



King County

516 Third Avenue, Council
Chambers, 10th Floor,
Seattle, WA 98104

Meeting Agenda

Employment and Administration Committee

*Councilmembers: Sarah Perry, Chair;
Jorge L. Barón, Vice-Chair; Claudia Balducci,
Rod Dembowski, Teresa Mosqueda*

*Staff: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff (206-477-6023)
Melani Hay: Committee Clerk (206-477-1025)*

1:30 PM

Wednesday, September 23, 2026

Hybrid Meeting

Hybrid Meetings: Attend the Employment and Administration Committee meetings in person in the Southwest Conference Room, 12th Floor, 516 3rd Avenue in Seattle, or through remote access. Details on how to attend the meeting remotely are listed below.

CONNECTING TO THE WEBINAR
Webinar ID: 867 8846 4943

If you do not have access to the ZOOM application, you can connect to the meeting by calling 1 253 215 8782 and using the Webinar ID.

Language access services: Sign language and interpreter services are available at no cost to you. To request these services, contact King County Council's Equity and Social Justice Office at 206-477-9259 (TTY Relay 7-1-1) or kccesj@kingcounty.gov at your earliest opportunity. Please provide notice by 9 AM at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting to better secure availability.

Pursuant to K.C.C. 1.24.035 A. and F., this meeting is also noticed as a meeting of the Metropolitan King County Council, whose agenda is limited to the committee business. In this meeting only the rules and procedures applicable to committees apply and not those applicable to full council meetings.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**

To show a PDF of the written materials for an agenda item, click on the agenda item below.



Sign language and interpreter services can be arranged given sufficient notice (206-848-0355).
TTY Number - TTY 711.
Council Chambers is equipped with a hearing loop, which provides a wireless signal that is picked up by a hearing aid when it is set to 'T' (Telecoil) setting.



3. **Approval of Minutes of September 1, 2026** **pg 3**

Discussion and Possible Action

4. Proposed Motion No. 2026-0274 **pg 6**

A MOTION appointing _____ as the inspector general, director of the King County inspector general division within the office of public complaints.

Sponsors: Perry

Contingent on Referral to Committee

5. Proposed Ordinance No. 2026-0250 **pg 8**

AN ORDINANCE relating to the office of law enforcement oversight director appointments; and amending Ordinance 15611, Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.75.030.

Sponsors: Perry

6. Proposed Ordinance No. 2026-0277 **pg 13**

AN ORDINANCE relating to legislative branch independent agencies; and amending Ordinance 394, Section 1, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.20.010, Ordinance 18799, Section 11, and K.C.C. 2.20.085, Ordinance 473, Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.52.020, Ordinance 5869, Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.52.030, Ordinance 473, Section 15, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.52.030, Ordinance 15611, Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.75.030, Ordinance 263, Article 5, Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 20.22.020, and Ordinance 11502, Section 19, as amended, and K.C.C. 20.22.310.

Sponsors: Barón

Contingent on Referral to Committee

Briefings

7. **Human Resources Update**

Deandra Stanley, Human Resources Manager

8. **Chief of Staff Update**

Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff

Other Business

Adjournment



King County

516 Third Avenue, Council
Chambers, 10th Floor,
Seattle, WA 98104

Meeting Minutes Employment and Administration Committee

*Councilmembers: Sarah Perry, Chair;
Jorge L. Barón, Vice-Chair; Claudia Balducci,
Rod Dembowski, Teresa Mosqueda*

*Staff: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff (206-477-6023)
Melani Hay: Committee Clerk (206-477-1025)*

2:00 PM

Tuesday, September 1, 2026

Hybrid Meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

**Hybrid Meetings: Attend the Employment and Administration
Committee meetings in person in the Southwest Conference Room, 516
3rd Avenue in Seattle, or through remote access. Details on how to
attend the meeting remotely are listed below.**

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Pursuant to K.C.C. 1.24.035 A. and F., this meeting is also noticed as a meeting of the Metropolitan King County Council, whose agenda is limited to the committee business. In this meeting only the rules and procedures applicable to committees apply and not those applicable to full council meetings.

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 2:12 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

Present: 4 - Barón, Dembowski, Mosqueda and Perry

Excused: 1 - Balducci

Councilmember Fain was also present.

