

Legislative Department

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<http://www.seattle.gov/council/>

Department Overview

The Legislative Department is comprised of the Seattle City Council, as well as two primary divisions: Central Staff and the Office of the City Clerk. Each division supports various aspects of the Council and works with members of the public and City departments to facilitate and develop effective and responsive public policy. The Council and Legislative Department are part of the legislative branch of government, which also includes the Office of City Auditor, the Office of Hearing Examiner, and the Office of Inspector General for Public Safety.

The Council is composed of two at-large and seven district-elected seats for a total of nine, nonpartisan, elected Councilmembers. In November 2019, seven district Councilmembers were elected to a four-year term beginning in 2020. Two at-large Councilmembers are elected to align with the election for a four-year term with the Mayor and City Attorney election in 2021. This approach staggers the district and at-large elections two years apart.

The City Council establishes city laws; creates, evaluates and approves policies, legislation, and regulations; approves the City's annual operating and capital improvement budgets; and provides oversight to the City's executive departments. Each Councilmember has a staff of legislative assistants who assist in this work.

Central Staff provides policy and budget analysis for Councilmembers and their staffs, as well as consultant contract services for the Legislative Department. The Office of the City Clerk advances principles of open government and inclusive access through effective facilitation of the legislative process and transparent, accountable stewardship of public information and the official record, including City Council proceedings and legislation. The City Clerk serves as ex-officio elections administrator and filing officer. The office manages the City's Boards and Commissions Registry Program; coordinates public records disclosure requests; and provides information technology, administrative and operational support to the Legislative Department.

Communications and Human Resources/Finance teams are also a part of the Legislative Department. Communications staff assist Councilmembers and the Council as a whole in communicating values, goals and issues to the public by providing marketing and public relations services, including website and social media management, strategic media relations and public affairs work. Human Resources/Finance staff provide employee relations, talent acquisition, employee development, performance management, benefits administration services, finance, budget, accounting, and payroll for the Legislative Department and Office of City Auditor.

Budget Snapshot

	2019 Actuals	2020 Adopted	2021 Adopted
Department Support			
General Fund Support	16,634,777	17,818,425	18,441,784
Total Operations	16,634,777	17,818,425	18,441,784
Total Appropriations	16,634,777	17,818,425	18,441,784
Full-Time Equivalents Total*	100.50	100.50	100.50

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

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Budget Overview

The 2021 Adopted Budget includes technical adjustments to bring the department’s baseline budget into alignment with an Annual Wage Increase, internal service cost changes, and the removal of one-time items added in prior year budgets. In addition, the proposed budget reduced the total budget for the Legislative Department by 5% in response to declining General Fund revenues due to COVID-19; this reduction was modified by the City Council in the adopted budget.

City Council Changes to the Proposed Budget

The City Council restored \$200,000 of ongoing General Fund to the Legislative Department for operating and personnel costs. In addition, one-time funding was added to supplement a King County study on wage inequities and for studies on transportation impact fees.

Incremental Budget Changes

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	Dollars	FTE
2020 Adopted Budget	17,818,425	100.50
Baseline		
Adjustment for One-Time Budget Changes	(300,712)	-
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	1,013,939	-
Baseline Adjustments for Personnel Costs	380,053	-
Proposed Operating		
5% General Fund Reduction	(879,921)	-
Council		
Fund Transportation Impact Fee Studies	150,000	-
Increase Funding for Operations and Personnel Expenses	200,000	-
Supplement Funding for King County Survey on Countywide Human Service Wage Inequities	60,000	-
Total Incremental Changes	\$623,359	-
Total 2021 Adopted Budget	\$18,441,784	100.50

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

Adjustment for One-Time Budget Changes

Expenditures	\$(300,712)
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This item includes budget adjustments for one-time changes in the 2020 Adopted Budget:

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- (\$120,000) for an analysis of the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) Program added in 2020 Council Budget Action LEG-7-A-1;
- (\$100,000) to study creation of an Infant/Parent Room added in 2020 Council Budget Action LEG-5-A-1;
- (\$40,712) to remove funding added by Council in the 2019-2020 Adopted Budget for criminal legal system planning; and
- (\$40,000) to align with a Memorandum of Agreement with the Law Department for a Code Reviser

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$1,013,939

Citywide technical adjustments made in the baseline phase reflect changes to internal services costs, including rates from the Department of Finance & Administrative Services, Seattle Information Technology Department, Seattle Department of Human Resources, and for healthcare, retirement and industrial insurance charges for the department. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

Baseline Adjustments for Personnel Costs

Expenditures \$380,053

This centrally administered change adjusts appropriations to reflect an annual wage increase, as outlined in the agreements between the City and the Coalition of Unions, for personnel costs included in this department's baseline budget. This includes increases to salary, FICA, Medicare, family medical leave, retirement, overtime and temporary labor. There is no increase assumed from 2021 to 2022.

Proposed Operating

5% General Fund Reduction

Expenditures \$(879,921)

This item reduces the Legislative Department's budget by 5% to help mitigate losses in the General Fund due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Fund Transportation Impact Fee Studies

Expenditures \$150,000

The City Council added \$150,000 of one-time General Fund to the Legislative Department to fund continued development of transportation impact fees. Transportation impact fees are authorized by State law pursuant to the Growth Management Act (GMA) and enabling authority for Transportation Benefit Districts. Among other things, the required studies will identify bridge maintenance projects eligible for investment from revenues generated by transportation benefit districts and will provide the basis for setting sustainable rate levels for these impact fees.

