

# Seattle Office for Civil Rights

## Julie Nelson, Director

### Contact Information

Department Information Line: (206) 684-4500

City of Seattle General Information: (206) 684-2489 TTY: (206) 684-4503

On the Web at: <http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights/>

### Department Description

The Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR) works to ensure that everyone in Seattle has equal access to housing, employment, public accommodations, contracting, and lending. SOCR investigates and enforces City, state, and federal anti-discrimination laws, and provides public policy recommendations to the Mayor, the City Council, and other City departments. The Office develops and implements policies and programs promoting justice, fairness, and equity. It also administers the Title VI program of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which relates to physical access to governmental facilities, projects, and programs.

Since 2004, the Office has led the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI). The Initiative envisions a city where racial disparities have been eliminated and racial equity achieved. RSJI's mission is to end institutionalized racism in City government and to promote multiculturalism and full participation by all city residents. The goals are to 1) end racial disparities internal to the City; 2) strengthen the way the City engages the community and provides services; and 3) eliminate race-based disparities in our communities.

SOCR also develops anti-discrimination programs and policies, and enhances awareness through free education and outreach to businesses, community groups, and the general public.

The Office works closely with immigrants, people of color, women, sexual minorities, and people with disabilities and their advocates, to inform them of their rights under the law. The Office publishes a wide array of printed materials, many of which are translated into other languages.

SOCR keeps civil rights issues before the public through articles in the local media, and sponsorship of events such as Seattle Human Rights Day. As part of a broad race and social justice movement, SOCR challenges Seattle to eliminate discrimination in all its forms.

SOCR staffs four volunteer commissions - the Human Rights, Women's, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender and People with Disabilities Commissions - which advise the Mayor and the City Council on relevant issues.

### Policy and Program Changes

In developing the 2011 Adopted Budget, the City of Seattle's General Fund was facing a \$67 million shortfall in 2011. The 2011 Adopted Budget includes reductions for all General Fund-dependent functions. Reductions in the Seattle Office of Civil Rights include programmatic and administrative cuts.

The 2011 Adopted Budget eliminates a paralegal position, which provides support to the case work of civil rights investigators. This position is responsible for drafting performance reports for the Mayor's Office and federal grantor agencies such as the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Functions previously performed by this position will be reassigned to other staff in the Enforcement Division and may result in less timely and responsive investigations.

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Additionally, the department is reducing its support staffing by 1.5 FTE. Staff support for the American Disabilities Act (ADA) work will be reduced and distributed among the existing Enforcement Division staff.

The administrative reductions eliminate funding for overtime, travel, and training. The 2011 Adopted Budget also eliminates funding for temporary employees and interns. These changes will limit the department's ability to use low-cost staffing and reduces entry level work opportunities in the civil rights field at the City for college students and graduates. SOCR will prioritize the department's work with the existing resources and take into account work plan commitments and high case processing periods.

Partially offsetting these reductions is an increase in the professional services budget for work on the Race and Social Justice Community Roundtable. In addition, the budget and staff is increased with the transfer in of the Immigrant and Refugee Initiative and the translation and interpretation funds for small departments from the Department of Neighborhoods. Transferring in the program functions and creating a half-time position in SOCR will more directly align the Immigrant and Refugee (I&R) Action Plan with the Race and Social Justice Initiative and ensure continued support for the I&R Action Plan and the Advisory Board, as well as implementation of the Interpretation and Translation policy, at a lower cost.

### **City Council Provisos**

There are no Council provisos.

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	Summit	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Appropriations</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Adopted</b>	<b>Adopted</b>	<b>Endorsed</b>
Civil Rights Budget Control Level	X1R00	2,369,532	2,253,988	2,226,035	2,248,477
<b>Department Total</b>		<b>2,369,532</b>	<b>2,253,988</b>	<b>2,226,035</b>	<b>2,248,477</b>
<b>Department Full-time Equivalents Total*</b>		<b>22.50</b>	<b>22.50</b>	<b>21.50</b>	<b>21.50</b>

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

	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Resources</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Adopted</b>	<b>Adopted</b>	<b>Endorsed</b>
General Subfund	2,369,532	2,253,988	2,226,035	2,248,477
<b>Department Total</b>	<b>2,369,532</b>	<b>2,253,988</b>	<b>2,226,035</b>	<b>2,248,477</b>

## **Civil Rights Budget Control Level**

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of the Civil Rights Budget Control Level is to work toward eliminating discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, contracting, and lending in Seattle through enforcement, and policy and outreach activities. The Office seeks to encourage and promote equal access and opportunity, diverse participation, and social and economic equity. In addition, the Office is responsible for directing the Race and Social Justice Initiative, leading other City departments to design and implement programs which eliminate institutionalized racism.

### **Summary**

Reduce budget by \$4,000, eliminating expenses for Temporary Employment, Interns, and Work Study.

Reduce budget by \$7,000, eliminating overtime labor expenses.

Reduce budget by \$16,000, eliminating travel and training expenses.

Reduce budget by \$10,000, eliminating the cost of living increase for Executive, Management and Strategic Advisor positions. This action will result in rolling back salaries to 2009 levels.

Reduce budget by \$52,000 and abrogate 0.5 FTE Planning and Development Specialist II.

Reduce budget by \$82,000 and abrogate 1.0 FTE Paralegal.

Reduce budget by \$46,000, decreasing the salary associated with a Senior Civil Rights Analyst position who works on the investigation of complaint cases. This action will result in the position being filled part-time rather than full-time for 2011.

Reduce budget by \$27,000, representing savings from a seven day furlough for non-represented staff.

The Mayor and the Council worked with the Coalition of City Labor Unions to identify mechanisms for reducing labor costs in the face of the City's strained financial situation. As a result of ratified agreements with represented employees and commensurate savings for non-represented positions in 'step-in-grade' classifications, this program will achieve \$14,000 in savings.

Increase budget by \$17,000, for professional services contracting expenses.

Increase budget by \$3,000 to reclassify a Manager 2 position to a Planning and Development Supervisor position. This action is taken to better align the position title with its workload.

Increase budget by \$68,000 and add 0.5 FTE Planning and Development Specialist I associated with the transfer of the Immigrant and Refugee Initiative Program from the Department of Neighborhoods to the Seattle Office of Civil Rights. This action is taken to better align the program and its work with a Department whose mission more closely aligns with the program goals.

Increase budget by \$143,000 for department technical adjustments and citywide adjustments to labor and other operating costs due to inflation, health care, and similar changes, for a net decrease from the 2010 Adopted Budget to the 2011 Adopted Budget of approximately \$27,000.

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<b>Expenditures/FTE</b>	<b>2009 Actual</b>	<b>2010 Adopted</b>	<b>2011 Adopted</b>	<b>2012 Endorsed</b>
Civil Rights	2,369,532	2,253,988	2,226,035	2,248,477
Full-time Equivalents Total*	22.50	22.50	21.50	21.50

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