3. **Approval of Minutes of July 7, 2026**

Councilmember Barón moved to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2026, meeting as presented. Seeing no objection, the Chair so ordered.

Discussion and Possible Action

4. **Proposed Motion No. 2026-0212**

A MOTION confirming the reappointment of Jason Lambacher to the citizens' elections oversight committee as a representative sponsored by an academic institution and who has knowledge of elections.

Sponsors: Perry

A motion was made by Councilmember Barón that this Motion be Recommended Do Pass Consent. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Barón, Dembowski, Mosqueda and Perry

Excused: 1 - Balducci

Sherrie Hsu, Council Staff, briefed the Committee and answered questions.

Jason Lambacher made remarks and answered questions.

Briefing

5. **OLEO Director Recruitment**

Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, made remarks and introduced Greg Nelson, Mosaic Public Partners.

Greg Nelson made remarks and briefed the Committee.

6. Human Resources Update

Deandra Stanley, Human Resources Manager, made remarks and briefed the Committee.

Janine Weihe, Chief Operating Officer, made remarks and briefed the Committee.

Elissa Benson, Chief Policy Officer, made remarks and briefed the Committee.

7. Chief of Staff Update

Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, made remarks and briefed the Committee.

Other Business

No other business was presented.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Approved this _____ day of _____

Clerk's Signature



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

Motion

Proposed No. 2026-0274.1

Sponsors Perry

1 A MOTION appointing _____ as the inspector
2 general, director of the King County inspector general
3 division within the office of public complaints.

4 WHEREAS, by adopting Ordinance 20101, the King County council created the
5 inspector general division within the office of public complaints, and

6 WHEREAS, by passing Motion 17000, the council approved the job description
7 for the inspector general, and

8 WHEREAS, K.C.C. 2.52.030 directs the King County council to appoint an
9 inspector general for a term of five years, and

10 WHEREAS, the employment and administrative committee has concluded the
11 recruitment process for the inspector general and recommends _____ to be appointed to
12 inspector general;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

14 _____ is hereby appointed to serve as the inspector general,

- 15 director of the King County office of inspector general within the office of public
16 complaints, effective _____, 2026.

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Sarah Perry, Chair

ATTEST:

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

Ordinance

Proposed No. 2026-0250.1

Sponsors

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to the office of law enforcement
2 oversight director appointments; and amending Ordinance
3 15611, Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.75.030.

4 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

5 SECTION 1. Ordinance 15611, Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.75.030, are
6 hereby amended as follows:

7 A. The director shall be appointed by a majority of the council to implement and
8 manage the duties of the oversight office.

9 B. The director (~~((shall))~~) should be selected by the council through a nationwide
10 search through a merit-based selection process.

11 C. The selected director must pass a complete criminal background check before
12 confirmation.

13 D. The director shall serve a term of four years and until a successor is appointed,
14 unless removed for cause at any time by a majority of the council, and shall be
15 considered for reappointment at the end of each term of office. A successor includes an
16 interim director, who council may appoint by motion pending the appointment of a new
17 director if the position becomes vacant for any reason, including nonreappointment.

18 E. The director, consistent with the Organizational Motion of the council and

- 19 within the resources available or budgeted by appropriation, may employ staff or use the
20 services of consultants as may be necessary for conduct of the oversight office's duties.

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Sarah Perry, Chair

ATTEST:

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, ____.

Girmay Zahilay, County Executive

Attachments: None



Metropolitan King County Council Staff Report

Committee:	Employment and Administration		
Agenda Item:	5	Analyst(s):	Nick Bowman
Proposed No.:	2026-0250	Meeting Date:	September 23, 2026

OVERVIEW

TOPIC: An Ordinance relating to the Office of Law Enforcement Oversight director appointments.

LEGISLATION SUMMARY

Proposed Ordinance 2026-0250 would amend K.C.C. 2.75.030, which establishes the Office of Law Enforcement Oversight (OLEO) director's responsibilities, appointment process, and term of service, to allow for the appointment of an interim director. Under the proposed ordinance, the Council could appoint an interim director at the expiration of a director's term or if the position otherwise becomes vacant. The proposed ordinance would also amend the current County Code so that a nationwide search for a director is optional but no longer required.

