

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 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.

The City of Seattle has a long history of welcoming immigrants, from the Vietnamese refugees who arrived in the 1970s to the Afghan and Ukrainian migrants of today. According to the 2019 American Community Survey (ACS), 19.4% of Seattle's residents (about 144,000 people) are foreign-born. Additionally, the nonpartisan think tank New American Economy has determined that immigrant household incomes in 2019 accounted for \$31 billion in household income and \$12.7 billion in taxes paid to support the Seattle Metropolitan Area.

Budget Snapshot

	2021 Actuals	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2024 Proposed
Department Support				
General Fund Support	29,127,476	4,760,065	4,821,873	4,859,731
Other Funding - Operating	-	250,000	163,289	163,289
Total Operations	29,127,476	5,010,065	4,985,161	5,023,019
Total Appropriations	29,127,476	5,010,065	4,985,161	5,023,019
Full-Time Equivalents Total*	9.50	11.00	12.00	12.00

* 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 received one-time funding to expand the Ready to Work program in an effort to mitigate the pandemic's disproportionate negative impacts on immigrant and refugee community members. As multiple COVID-19 state of emergency proclamations end and Seattle emerges from the pandemic, the focus of the 2023 Proposed Budget shifts to long-term economic recovery efforts.

A new position for a Workforce Policy and Partnerships Manager is added to provide support and to address the unique challenges faced by the immigrant workforce and immigrant business owners to improve their economic mobility. This action is funded with the JumpStart Payroll Expense Tax (PET) Fund for purposes outlined in Ordinance 126393. See the Proposed Operating section for more details.

Incremental Budget Changes

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	Dollars	FTE
2022 Adopted Budget	5,010,065	11.00
Baseline		
Align Budget to Central Cost Manual	-	-
Appropriations for 2022 Annual Wage Increase (AWI)	58,943	-
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	2,865	-
Remove one-time Ready to Work COVID-19 expansion	(250,000)	-
Proposed Operating		
Workforce Policy and Partnerships Manager	163,289	1.00
Total Incremental Changes	\$(24,903)	1.00
Total 2023 Proposed Budget	\$4,985,161	12.00

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

Align Budget to Central Cost Manual

Expenditures -

This is a net zero technical change to align the 2023 baseline budget to the 2022 adopted central cost manual.

Appropriations for 2022 Annual Wage Increase (AWI)

Expenditures \$58,943

This centrally administered change adjusts appropriations to reflect an annual wage increase in 2022, as outlined in the agreements between certain City unions, for personnel costs included in this department. These agreements were not finalized until after the 2022 budget had been adopted. This change includes ongoing cost increases to

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salary, FICA, Medicare, retirement, overtime and temporary labor. There is no increase assumed from 2022 to 2023.

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$2,865

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.

Remove one-time Ready to Work COVID-19 expansion

Expenditures \$(250,000)

This item removes a one-time 2022 increase to address 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. As multiple COVID-19 state of emergency proclamations end and Seattle emerges from the pandemic, the focus of the 2023 Proposed Budget shifts to long-term economic recovery efforts.

Proposed Operating

Workforce Policy and Partnerships Manager

Expenditures \$163,289

Position Allocation 1.00

The City's 2023 Proposed Budget spends approximately \$294 million in JumpStart Payroll Expense Tax (payroll tax) proceeds, of which \$33 million is allocated to investments promoting economic revitalization and workforce development. This item adds \$163,289 backed by payroll tax to the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs to add 1.0 FTE – a Workforce Policy and Partnerships Manager position. The new staff will engage with immigrants and refugees in the City of Seattle's workforce and businesses in its strategy for economic revitalization. This position will also provide direct technical support and language access assistance to businesses and property owners, and assist with re-employment pathways for immigrants and refugees through the City of Seattle's Ready to Work Initiative.

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Expenditure Overview

	2021 Actuals	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2024 Proposed
Appropriations				
OIRA - BO-IA-X1N00 - Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs				
00100 - General Fund	29,127,476	4,760,065	4,821,873	4,859,731
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	-	250,000	163,289	163,289
Total for BSL: BO-IA-X1N00	29,127,476	5,010,065	4,985,161	5,023,019
Department Total	29,127,476	5,010,065	4,985,161	5,023,019
Department Full-Time Equivalents Total*	9.50	11.00	12.00	12.00

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Budget Summary by Fund Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

	2021 Actuals	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2024 Proposed
00100 - General Fund	29,127,476	4,760,065	4,821,873	4,859,731
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	-	250,000	163,289	163,289
Budget Totals for OIRA	29,127,476	5,010,065	4,985,161	5,023,019

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	2021 Actuals	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2024 Proposed
Office of Immigrant and Refugee	29,127,476	5,010,065	4,985,161	5,023,019
Total	29,127,476	5,010,065	4,985,161	5,023,019
Full-time Equivalents Total*	9.50	11.00	12.00	12.00

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