



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

Motion 16839

Proposed No. 2025-0154.1

Sponsors Zahilay

1 A MOTION approving the job description for the position
2 of hearing examiner.

3 WHEREAS, Section 896 of the King County Charter states that the King County
4 council shall by ordinance provide the opportunity for an administrative appeal to a hearing
5 examiner for appeals regarding the granting or rejecting of an application for zoning
6 variance or conditional use permit, and

7 WHEREAS, K.C.C. 20.22.020 directs the King County council to appoint a hearing
8 examiner for a term of four years, and

9 WHEREAS, OR- 0230 of the council's organizational motion compilation requires that
10 the employment and administration committee to recommend all job descriptions within
11 the legislative branch of King County to the council for approval, and

12 WHEREAS, the King County council seeks to update the job descriptions for the
13 position of hearing examiner;

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

Motion 16839

15 The job description of the hearing examiner is approved as Attachment A to this
16 motion.

Motion 16839 was introduced on 5/27/2025 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 7/8/2025, by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Balducci, Barón, Dembowski, Dunn, Perry, Quinn, von
Reichbauer and Zahilay
Excused: 1 - Mosqueda

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Signed by:

Girmay Zahilay

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Girmay Zahilay, Chair

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:

Melani Hay

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Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: A. Hearing Examiner Position Description 2025

Metropolitan King County Council

Position Description

Motion 16839



King County

Position: Hearing Examiner	FLSA: salaried, overtime exempt
Department: Hearing Examiner's Office	Salary Grade: 134
Council Approved:	

Summary

The King County Hearing Examiner leads an independent agency responsible for conducting fair, efficient, and inclusive quasi-judicial administrative hearings on a variety of matters. Under the King County Code, the Hearing Examiner's Office has jurisdiction over 80 distinct subject areas—examples include animal control, public health, for-hire transportation, and land use, including permitting, preliminary plats, and code enforcement. In addition to drafting and issuing written decisions, orders, and recommendations for the office, the Examiner also supports the King County Personnel Board in producing its written opinions.

The Hearing Examiner supervises a staff of three full-time employees and several pro tem examiners, in addition to managing the agency's budget. This is a salaried, at-will position that reports to the Chair of the King County Council, with a dotted-line relationship to the Council's Chief of Staff.

Distinguishing Career Features

The Hearing Examiner is appointed by the King County Council for a renewable term under the guidelines set forth in [King County Code Section 20.22](#). This is a high-profile position with significant autonomy and independence, requiring a fair-minded, principled professional with experience as an attorney, administrative law judge, or other role that requires adjudication in compliance with the law. The incumbent must also be a strong people manager and administrator who can apply an equity and social justice lens to their work.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Hearings and Proceedings

- Manage the scheduling, preparation, and conduct of public hearings on a variety of land use applications, appeals from agency decisions, and other administrative matters. Ensure that hearings are timely scheduled and that notices and other communications are sent within appropriate deadlines.
- Conduct proceedings including hearings and conferences. Prepare reports of hearings conducted that include written findings of fact and conclusions, final decisions, or recommendations for Council action.
- Assign cases to pro tem examiners and monitor status throughout all stages of the hearing process; ensure that pro tem decisions are legally sound and comply with applicable laws and standards.
- Coordinate with Hearing Examiner staff to manage case files, ensuring that hearing exhibits and official documents are properly included, identified, and maintained as a

permanent record.

- Maintain poise and empathy during stressful and emotional situations involving adversarial hearings, including viewing exhibits and listening to testimony that may be graphic or distressing.

Information and Policy

- Submit complete case file packets and conduct briefings for the Council on decisions that are being appealed to the Council or higher legal authority. Prepare and deliver summaries, respond to questions, and advise on issues to consider.
- Review and periodically revise procedural rules and guides for the conduct of public hearings. Advise the Council on areas where County policy can be revised, clarified, and strengthened; work with Council to propose or revise legislation as appropriate. Prepare periodic reports of office activity and outcomes, and provide briefings to Council as needed.
- Work with Council staff, County agencies, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, and other interested parties to as needed to research, clarify, and convey information; periodically provide public briefings at Council meetings.
- Initiate and respond to requests for information on official policies and procedures dealing with the conduct of examiner hearings. Ensure that the Hearing Examiner's Office complies with all Public Records Act requirements.
- Establish physical and electronic information storage and retrieval systems to support hearing activity and decisions.

Personnel and Office Management

- Manage and support Hearing Examiner staff by setting clear expectations and short- and long-term goals; provide regular coaching and feedback; conduct periodic performance evaluations; and foster professional development.
- Work with the Council Chief of Staff and Chief Operating Officer to research and prepare budget proposals, including projecting staffing and material needs and costs. Present budget requests to the Council as needed and administer approved budgets.
- Periodically evaluate hearing procedures, including scheduling and decision-making processes. Consult with and seeks advice from other County agencies. Design and implements processes that make for efficient scheduling and handling of documents, and enhanced resources to enable faster hearings.
- Perform other duties as required to coordinate office functions with Council policies and procedures.