KEY ISSUES FROM THE ANALYSIS

- A. **Compliance with the King County Charter.** King County Charter Section 265 states that the OLEO director "shall serve a four-year term and until a successor is appointed." The Charter does not, however, define what constitutes a successor.

The proposed ordinance would include an interim director as a qualifying successor, which the Council may appoint pending the appointment of a permanent director. The proposed ordinance would also remove the requirement that the selection process for a new director include a nationwide search. As the Charter does not prohibit the appointment of an interim director, nor require that the director be selected through a nationwide search, the proposed ordinance appears to be in compliance with the Charter.

OLEO Director Charter and Code Provisions.

King County Charter Section 265 states that the Office of Law Enforcement “shall have a director who is appointed by a majority of the county council to serve a term of four years and until a successor is appointed. The director may be removed from office at any time for cause by a majority of the county council.”

King County Code 2.75.030 reads:

- A. The director shall be appointed by a majority of the council to implement and manage the duties of the oversight office.
- B. The director shall be selected by the council through a nationwide search through a merit-based selection process.
- C. The selected director must pass a complete criminal background check before confirmation.
- D. The director shall serve a term of four years, unless removed for cause at any time by a majority of the council, and shall be considered for reappointment at the end of each term of office.
- E. The director, consistent with the Organizational Motion of the council and within the resources available or budgeted by appropriation, may employ staff or use the services of consultants as may be necessary for conduct of the oversight office's duties.

ANALYSIS

Key Issue A. Compliance with the King County Charter. All County ordinances must comply with any relevant County Charter provisions. King County Charter Section 265 states that the OLEO director shall be appointed to a term of four years, shall serve until a successor is appointed, and may be removed by the majority of the Council for cause. K.C.C. 2.75.030 reflects the Charter’s language but contains additional requirements for the appointment process including that the director must be selected through a nationwide search and merit-based selection process, that the selected director must pass a criminal background check, and that any director be considered for reappointment at the end of each term of office. While these additional requirements are not stated in the Charter, neither are they prohibited.

Proposed Ordinance 2026-0250 would amend K.C.C. 2.75.030.B. so that the selection process for an OLEO director includes an optional nationwide search. The proposed

ordinance would also amend K.C.C. 2.75.030.D to allow for the appointment of an interim director as a “successor” to a director whose term has expired or who has otherwise left the office vacant. As the Charter does not require a director to be selected through a nationwide search, define what constitutes a “successor,” nor prohibit the appointment of an interim director, the proposed ordinance appears to be in compliance with King County Charter Section 265.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Ordinance 2026-0250



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

Ordinance

Proposed No. 2026-0277.1

Sponsors Barón

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to legislative branch
2 independent agencies; and amending Ordinance 394,
3 Section 1, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.20.010, Ordinance
4 18799, Section 11, and K.C.C. 2.20.085, Ordinance 473,
5 Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.52.020, Ordinance
6 5869, Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.52.030,
7 Ordinance 473, Section 15, as amended, and K.C.C.
8 2.52.030, Ordinance 15611, Section 4, as amended, and
9 K.C.C. 2.75.030, Ordinance 263, Article 5, Section 2, as
10 amended, and K.C.C. 20.22.020, and Ordinance 11502,
11 Section 19, as amended, and K.C.C. 20.22.310.

12 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

13 SECTION 1. Ordinance 394, Section 1, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.20.010, are
14 hereby amended as follows:

15 A. The auditor shall be appointed by motion by a majority of the council to
16 implement and manage the duties of the auditor's office. The auditor shall serve for a term
17 of four years, unless removed for cause at any time by an affirmative vote of at least two-
18 thirds majority of the council, and shall be considered for reappointment at the end of each
19 term. The process for reappointment consideration should begin within the three months

20 before the expiration of a term. If the position becomes vacant for any reason, including
21 nonreappointment, the council may appoint an interim auditor by motion.

22 B. The auditor (~~shall~~) should be selected by the council through a nationwide
23 search using a merit-based selection process that includes screening by experienced
24 performance auditors.

25 C. The auditor shall possess adequate professional proficiency and characteristics
26 for the job. The auditor shall:

27 1. Be able to analyze problems of performance, program operations, financial
28 management and administration, internal controls and public policy;

29 2. Have a track record of integrity, acting without bias, conducting professional
30 interactions diplomatically and effectively managing personnel;

31 3. Not be actively involved in partisan affairs; and

32 4. Pass a complete criminal background check before appointment.

