



King County Elections 2022

# Year in Review

**King County Elections (KCE) conducts accurate, secure, and accessible elections for the residents and registered voters of our county.**

Guided by values of accuracy, equity, integrity, service, teamwork, and transparency, the team at KCE is made up of state and nationally certified election administrators with many years of experience not only running vote-by-mail elections but setting the gold standard in vote-by-mail elections.

Nationally recognized for innovation, efficiency, outreach, and expanding opportunities for election observation, KCE strives to be a leader in providing inclusive elections.

## Our Values



### Accuracy

We rigorously check and re-check every step of the process - as many times as necessary. We are unwavering in our commitment to no voter left behind.



### Equity

We believe that democracy works best when all voices are heard. We proactively work to remove barriers to ensure all voters can meaningfully participate in our elections.



### Integrity

We bring honesty and integrity to everything we do. We are unshakable in our ethics and do the right thing no matter what.



### Service

We recognize that our responsibility to the public and to each other goes beyond simply administering elections. We readily go above and beyond to solve problems, share our knowledge and experiences, and bring the mission and vision of King County Elections to life.



### Teamwork

We are better together. We step up for other teams and teammates without hesitation.



### Transparency

We believe in radical transparency. We intentionally share our wins and own our mistakes - even when it's not easy. Our elections are observable and understandable to our voters.



## Dear Friends,

I've worked for more than two decades as an election administrator here in King County, and I have never experienced a year like 2022.

It is unmistakable that the elections landscape has changed and twisted dramatically since 2020. Blatant mis- and disinformation, conspiracy theories, and threats against election workers abound.

There is a small but very vocal cadre of folks determined to prove a false reality regardless of the clear evidence of election integrity in front of them. It can be disheartening—at times even devastating—to have our competency, honesty, and values constantly being called into question.

Yet in the face of these challenges, the team here at King County Elections continues to remove barriers to voting. We continue to set the standard for what accurate, secure, and accessible elections look like. The democracy-driven team at KCE is made up of experienced election professionals, many of whom are state and nationally certified election administrators, who are also some of the best people I've ever met.

Together, we conduct transparent elections in full view of the public, both in person and online. Bipartisan and non-partisan observers are welcomed into the facility constantly while ballots are being processed. My team answers hundreds—maybe even thousands—of questions from observers, voters, and media with patience, a deep knowledge of election law and procedure, and an optimism and positivity that is unwavering.

The reality is that the work this team does every single day is incredible. In the pages that follow, we'll highlight a selection of that work, but please know that the work does not end with and is not limited by the words that can be contained in an annual report. This team continues to challenge itself, to rise to the occasion, and to push the envelope on how secure and accessible vote-by-mail elections can be. I'm proud to work with them, and I'm proud to share their work with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Wise". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie Wise

## Redistricted, re-precincted, and ready to vote

Every ten years, following the national Census, district boundaries are redrawn at all levels, ranging from Congressional to legislative to city council to school board districts. Processes and deadlines for redistricting vary depending on the jurisdiction. One aspect that does not change is the enormous amount of work that KCE's GIS team puts into getting every line right for our voters. Their diligence, attention to detail, and quality control ensure that every voter gets the correct ballot with the correct races, based on their address.

Voters in new-to-them districts found those contests on their ballots for the first time in the 2022 Primary and General elections. Ahead of those elections, our team put in hundreds of hours to balance each precinct's population and move lines, block by block. These precinct changes then are presented to and approved by the King County Council before going live with voters.

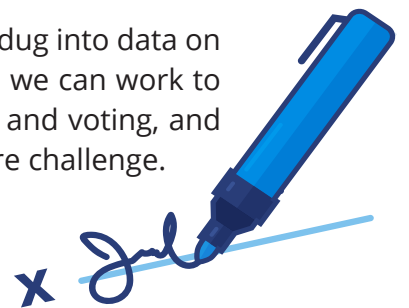
In the spring, KCE GIS launched a [Find Your District](#) tool where voters could search, using their address, and find their updated voting districts. KCE was the only place for King County voters to quickly and easily find their new districts. We shared information about this tool in the Local Voters' Pamphlet, on our website, and via social media.

