

Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

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Department Overview

The Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) was established in 2012 by Seattle Ordinance 123822 to recognize the importance and need for a stronger relationship and increased accountability between the City of Seattle and immigrant and refugee communities. OIRA serves as the backbone and coordinator of key City efforts across all departments to advance equity and access for immigrants and refugees.

As an office dedicated to serving immigrants refugees, our core values and shared agreements are centered around integrity, humility, communities, innovation, gratitude, respect, accountability, partnership, and transparency. We address the underlying causes of inequities and develop programs and policies that empower our community partners and those they serve.

OIRA serves immigrant and refugee Seattle residents in the areas of language access, immigration legal services, workforce development, and more. OIRA is focused on incorporating community needs and direct feedback in policy decisions and program development while also centering the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative.

Budget Snapshot

	2022 Actuals	2023 Adopted	2024 Endorsed	2024 Proposed
Department Support				
General Fund Support	6,635,005	4,899,873	4,937,731	6,028,698
Other Funding - Operating	118,272	163,289	163,289	164,417
Total Operations	6,753,277	5,063,161	5,101,019	6,193,114
Total Appropriations	6,753,277	5,063,161	5,101,019	6,193,114

Full-Time Equivalent Total* 11.00 12.00 12.00 12.50

** 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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Incremental Budget Changes

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	2024 Budget	FTE
Total 2024 Endorsed Budget	5,101,019	12.00
Baseline		
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	24,843	-
Proposed Operating		
Increase Legal Defense Network Support	-	0.50
Investment in Immigrant and Safety Access Network	150,000	-
Seattle Housing Authority Grant for New Citizen Program	51,652	-
Washington Department of Social and Health Services Grant for New Citizen Program	865,600	-
Total Incremental Changes	\$1,092,095	0.50
Total 2024 Proposed Budget	\$6,193,114	12.50

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$24,843

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

Increase Legal Defense Network Support

Expenditures -
 Position Allocation 0.50

This item modifies an existing 0.5 FTE to make it a full-time 1.0 FTE to manage the Legal Defense Network (LDN) program. OIRA has grant funding and ongoing savings in the LDN budget to support the full-time position. For the past three years OIRA has used underspend to bring this position to full-time capacity. This item is needed to permanently make the position full-time to support the level of work required to manage the program.

Investment in Immigrant and Safety Access Network

Expenditures \$150,000

This item adds ongoing General Fund for the Immigrant Safety and Access Network (ISAN). Building upon the success

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of OIRA's Immigrant Family Institute (IFI) program that operated from 2018 to 2020, the ISAN program aims to establish a network of community-based organizations that provide support for immigrant and refugee families who experience disproportionate harm from violence. In 2023, OIRA contracted \$220,000 to 9 community organizations through ISAN. The funding encompassed one-time \$100,000 funding from King County, some underspend from 2022, and the 2023 base budget of \$70,000. This proposal requests \$150,000 of ongoing funding to maintain the ISAN program at its current level of \$220,000.

Seattle Housing Authority Grant for New Citizen Program

Expenditures	\$51,652
Revenues	\$51,652

This item includes revenues and expenditures for a grant received annually from the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA). This grant supports the participation of SHA residents in the New Citizen Program (NCP), which provides assistance to income-qualified individuals to apply for naturalization using a case management model. Over 400 participants were naturalized and became US citizens in 2022 through NCP.

Washington Department of Social and Health Services Grant for New Citizen Program

Expenditures	\$865,600
Revenues	\$865,600

This item includes revenues and expenditures for a grant from the Washington Department of Social and Health Services. This annual grant supports the participation of state benefits recipients in the New Citizen Program (NCP), which provides assistance to income-qualified individuals to apply for naturalization using a case management model. Over 400 participants were naturalized and became US citizens in 2022 through NCP.

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2023-24 Proposed Mid-Biennial Budget Adjustments – Operating Expenses

Budget Summary Level	Fund	Budget Process Phase Endorsed	Proposed Changes	Grand Total
Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs	00100 - General Fund	4,937,731	1,090,967	6,028,698
	14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	163,289	1,128	164,417
Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs Total		5,101,019	1,092,095	6,193,114
Grand Total		5,101,019	1,092,095	6,193,114