33 D. (~~The auditor shall serve a term of four years, unless the council passes a motion~~
34 ~~with at least six affirmative votes to remove the auditor for cause, and shall be considered~~
35 ~~for reappointment at the end of each term.~~

36 E.) Within available appropriation, the auditor:

37 1. May employ staff as necessary for conduct of the auditor's duties; and

38 2. Shall be the appointing authority for the auditor's office staff and shall consult
39 with the council before appointment, advancement or removal of staff; and

40 3. May enter into a contract for consultant services for fifty thousand dollars or
41 less without prior authorization by council motion.

42 SECTION 2. Ordinance 18799, Section 11, and K.C.C. 2.20.085 are hereby
43 amended to read as follows:

44 The auditor shall administer the following programs:

45 A. The capital project oversight program, which shall consist of oversight, audits or
46 studies of operations, programs or services performed related to the county's capital
47 programs. To accomplish the work of the capital project oversight program, the auditor
48 shall:

49 1. Assign a program manager and may use personnel with expertise in capital
50 projects, retain independent consulting services with appropriate expertise or both;

51 2. Include capital projects, capital programs or other areas for capital project
52 oversight in the work program; and

53 3. By ~~((July))~~ June 1 of each even-numbered year, publish a report summarizing
54 capital project oversight work completed by the auditor and implementation by agencies in
55 the last twenty-four months;

56 B. The transit audit program, which shall consist of audits or studies of operations,
57 programs or services performed by the department of transportation, transit division, or its
58 successor. To accomplish the work of the transit audit program, the auditor shall:

59 1. Assign a program manager and may use personnel with expertise in transit,
60 retain independent consulting services with appropriate expertise or both;

61 2. Include a minimum of two transit audits per biennium on the work program;
62 and

63 3. By ~~((July))~~ June 1 of each even-numbered year, publish a report summarizing
64 the transit audit program work completed by the auditor and implementation by transit
65 agencies in the last twenty-four months; and

66 C. The law enforcement audit program, which shall consist of audits or studies of
67 operations, programs or services performed by the sheriff's office and other county
68 agencies related to law enforcement. To accomplish the work of the law enforcement audit
69 program, the auditor shall:

- 70 1. Assign a program manager and may use personnel with expertise in law
71 enforcement, retain independent consulting services with appropriate expertise or both;
- 72 2. Include a minimum of two audits of law enforcement per biennium on the work
73 program; and

74 3. By ~~((July))~~ June 1 of each even-numbered year, publish a report summarizing
75 the law enforcement program work completed by the auditor and implementation by law
76 enforcement agencies in the last twenty-four months.

77 SECTION 3. Ordinance 473, Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.52.020 are
78 hereby amended to read as follows:

79 A. In accordance with Section 260 of the King County Charter, the office of
80 public complaints is established. The office shall consist of:

- 81 1. The ombuds division; and
- 82 2. The inspector general division.

83 B. The duties of the ombuds division shall include the following:

- 84 1. Inspection and investigation of alleged violations of the employee code of
85 ethics under K.C.C. chapter 3.04;

86 2. Inspection and investigation of reports of improper governmental action and
87 retaliation under K.C.C. chapter 3.42;

88 3. Inspection and investigation of possible violations of the lobbyist disclosure
89 code under K.C.C. chapter 1.07; and

90 4. Serve as property tax advisor in accordance with RCW 84.48.140 and provide
91 advice to any person liable for payment of property taxes in King County, including the
92 process for appealing property tax assessments and other matters related to property
93 taxes. The division shall routinely and at least annually publicize these services to the
94 public.

95 C. The duties of the inspector general division shall include inspection and
96 investigation of all suspected fraud, waste, and abuse of county-administered moneys.
97 The inspector general division may receive assistance from the auditor with
98 investigations of suspected fraud, waste, or abuse of county-administered moneys. In
99 carrying out the duties of the inspector general division, its director should adhere to
100 applicable professional standards and best practices, such as the Quality Standards for
101 Investigations (2025) promulgated by the Council for Inspectors General on Integrity and
102 Efficiency.

