

# 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, OIRA's core values and shared agreements are centered around integrity, humility, communities, innovation, gratitude, respect, accountability, partnership, and transparency. OIRA addresses the underlying causes of inequities and develop programs and policies that empower 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

	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
<b>Department Support</b>				
General Fund Support	6,254,820	6,224,830	6,570,612	10,677,283
Other Funding - Operating	190,986	142,227	151,567	148,766
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>6,445,806</b>	<b>6,367,057</b>	<b>6,722,179</b>	<b>10,826,049</b>
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	<b>6,445,806</b>	<b>6,367,057</b>	<b>6,722,179</b>	<b>10,826,049</b>
Full-Time Equivalents Total*	12.50	12.50	12.50	16.00

\* 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

## Budget Overview

The 2026 Adopted Budget maintains core services for OIRA. The department will continue to invest in programs such as the Legal Defense Network, the New Citizen Campaign, the New Citizen Program, the Immigrant Safety and Access Network, the Language Access program, and the Ready to Work program.

The 2026 Adopted Budget also increases administrative staffing support for the department. Moreover, the 2026 Proposed Budget includes \$4 million in one-time funds from the City's proposed Business and Occupation Tax, which is intended to mitigate impacts of changes in federal funding and for administrative costs. These funds will be used for the expansion of existing and new programming to support the immigrant and refugee community, including representation and other legal services, workforce development programs, outreach, community navigation

## **Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs**

services, and other critical programs. These changes comprise an increase of 61% from the 2025 Adopted Budget.

### **City Council Changes to the Proposed Budget**

The Council changed \$4 million in new appropriations for addressing federal budgetary and policy changes from one-time to ongoing appropriations and making technical adjustments to three associated temporary positions.

## Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

### Incremental Budget Changes

#### Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

	2026 Budget	FTE
<b>Total 2026 Endorsed Budget</b>	<b>6,722,179</b>	<b>12.50</b>
<b>Baseline</b>		
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	85,901	-
<b>Proposed Operating</b>		
Support for Workforce Opportunities, Immigration Legal Services, and Safety Programs	3,700,000	2.00
Support for Emerging Needs	300,000	-
Increase Grants and Contracts Staffing	46,792	0.50
<b>Proposed Technical</b>		
Bargained Annual Wage Adjustment to Base Budget	(27,082)	-
SCERS Retirement Contribution Rate Reduction	(1,741)	-
Payroll Expense Tax Baseline Adjustments	-	-
Technical Adjustments to Central Cost Budget Line Items	-	-
Assignment of Budget for Unmapped Accounts and General Fund Baseline Adjustment	-	-
<b>Council</b>		
Support for Workforce Opportunities, Immigration Legal Services, Safety Programs and Emergent Needs	-	1.00
<b>Total Incremental Changes</b>	<b>\$4,103,870</b>	<b>3.50</b>
<b>Total 2026 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>\$10,826,049</b>	<b>16.00</b>

### Description of Incremental Budget Changes

#### Baseline

##### Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$85,901

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 and other central cost factors. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

# Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

## Adopted Operating

### **Support for Workforce Opportunities, Immigration Legal Services, and Safety Programs**

Expenditures	\$3,700,000
Position Allocation	2.00

The Council altered this proposal in the Adopted Budget. Refer to the description in the Council Changes section below. The Adopted Budget description follows:

The adopted budget includes revenues associated with the City's adopted Business & Occupation Tax increase. The tax is anticipated to generate \$86 million in 2026, of which up to \$30 million is intended to mitigate the impacts of changes in federal funding and for administrative costs.

In the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, the B&O federal mitigation funding provides \$3.7 million in one-time funds for services to immigrants and refugees. This includes \$1.85 million to expand and launch critical programs, including workforce development for youth and English language learners, legal assistance and safety services, rapid response initiatives, and immigrant access and navigation support, and also includes \$1.35 million for new initiatives, including the expansion of naturalization services, the development of immigrant youth career pathways, the enhancement of integration and civic engagement programs, strengthened community navigation services, and increased outreach through ethnic media, translation and community advisory resources. Staffing includes a temporary Grants and Contracts Specialist and two Strategic Advisor positions that sunset after one year.

### **Support for Emerging Needs**

Expenditures	\$300,000
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The Council altered this proposal in the Adopted Budget. Refer to the description in the Council Changes section below. The Adopted Budget description follows:

The adopted budget includes revenues associated with the City's adopted Business & Occupation Tax increase. The tax is anticipated to generate \$86 million in 2026, of which up to \$30 million is intended to mitigate the impacts of changes in federal funding and for administrative costs.

In the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, the B&O federal mitigation funding provides \$300,000 in one-time funds to address emerging needs for the city's immigrant and refugee community by supporting the expansion of the rapid response efforts. These efforts involve partnerships with eight trusted community organizations to provide urgent services, such as legal consultations, Know Your Rights trainings, family safety planning, and a hotline for reporting immigration enforcement activity. This item was included as a one-time addition for the same amount in a supplemental amendment to the 2025 budget.