Qualifications

Knowledge and Skills

- Advanced knowledge of King County Code provisions; federal, state, and local laws; court decisions; and other legal requirements relevant to quasi-judicial administrative

hearings, including rules of evidence and procedure.

- Project management skills to organize and oversee complex assignments, implement policies and processes, and develop ideas from concept to completion.
- Understanding of the theory, principles, and practices involved with land use planning and implementation, land development processes, and related code.
- Advanced communication skills, including a strong command of the English language to write decisions, reports, and other documents that convey complex, sensitive issues in a thoughtful and accessible manner.
- Knowledge of the principles and practices associated with supervision, leadership style, team building, and performance management.
- Interpersonal communication skills and a high level of emotional intelligence to be able to work with others in difficult situations and manage conflict, employ lines of questioning for fact-finding, and deliver information in a variety of settings.
- Proficiency with a range of technology and applications related to a hybrid work environment: word processing and spreadsheet applications, databases, videoconferencing, cloud storage systems, etc.
- Appropriate math skills to prepare budgets, account for expenditures, and develop and interpret statistical and operating information.

Abilities

- Organize, facilitate, and execute a high volume of critical thinking and decision-making processes, including conducting research and analysis.
- Learn, interpret, and apply relevant sections of the King County Code, and local, state and federal legislation dealing with subject matter that comes before the Hearing Examiner's Office.
- Maintain order in hearings, remaining fair and impartial to all parties, and properly handle private and confidential communications; ability to de-escalate emotionally charged interactions and maintain decorum.
- Remain fair and impartial at all times, maintaining the ability to render decisions free from political or personal influence.
- Communicate and present information in a clear, concise, and accessible manner, both verbally and in writing.
- Develop and maintain positive, professional work relationships with diverse people, including staff, hearing participants, community members, councilmembers, county agencies, and others.
- Prioritize workload and manage competing needs and interests across the agency; manage a variable schedule.

Education and Experience

The successful candidate must have at a minimum any combination of education and experience

equivalent to the following:

- A Juris Doctor from an accredited law school—or the successful completion of a Law Clerk program—and be an active attorney with membership in good standing with the Washington State Bar;
- Five years of progressively responsible experience conducting or assisting with conducting administrative or other contested hearings, or experience adjudicating matters in areas applicable to the County’s hearing process.
- Three years of supervisory or program management experience.

Candidates who have experience with planning and land use issues such as land development processes, zoning, and permitting are preferred.

Licenses and Certificates

License to practice law in the State of Washington

Certificate Of Completion

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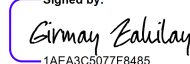
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Signer Events

Girmay Zahilay
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 Council Chair
 Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

Signature

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Melani Hay
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 Clerk of the Council
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Editor Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Agent Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Intermediary Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Certified Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
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Witness Events	Signature	Timestamp
Notary Events	Signature	Timestamp

Envelope Summary Events	Status	Timestamps
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Certified Delivered	Security Checked	7/9/2025 10:22:52 AM
Signing Complete	Security Checked	7/9/2025 10:22:58 AM
Completed	Security Checked	7/9/2025 10:22:58 AM
Payment Events	Status	Timestamps
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Unless you tell us otherwise in accordance with the procedures described herein, we will provide electronically to you through the DocuSign system all required notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to you during the course of our relationship with you. To reduce the chance of you inadvertently not receiving any notice or disclosure, we prefer to provide all of the required notices and disclosures to you by the same method and to the same address that you have given us. Thus, you can receive all the disclosures and notices electronically or in paper format through the paper mail delivery system. If you do not agree with this process, please let us know as described below. Please also see the paragraph immediately above that describes the consequences of your electing not to receive delivery of the notices and disclosures electronically from us.

How to contact King County-Department of 02:

You may contact us to let us know of your changes as to how we may contact you electronically, to request paper copies of certain information from us, and to withdraw your prior consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically as follows:

To contact us by email send messages to: cipriano.dacanay@kingcounty.gov

To advise King County-Department of 02 of your new email address

To let us know of a change in your email address where we should send notices and disclosures electronically to you, you must send an email message to us at cipriano.dacanay@kingcounty.gov and in the body of such request you must state: your previous email address, your new email address. We do not require any other information from you to change your email address.

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To request delivery from us of paper copies of the notices and disclosures previously provided by us to you electronically, you must send us an email to cipriano.dacanay@kingcounty.gov and in the body of such request you must state your email address, full name, mailing address, and telephone number. We will bill you for any fees at that time, if any.

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- Until or unless you notify King County-Department of 02 as described above, you consent to receive exclusively through electronic means all notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to you by King County-Department of 02 during the course of your relationship with King County-Department of 02.