

Office of 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 communities. OIRA does this by:

- Equitably engaging with immigrants and refugees to help advise on new City of Seattle issues and policies and enhance current ones.
- Ensuring that City of Seattle programs, services, and information are accessible to vulnerable immigrant and refugee community members regardless of their English-language proficiency and citizenship status.
- Partnering with community-based organizations, the Seattle Immigrant and Refugee Commission, and other partners to administer programs focused on helping immigrants successfully integrate into the civic life and culture of the city.

The City's Race and Social Justice Initiative guides OIRA's work, as direct and early engagement with community members and organizations informs the department's new decisions, initiatives, and policies. OIRA operationalizes racial equity in all its workplans, especially in working with other City departments on outreach, engagement, and language accessibility.

Between 2000 and 2018, King County's total population increased by around 496,000 residents. The foreign-born population increased by about 255,000 residents, accounting for 52 percent of the total population growth. In 2018, about 23.5 percent of King County's residents were born in another country. According to the non-partisan think tank New American Economy, immigrant household incomes accounted for \$31 billion in household income and \$12.7 billion in taxes paid to support the Seattle Metropolitan Area.

Budget Snapshot

	2020 Actuals	2021 Adopted	2022 Adopted
Department Support			
General Fund Support	13,608,322	3,864,854	4,760,065
Other Funding - Operating	-	-	250,000
Total Operations	13,608,322	3,864,854	5,010,065
Total Appropriations	13,608,322	3,864,854	5,010,065
Full-Time Equivalents Total*	9.50	9.50	11.00

* 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

During the COVID-19 pandemic, OIRA’s Language Access program modeled what a highly effective centralization of language access Citywide could look like, expanding support to other departments as well as directly providing translation services and recommendations on in-language outreach. OIRA responded to the urgent need to produce materials in many languages accessible to immigrant and refugee community members to help them navigate COVID restrictions and information and access relief resources. The 2022 Adopted Budget increases support for the City’s Language Access needs, so that OIRA may maintain these gains and further expand language access support to departments.

The 2021 Adopted Budget paused the Immigrant Family Institute (IFI) due to public health restrictions placed on indoor gatherings. The 2022 Budget includes funding to resume IFI activities in a virtual format.

City Council Changes to the Proposed Budget

In the 2021 Adopted Budget, Council added one-time funding for the Legal Defense Network (LDN). The Council made that increased funding to the Legal Defense Network ongoing in the 2022 Adopted Budget and added additional one-time funds to expand the program.

In addition, the City Council amended the 2022 Proposed Budget by reallocating \$70.7 million of one-time federal Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Act (CLFR) Funds to revenue replacement in the General Fund. This action allows for the reallocation of funds in the Jumpstart Payroll Expense Tax (PET) Fund for purposes outlined in Ordinance 126393. The \$250,000 allocation for workforce development support to low-income immigrant and refugee adults will now be funded by PET. Full revenue replacement details can be found in the Seattle Rescue Plan chapter. See the Council Changes section for more details.

Incremental Budget Changes

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	Dollars	FTE
2021 Adopted Budget	3,864,854	9.50
Baseline		
Baseline Adjustments for Personnel Costs	31,230	-
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	64,325	-
Proposed Operating		
Language Premium Staff Stipend	12,000	-
Language Access and Contracting Capacity	246,656	1.50
Re-employment Pathways for Immigrants and Refugees	250,000	-
Proposed Technical		
Restore Immigrant Family Institute funding	70,000	-
Remove one-time increase to Legal Defense Fund	(190,000)	-
Council		

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Restore JumpStart Fund expenditures to the amounts and purposes proscribed in Ordinance 126393	-	-
Legal Defense Network Expansion	661,000	-
Total Incremental Changes		
	\$1,145,211	1.50
Total 2022 Adopted Budget	\$5,010,065	11.00

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

Baseline Adjustments for Personnel Costs

Expenditures \$31,230

This centrally administered change adjusts appropriations to restore the annual wage increase for non-represented Executives, Managers and Strategic Advisors, which was forgone in 2021 due to financial constraints.

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$64,325

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.

Proposed Operating

Language Premium Staff Stipend

Expenditures \$12,000

This item increases ongoing appropriation authority for language services stipends. Per the Coalition of City Unions collective bargaining agreement, City employees who are multilingual and provide language services, such as interpretation and translation, to communicate with clients and/or other employees in business-related situations are now eligible for a monthly language premium stipend. The amounts in the 2022 budget are estimates based on the eligible employees from 2021.