103 D. The division directors of the office of public complaints shall confer at the
104 initial intake of a complaint to determine which division shall be responsible for the
105 review and any follow up investigation of the complaint. If the directors are unable to
106 determine which division should be responsible, the directors shall confer with the
107 council chief of staff, who shall make the final decision of which division should be
108 responsible for the complaint.

109 E. An administrative agency should notify the office of public complaints of all
110 suspected fraud, waste, or abuse of county-administered moneys, including but not
111 limited to complaints. Upon receipt of the notification and assignment of the matter to
112 the inspector general division in accordance with this chapter, the inspector general
113 division director shall determine whether the inspector general division will undertake an
114 investigation or the administrative agency itself will investigate. If the inspector general
115 division director determines the administrative agency will investigate, in any such
116 investigation, the administrative agency should consult, coordinate, or collaborate with
117 the inspector general division on the agency's investigation.

118 F. The organization and administration of the office shall be sufficiently
119 independent to assure that interference or influence external to the office shall not
120 adversely affect independent and objective review, investigations, and analysis by the
121 office.

122 SECTION 4. Ordinance 5869, Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.52.030 are
123 hereby amended to read as follows:

124 A.1. Both the ombuds division director and the inspector general division director
125 of the office of public complaints shall be appointed by a majority of the ~~((members of the~~
126 ~~county))~~ council.

127 2. For appointments made by the council before the effective date of this
128 ordinance, ((E))each division director shall serve for a term of five years, unless removed
129 for cause at any time by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds((of the members))
130 majority of the ((county)) council ((upon their determination that the director has become
131 incapacitated or has been guilty of neglect of duty, misconduct, or political activity. The

council may appoint an interim director pending the appointment of a new director
whenever the term of the director has expired or the position otherwise becomes vacant)),
and shall be considered for reappointment at the end of each term of office. The process
for reappointment consideration should begin within the three months before the
expiration of a term. If the position becomes vacant for any reason, including
nonreappointment, the council may appoint by motion an interim division director.

3. For appointments made by the council on or after the effective date of this
ordinance, each division director shall serve for a term of four years, unless removed for
cause at any time by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds majority of the council, and
shall be considered for reappointment at the end of each term of office. The process for
reappointment consideration should begin within the three months before the expiration
of a term. If the position becomes vacant for any reason, including nonreappointment,
the council may appoint by motion an interim division director.

B. Each division director shall hold a degree from an accredited college or its
equivalent in service to government, shall have a working knowledge of legal and
administrative procedures, and shall have either experience or knowledge, or both, in
local government commensurate to the powers of the office. During the term of which
the director is appointed, the director shall be ineligible to hold any other public office of
employment. The director shall not be a candidate for any public office for a period of
two years following the completion of the director's term as inspector general division
director. The director shall not be included in the classified civil or career service of the
county.

154 SECTION 5. Ordinance 473, Section 15, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.52.030 are
155 hereby amended to read as follows:

156 A. In addition to whatever reports the office of public complaints may make from
157 time to time, the ombuds division director shall report to the county council annually.
158 The director shall electronically file the report by ~~((March))~~ June 1 of each year with the
159 clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to
160 all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the executive. The director shall also
161 transmit that portion of the report related to ethics complaints, as described in subsection
162 A.2. of this section, annually by ~~((March))~~ June 1 of each year, in the form of an
163 electronic copy to the board of ethics administrator, who shall provide an electronic copy
164 to all board members. The ombuds division annual report shall provide an overview of
165 activities performed by the ombuds division during the prior calendar year, including, but
166 not be limited to:

167 1. The status of the lobbyist disclosure program described in K.C.C. chapter
168 1.07 from the proceeding calendar year, including a summary of case outcomes of
169 complaints alleging a violation of K.C.C. chapter 1.07 that are no longer eligible for
170 appeal, resource issues, and any concerns and recommendations for program
171 improvement raised by members of the public or county employees;

172 2. The status of the employee code of ethics program described in K.C.C.
173 chapter 3.04 from the proceeding calendar year, including a summary of case outcomes
174 of complaints alleging a violation of K.C.C. chapter 3.04 that are no longer eligible for
175 appeal, resource issues, and any concerns and recommendations for program
176 improvement raised by members of the public or county employees; and

177 3. The status of the whistleblower program described in K.C.C. chapter 3.42
178 from the preceding calendar year, including a summary of improper governmental action
179 and retaliation claims processed during the reporting period, case outcomes of all claims
180 investigated by the ombuds division, resource issues, any concerns raised by
181 whistleblowers about the process, and any recommendations for program improvements.
182 The ombuds division director is encouraged to seek feedback from participants in the
183 whistleblower process when preparing the report.