Increase Funding for Operations and Personnel Expenses

Expenditures \$200,000

This item increases the Legislative Department's budget by \$200,000 to partially restore cuts made in the 2021 Proposed Budget. The proposed budget had included a 5% reduction (\$879,921) due to the COVID-19 pandemic and reduced General Fund revenues. This budget action is intended to address the Legislative Department's need to correct pay disparities among employees performing the same or similar duties; hire a consultant to support a search process for a permanent Central Staff Director; and hire to fill a vacant but unfunded Central Staff analyst

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position, relieving significant capacity constraints on Central Staff, particularly in the subject areas of community safety, police accountability and labor standards/regulations.

Supplement Funding for King County Survey on Countywide Human Service Wage Inequities

Expenditures \$60,000

The City Council added \$60,000 of one-time General Fund to the Legislative Department to contract with King County to expand its Countywide Nonprofit Wage Survey to include additional nonprofit organizations. The current survey includes only organizations funded through the Veterans, Seniors and Human Services levy. This funding will allow the survey to include additional Seattle organizations not funded through the levy.

Expenditure Overview

	2019 Actuals	2020 Adopted	2021 Adopted
Appropriations			
LEG - BO-LG-G1000 - Legislative Department			
00100 - General Fund	12,847,102	14,040,886	13,745,550
Total for BSL: BO-LG-G1000	12,847,102	14,040,886	13,745,550
LEG - BO-LG-G2000 - Leadership and Administration			
00100 - General Fund	3,787,675	3,777,539	4,696,234
Total for BSL: BO-LG-G2000	3,787,675	3,777,539	4,696,234
Department Total	16,634,777	17,818,425	18,441,784
Department Full-Time Equivalent Total*	100.50	100.50	100.50

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

Budget Summary by Fund Legislative Department

	2019 Actuals	2020 Adopted	2021 Adopted
00100 - General Fund	16,634,777	17,818,425	18,441,784
Budget Totals for LEG	16,634,777	17,818,425	18,441,784

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Appropriations by Budget Summary Level and Program

LEG - BO-LG-G1000 - Legislative Department

The purpose of the Legislative Department Budget Summary Level is to set policy, enact City laws, approve the City's budget, provide oversight of City departments, and support the mission of the Council.

Program Expenditures	2019 Actuals	2020 Adopted	2021 Adopted
Central Staff	3,373,709	3,995,483	3,760,685
City Clerk	3,703,148	3,924,261	3,821,245
City Council	5,770,245	6,121,142	6,163,620
Total	12,847,102	14,040,886	13,745,550
Full-time Equivalents Total*	95.50	95.50	95.50

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The following information summarizes the programs in Legislative Department Budget Summary Level:

Central Staff

The purpose of the Central Staff Program is to provide high-quality, objective research and analysis to the Council and its individual members on a variety of policy and budget issues, as well as consultant contract services for the Legislative department.

Expenditures/FTE	2019 Actuals	2020 Adopted	2021 Adopted
Central Staff	3,373,709	3,995,483	3,760,685
Full Time Equivalents Total	19.00	19.00	19.00

City Clerk

The purpose of the City Clerk Program is to support and facilitate the City's legislative process in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act; manage the City's Records Management Program and ensure public access to the City's records; preserve the City's official and historical records in compliance with the Public Records Acts; manage the City's Boards and Commissions Registry; serve as the City's ex officio elections officer; and provide information technology, administrative and operational support to the Legislative Department.

Expenditures/FTE	2019 Actuals	2020 Adopted	2021 Adopted
City Clerk	3,703,148	3,924,261	3,821,245
Full Time Equivalents Total	27.50	27.50	27.50

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City Council

The purpose of the City Council Program is to set policy; review, consider and determine legislative action; approve the City's budget; and provide oversight of City departments. The goal of the City Council is to be transparent, effective and accountable, as well as to promote diversity and health of all neighborhoods. This program consists of the nine Councilmembers, their Legislative Assistants and the Communications staff.

Expenditures/FTE	2019 Actuals	2020 Adopted	2021 Adopted
City Council	5,770,245	6,121,142	6,163,620
Full Time Equivalents Total	49.00	49.00	49.00

LEG - BO-LG-G2000 - Leadership and Administration

The purpose of the Leadership and Administration Budget Summary Level is to provide executive, community, financial, human resource, technology and business support to the department.

Program Expenditures	2019 Actuals	2020 Adopted	2021 Adopted
Citywide Indirect Costs	2,735,431	2,513,454	2,897,642
Departmental Indirect Costs	1,052,243	1,264,085	1,798,592
Total	3,787,675	3,777,539	4,696,234
Full-time Equivalents Total*	5.00	5.00	5.00

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The following information summarizes the programs in Leadership and Administration Budget Summary Level:

Citywide Indirect Costs

The purpose of the Citywide Indirect Costs program is to fund internal services costs originating from outside of the department such as allocated costs from the Department of Finance and Administrative Services and Seattle Information Technology Department.

Expenditures/FTE	2019 Actuals	2020 Adopted	2021 Adopted
Citywide Indirect Costs	2,735,431	2,513,454	2,897,642

Departmental Indirect Costs

The purpose of the Departmental Indirect Costs program is to fund costs associated with management of the department. This may include personnel costs related to department leadership and administration or other administrative costs such as external rent and operating supplies or services.

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Expenditures/FTE	2019 Actuals	2020 Adopted	2021 Adopted
Departmental Indirect Costs	1,052,243	1,264,085	1,798,592
Full Time Equivalents Total	5.00	5.00	5.00