organizational development, project management, and community engagement since this work can be done by existing staff and with remaining resources.
- Elimination of \$17,505 for a consultant to provide general support for the office and some support for specific programs, including the Immigrant Family Institute and the New Citizen Campaign since this work can be done by existing staff and with remaining resources.
- Elimination of \$10,000 for a consultant to provide community outreach and engagement and program support for the office's programs. This work can be done in partnership with the Community Liaisons program in the Department of Neighborhoods using existing resources.
- Elimination of \$5,000 for a consultant to provide girls' programming for the Immigrant Family Institute (IFI) and plan the sessions. This is no longer necessary as OIRA now has the content it needs to run the program.
- Elimination of \$10,000 for Language Access data analysis. This work can be done by existing capacity.
- Elimination of \$5,000 for software to help immigrants applying for naturalization, but the software was rarely used.

Proposed Technical Changes

Compensation Adjustments

This item includes two office-initiated compensation adjustments and will be offset by reductions to the professional services budget:

- \$25,253 for a Strategic Advisor 3, Exempt, the finance and operations manager

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- \$6,928 for a Strategic Advisor 1, Exempt, a New Citizen Campaign program specialist

Council Changes

General Fund Appropriation Reduction - (\$3,445)

The Council made an across-the-board reduction to all General Fund appropriation authority in order to support other priorities. The percentage reduction in 2019 is about 0.07% and in 2020 about 0.1%.

Additional Funding for the Legal Defense Network - \$205,000

This item provides ongoing funding for the Legal Defense Network to bring the annual level of funding to \$1 million. For more information on this program, please refer to the Proposed Changes section.

Citizenship Programming - \$20,000

This funding provides additional resources for the office's citizenship efforts in 2019 and 2020. The office uses various methods to help Lawful Permanent Residents—"green card" holders—naturalize and become U.S. citizens. This includes outreach, application assistance, legal assistance, and a means-tested case management program that helps low-income people with ongoing support to help navigate the naturalization process including the application, English and civics requirements, and interview.

This funding is provided by reducing a planning project in the Seattle Public Utilities' Clean City suite of programs. The funding is not ongoing.

City Council Provisos

There are no Council provisos.

Expenditure Overview

Appropriations	2018 Adopted	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed
Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Budget Summary Level			
General Fund	3,212,009	5,277,873	5,087,146
Total for BSL: BO-IA-X1N00	3,212,009	5,277,873	5,087,146
Department Total	3,212,009	5,277,873	5,087,146
Department Full-time Equivalents Total*	9.00	9.50	9.50

* FTE totals are provided for information purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Personnel Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here.

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Budget Summary by Fund for Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

	2018 Adopted	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed
00100 - General Fund	3,212,009	5,277,873	5,087,146
Budget Totals for OIRA	3,212,009	5,277,873	5,087,146

Appropriations By Budget Summary Level (BSL) and Program

<u>Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Budget Summary Level</u>			
<p>The purpose of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Budget Summary Level is to facilitate the successful integration of immigrants and refugees into Seattle's civic, economic, and cultural life, and to advocate on behalf of immigrant and refugee communities so that the City's programs and services better meet the unique needs of these constituents.</p>			
Program Expenditures	2018 Adopted	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed
Office of Immigrant and Refugee	3,212,009	5,277,873	5,087,146
Total	3,212,009	5,277,873	5,087,146
Full-time Equivalents Total*	9.00	9.50	9.50
<p><i>* FTE totals are provided for information purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Personnel Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here.</i></p>			