184 B. In addition to reports from the office of public complaints, the inspector
185 general division director of the office of public complaints shall report to the county
186 council annually. The director shall electronically file the report by ~~((July))~~ June 1 of
187 each year with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an
188 electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff and the executive. The
189 inspector general division annual report shall provide an overview of activities performed
190 by the inspector general division during the prior calendar year, including, but not be
191 limited to:

192 1. An overview of inspections and investigations of suspected fraud, waste, and
193 abuse of county-administered moneys, including a summary of case outcomes; and

194 2. The status of the King County fraud, waste, and abuse central reporting
195 system established under K.C.C. 2.52.180, including any recommendations for reporting
196 system improvement provided by members of the public or county employees.

197 SECTION 6. Ordinance 15611, Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 2.75.030, are
198 hereby amended as follows:

199 A. The director shall be appointed by a majority of the council to implement and
200 manage the duties of the oversight office.

201 B. The director (~~((shall))~~) should be selected by the council through a nationwide
202 search through a merit-based selection process.

203 C. The selected director must pass a complete criminal background check before
204 confirmation.

205 D. The director shall serve for a term of four years(~~((7))~~) and until a successor is
206 appointed unless removed for cause at any time by a majority of the council, and shall be
207 considered for reappointment at the end of each term of office. The process for
208 reappointment consideration should begin within the three months before the expiration
209 of a term. If the position becomes vacant for any reason, including nonreappointment,
210 the council may appoint by motion an interim director until a successor is appointed.

211 E. The director, consistent with the Organizational Motion of the council and
212 within the resources available or budgeted by appropriation, may employ staff or use the
213 services of consultants as may be necessary for conduct of the oversight office's duties.

214 SECTION 7. Ordinance 263, Article 5, Section 2, as amended, and K.C.C.
215 20.22.020, are hereby amended as follows:

216 A. The office of hearing examiner is created and shall act on behalf of the council
217 in considering and applying adopted county policies and regulations. The examiner shall
218 separate the application of regulatory controls from the legislative planning process,
219 protect, and promote the public and private interests of the community, and expand the
220 principles of fairness, due process, openness, and equity in public hearings.

221 B.1. The ~~((council shall appoint the))~~ hearing examiner ~~((to))~~ shall be appointed
222 by a majority of the council. The hearing examiner shall serve for a term of four years
223 and, unless removed for cause at any time by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds
224 majority of the council, and shall be considered for reappointment at the end of each term
225 of office. The process for reappointment consideration should begin within the three
226 months before the expiration of a term. If the position becomes vacant for any reason,
227 including nonreappointment, the council may appoint by motion an interim hearing
228 examiner.

229 2. The council may authorize the hearing examiner to hire a deputy examiner to
230 assist the hearing examiner with the powers and duties described in subsection D. of this
231 section.

232 3. The council may authorize the hearing examiner to create a roster of qualified
233 persons to serve as examiner pro tempore, with the powers and duties described in
234 subsection E. of this section.

235 C. Examiners shall be appointed solely based on their qualifications for the duties
236 of their offices and shall have such training or experience as will qualify them to conduct
237 administrative or quasi-judicial hearings on regulatory enactments and to discharge their
238 other functions. They shall not hold another appointive or elective public office or
239 position in county government except as authorized by the council by motion.

240 D. A deputy examiner shall assist the hearing examiner in performing the duties
241 conferred upon the hearing examiner by ordinance and, in the event of the absence or the
242 inability of the hearing examiner to act, has all the duties and powers of the hearing
243 examiner.

244 E. The hearing examiner may appoint an examiner pro tempore to a case from the
245 roster created in accordance with subsection B.3. of this section. Once appointed to a
246 case, an examiner pro tempore has the same duties and powers as the hearing examiner.