### **Increase Grants and Contracts Staffing**

Expenditures	\$46,792
Position Allocation	0.50

This item increases budget and position authority for an existing Senior Grants and Contracts position at half-time equivalency to full time. This action aligns staffing and budget to meet elevated administrative needs of the department.

# Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

## Adopted Technical

### **Bargained Annual Wage Adjustment to Base Budget**

Expenditures \$(27,082)

This centrally administered change adjusts base budget appropriations to reflect the proper Annual Wage Increase (AWI) increment for 2026, as outlined in the agreements between the City and the Coalition of City Unions for personnel costs. AWI increments are determined based on the average change in the local Consumer Price Index (CPI). This change represents a true-up between the forecasted CPI assumption included in the Endorsed Budget and the actual CPI data.

### **SCERS Retirement Contribution Rate Reduction**

Expenditures \$(1,741)

The City's employee retirement system, the Seattle City Employees Retirement System (SCERS) is a defined benefit pension program funded by a combination of salary-based employer (i.e., the City) and employee contributions, and investment earnings. Based on the updated actuarial valuation for 2025, this item reduces the employer contribution rate from the endorsed rate of 15.17% to the SCERS minimum actuarial required rate of 15.06%.

### **Payroll Expense Tax Baseline Adjustments**

Expenditures -

This net-zero technical item aligns Payroll Expense Tax expenditures to projected spending and updates project information.

### **Technical Adjustments to Central Cost Budget Line Items**

Expenditures -

This item adds detailed project information in budget line items for central costs.

### **Assignment of Budget for Unmapped Accounts and General Fund Baseline Adjustment**

Expenditures -

This net-zero technical item corrects budget account details and aligns budget with anticipated expenditures.

## Council

### **Support for Workforce Opportunities, Immigration Legal Services, Safety Programs and Emergent Needs**

Expenditures -

Position Allocation 1.00

The adopted budget includes two actions totaling \$4 million in one-time General Fund appropriations for workforce opportunities, immigration legal services, safety programs and emergent needs, including but not limited to rapid response efforts, as well as a 12-month temporary Grants and Contracts Specialist and two Strategic Advisor 1 positions sunsetting at the end of 2026.

This Council action alters these proposals by making the appropriations ongoing. Council also changed the temporary Grants and Contracts Specialist to a sunsetting position and converts the labor classification of the Strategic Advisor 1 positions as general government rather than exempt status.

## Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

### Expenditure Overview

	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
<b>Appropriations</b>				
<b>OIRA - BO-IA-X1N00 - Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs</b>				
00100 - General Fund	6,254,820	6,224,830	6,570,612	10,677,283
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	190,986	142,227	151,567	148,766
<b>Total for BSL: BO-IA-X1N00</b>	<b>6,445,806</b>	<b>6,367,057</b>	<b>6,722,179</b>	<b>10,826,049</b>
<b>Department Total</b>	<b>6,445,806</b>	<b>6,367,057</b>	<b>6,722,179</b>	<b>10,826,049</b>
<b>Department Full-Time Equivalents Total*</b>	<b>12.50</b>	<b>12.50</b>	<b>12.50</b>	<b>16.00</b>

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### Budget Summary by Fund Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
00100 - General Fund	6,254,820	6,224,830	6,570,612	10,677,283
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	190,986	142,227	151,567	148,766
<b>Budget Totals for OIRA</b>	<b>6,445,806</b>	<b>6,367,057</b>	<b>6,722,179</b>	<b>10,826,049</b>

### Revenue Overview

#### 2026 Estimated Revenues

Account Code	Account Name	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Adopted
331110	Direct Fed Grants	704,462	700,000	700,000	700,000
334010	State Grants	729,024	870,000	870,000	870,000
337010	Grants & Contr From Local Govt	68,188	53,649	53,649	53,649
<b>Total Revenues for: 00100 - General Fund</b>		<b>1,501,674</b>	<b>1,623,649</b>	<b>1,623,649</b>	<b>1,623,649</b>
<b>Total OIRA Resources</b>		<b>1,501,674</b>	<b>1,623,649</b>	<b>1,623,649</b>	<b>1,623,649</b>

## Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

### 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.

<b>Program Expenditures</b>	<b>2024 Actuals</b>	<b>2025 Adopted</b>	<b>2026 Endorsed</b>	<b>2026 Adopted</b>
Office of Immigrant and Refugee	6,445,806	6,367,057	6,722,179	10,826,049
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,445,806</b>	<b>6,367,057</b>	<b>6,722,179</b>	<b>10,826,049</b>
Full-time Equivalents Total*	12.50	12.50	12.50	16.00

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