Language Access and Contracting Capacity

Expenditures \$246,656

Position Allocation 1.50

This item increases funding to support language access functions that will increase meaningful access for speakers of languages other than English to Seattle programs and services. The funding adds two positions, the first of which is a Language Access Specialist who will work with the existing specialist in supporting City departments to develop internal Language Access Plans and improve their communication with different communities. This position will also actively work with translators in the community to create linguistically accessible materials for the City. The second is a half-time position which will support OIRA's procurement and contracting needs generally and as it relates to language access needs. Lastly, this funding covers the operating costs of a City-wide cloud-based, computer-assisted

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translation tool (SmartCAT). This tool will help facilitate City departments' translation requests and will serve as a repository and reference of translated content.

Re-employment Pathways for Immigrants and Refugees

Expenditures \$250,000

The Council made changes to the funding source for this item in the Adopted Budget. Refer to the Council Changes section below. The proposed budget description follows:

This item addresses the negative economic impact of the pandemic on low-wage, limited-English-proficiency immigrant and refugee adults, further investing in their digital skill-building and device ownership through the Ready to Work (RTW) program. This further expands opportunities for educational and training pathways to help program participants obtain family-wage jobs.

Proposed Technical

Restore Immigrant Family Institute funding

Expenditures \$70,000

The 2021 Adopted Budget suspended funding for the Immigrant Family Institute (IFI) in 2021 because the in-person nature of the programming was not compatible with pandemic social distancing requirements. This item restores funding in the 2022 Budget with the intent to resume programming for the IFI. The IFI is an 8-week program that brings together immigrant and refugee families and Seattle police officers to improve understanding and build relationships.

Remove one-time increase to Legal Defense Fund

Expenditures \$(190,000)

The Council maintained ongoing funding for this item in the Adopted Budget. Refer to the Council Changes section below. The proposed budget description follows:

The Council added one-time funding to the Legal Defense Network in 2021 to restore its funding to 2020 levels. This is a technical item that removes the one-time increase of \$190,000. During the 2022 Council budget process, this one-time increase to the LDN was made ongoing. See the Council changes section for more details.

Council

Restore JumpStart Fund expenditures to the amounts and purposes proscribed in Ordinance 126393

Expenditures -

This Council change aligns JumpStart Fund expenditures with the JumpStart Payroll Expense Tax Fund ("JumpStart (JS) Fund") policies, passed by Council in July 2021 through Ordinance 126393, and aligns community-led investments with one-time resources. In OIRA, this change shifts \$250,000 of funding for workforce development from the General Fund to the Payroll Expense Tax.

Legal Defense Network Expansion

Expenditures \$661,000

The Legal Defense Network was established in 2017 to provide legal services to immigrants in removal proceedings, or at risk of removal. In 2021, the City invested \$1 million in the program, including \$193,000 of one-time funds. The 2022 Proposed Budget included \$827,000 for the program. This Council Budget Action adds \$661,000 for the Legal

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Defense Network bringing the City's total 2022 investment to \$1.49 million. The additional funds (1) restore and make ongoing the additional \$190,000 allocated in 2021, (2) add \$71,000 for an inflationary adjustment for contracted providers and (3) add \$400,000 of one-time funds to expand the program and increase services.

Expenditure Overview

	2020 Actuals	2021 Adopted	2022 Adopted
Appropriations			
OIRA - BO-IA-X1N00 - Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs			
00100 - General Fund	13,608,322	3,864,854	4,760,065
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	-	-	250,000
Total for BSL: BO-IA-X1N00	13,608,322	3,864,854	5,010,065
 Department Total	 13,608,322	 3,864,854	 5,010,065
 Department Full-Time Equivalents Total*	 9.50	 9.50	 11.00

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Budget Summary by Fund Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

	2020 Actuals	2021 Adopted	2022 Adopted
00100 - General Fund	13,608,322	3,864,854	4,760,065
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	-	-	250,000
Budget Totals for OIRA	13,608,322	3,864,854	5,010,065

Revenue Overview

2022 Estimated Revenues

Account Code	Account Name	2020 Actuals	2021 Adopted	2022 Adopted
331110	Direct Fed Grants	446,598	650,200	650,200
334010	State Grants	721,169	-	-
337010	Grants & Contr From Local Govt	75,643	-	-
337080	Other Private Contrib & Dons	12,429	-	-
Total Revenues for: 00100 - General Fund		1,255,839	650,200	650,200
 Total OIRA Resources		 1,255,839	 650,200	 650,200

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Appropriations by Budget Summary Level and Program

OIRA - BO-IA-X1N00 - Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

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.

Program Expenditures	2020 Actuals	2021 Adopted	2022 Adopted
Office of Immigrant and Refugee	13,608,322	3,864,854	5,010,065
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