247 F. ~~((The hearing examiner may be removed from office for just cause at any time
248 by the affirmative vote of at least six members of the council.~~

249 G.)) Individual councilmembers, county officials, or any other persons, shall not
250 interfere with, or attempt to interfere with, the performance of the designated duties of the
251 examiner. The organization and administration of the office of hearing examiner shall be
252 sufficiently independent to assure that no interference or influence external to the office
253 shall adversely affect independent and objective review, decision making, and analysis by
254 the office.

255 SECTION 8. Ordinance 11502, Section 19, as amended, and K.C.C. 20.22.310,
256 are hereby amended as follows:

257 The office of the hearing examiner shall prepare an annual report to the council
258 detailing the length of time required for hearings in the previous year, categorized both
259 on average and by type of proceeding. The report shall provide commentary on office
260 operations and identify any need for clarification of county policy or regulations. The
261 office shall electronically file the report by ~~((March))~~ June 1 of each year with the clerk

262 of the council, who shall retain ((the original)) an electronic copy and provide an
263 electronic copy to all councilmembers.

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Sarah Perry, Chair

ATTEST:

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, ____.

Girmay Zahilay, County Executive

Attachments: None



Metropolitan King County Council Staff Report

Committee:	Employment and Administration		
Proposed No.	2026-0277		
Agenda Item:	6	Analyst(s):	Miranda Leskinen and Nick Bowman

OVERVIEW

TOPIC: An Ordinance relating to legislative branch independent agencies.

LEGISLATION SUMMARY

Proposed Ordinance 2026-0277 would amend the following King County Code sections to make language regarding director-level appointments and reappointments, removal and succession processes; agency organization and administration independence; and reporting requirements consistent among the following legislative branch independent agencies:

- K.C.C. 2.20.010 (Auditor's Office)
- K.C.C. 2.52.020 and 2.52.030 (Office of Public Complaints)
- K.C.C. 2.75.030. (Office of Law Enforcement Oversight)
- K.C.C. 20.22.020 (Hearing Examiner's Office)

KEY ISSUES FROM THE ANALYSIS

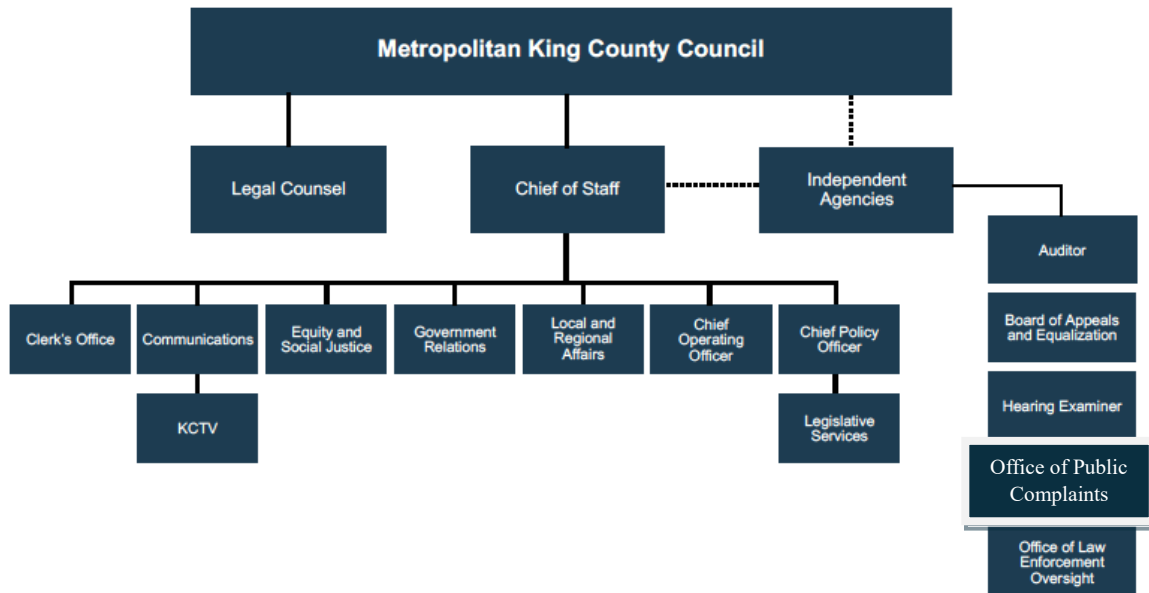
Staff have not identified key issues for this proposed ordinance, whose provisions pose a policy choice for the Council.

BACKGROUND & TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

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Legislative Branch Organization Structure. Figure 1 provides an illustrative summary of the organizational structure for the legislative branch of King County government.

Figure 1. King County Legislative Branch Organizational Chart¹



As shown in Figure 1, independent agencies within the legislative branch include the Office of Law Enforcement Oversight (OLEO), Office of Public Complaints, Hearing Examiner, Board of Appeals and Equalization, and Auditor.

ANALYSIS

Proposed Ordinance 2026-0277 would amend the following King County Code sections to make language consistent regarding director-level appointments and reappointments; removal and succession processes; agency organization and administration independence; and reporting requirements among the following legislative branch independent agencies:

- K.C.C. 2.20.010 (Auditor's Office)
- K.C.C. 2.52.020 and 2.52.030 (Office of Public Complaints)
- K.C.C. 2.75.030. (Office of Law Enforcement Oversight)
- K.C.C. 20.22.020 (Hearing Examiner's Office)

Table 1 provides a crosswalk summary of the proposed changes within these Code sections per the proposed ordinance.

¹ Please note the office name update for the Office of Public Complaints, per Ordinance 10202, is not yet reflected in the Council's organization motion, Attachment A to Motion 16264 or King County Code Chapter 2.52.

Table 1. Proposed Ordinance 2026-0277 Summary of Proposed Changes

Code Section	Current Provision/s	Proposed Change/s
2.20.010 Auditor	1. Auditor appointed by Council majority. 2. Four-year term. 3. "Shall" be selected through a nationwide search. 4. Removal for cause requires at least 6 Council votes. 5. Auditor program reports are due July 1 on even numbered years 6. NA	1. No change. 2. No change. 3. Change from "shall" to "should". 4. No change in practice (language change from at least 6 Council votes to "at least two-thirds majority of the Council"). 5. Program reports are due June 1 on even numbered years. 6. Add new language to specify succession process, including in the event of a vacancy, and timing consideration specificity for reappointments.
2.52.020 Office of Public Complaints	1. NA	1. Specify agency organization and administration independence consistent with current provisions for the Auditor and OLEO.
2.52.030 Office of Public Complaints (Division Directors)	1. Appointed by Council majority. 2. Five-year term. 3. Removal requires at least six Council votes upon determination of	1. No change. 2. Change to four-year term (only for appointments made on/after ordinance effective date). 3. Change to removal "for cause" with a two-thirds majority of the Council.

	incapacitation, neglect of duty, misconduct, or political activity. - Allows Council to appoint an interim division director if needed (e.g. in the event of vacancy/pending the appointment of a new director). - Division Director's annual reports are due March 1 and July 1 of each year.	- Replaces existing interim division director language with succession process language matching the Auditor, OLEO, and Hearing Examiner. - Division Director's annual reports are both due June 1 of each year.
2.75.030 Office of Law Enforcement Oversight (OLEO)	- Director appointed by Council majority. - Four-year term. "Shall" be selected through a nationwide search. - Removal for cause requires a majority of Council votes. - NA	- No change. - No change. - Change from "shall" to "should". - No change (King County Charter Section 265 requires removal for cause by a majority). - Add new language to specify succession process, including in the event of a vacancy, and timing consideration specificity for reappointments.
20.22.020 Hearing Examiner	- Current code reads "the Council shall appoint the Hearing Examiner." - Four-year term. - Removal requires at least six Council votes. - Removal for "just cause".	- Clarifies that the Hearing Examiner shall be appointed "by a majority of the Council". - No change. - No change in practice (language change from at least six Council votes to "at least two-thirds majority of the Council"). - Changes removal from "just cause" to "cause"; a lower standard.

	5. Specifies agency organization and administration independence. 6. Annual report is due March 1 of each year. 7. NA	5. Adjusts the phrasing to match the phrasing used for the Auditor and OLEO. 6. Annual report is due June 1 of each year. 7. Add new language to specify succession process, including in the event of a vacancy, and timing consideration specificity for reappointments.
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ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Proposed Ordinance 2026-0277