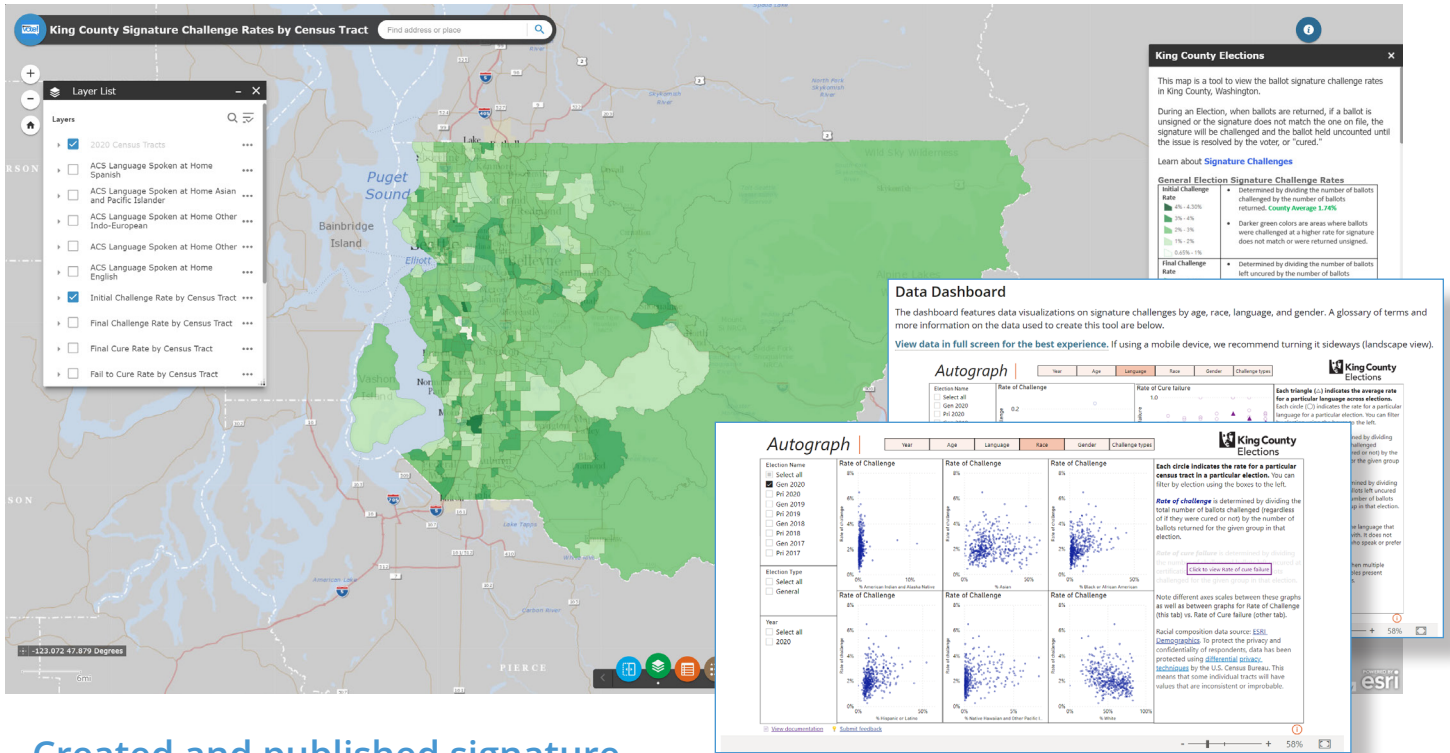
## Worked to make signatures less challenging

Under state law, signatures are the sole mechanism for verifying that the right person voted the right ballot. Trained staff verify every signature on every ballot in every election. Ballots with signatures that do not match the signature on the voter's registration record are "challenged," or held uncounted, until the voter resolves the issue by returning a simple form.

Approximately 0.8-1.5% of returned ballots go uncounted each election due to a signature challenge. Each ballot we receive represents a voter who took the time to make their selections, fill out their ballot, and return it. Each ballot represents a voter who wants their vote to count. We reach out to each voter with a challenged ballot by mail – and with phone and email, if the voter has provided us with that information. We want every voter to have a positive voting experience, and we want every ballot to count.

To help more voters have their ballots counted and voices heard, our team dug into data on signature challenges to learn more about whose ballots are challenged, so we can work to fix the why. We improved communication and education about signatures and voting, and helped thousands of voters update their signature so they can avoid a future challenge.





## Created and published signature challenge data dashboard & interactive maps

KCE partnered with KCIT and KC GIS to compile, visualize, and publish signature challenge rates via both a [data dashboard and interactive maps](#). These were published to the Elections website in the spring, making demographic information around signature challenges easy to access and understandable to interested voters, campaigns, community partners, media, and more.

Creation of these tools was an in-depth collaboration between King County departments. Disparate data sources were united to provide concise and easy-to-understand visualizations that illuminate the issues inherent in relying on a singular, and increasingly outdated, method of verification for all voters.

These visualizations of how our voters experience the signature challenge process confirmed what we already believed to be true — people of color, young people, and people with limited English proficiency experience higher signature challenge rates than other voters. Looking at the interactive maps, particularly in conjunction with KCE's [interactive voter registration and turnout maps](#), it's clear that communities with traditionally lower registration and turnout rates also consistently experience higher signature challenge rates.

With data in hand, we and others can now consider how to make signatures less challenging for our voters, and can focus our resources on the actions and areas that will have the biggest impact.

## Implemented anti-bias training for signature verification staff

Our staff are highly trained election administrators and signature verification staff receive training from the Washington State Patrol in signature verification. Over the last year, we've incorporated anti-bias training into our regular signature verification training to help staff identify and challenge their internal biases when comparing and verifying signatures.

KCE staff researched best practices for anti-bias training, with a focus on options used by government agencies. Ultimately, we incorporated an in-depth discussion of internal bias and discrimination. Signature verification staff has provided feedback that this training has been illuminating and got them thinking about what biases they may hold and how they can work against those biases to conduct an accurate and accessible election.

## Increased voter education about why signatures matter in elections

Knowledge is power. Knowing how signatures are used in elections and how verification happens can help a voter avoid a simple mistake that could leave their ballot uncounted. Knowing more about the process might also make voting less intimidating for first-time or sporadic voters.

With that in mind, we added information and messaging about signatures on social media and in printed voter education materials, media interviews, ballot packet materials, the Local Voters' Pamphlet, and even on the return envelope that voters sign before returning their ballot. As with all core voter education, this messaging is featured in English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese. In 2023, it will be expanded into our newly available languages of Russian and Somali as well.

We also provided in-depth training and talking points on signatures to our thirty Voter Education Fund (VEF) partners. These community partners reach thousands of voters every year, often in languages other than English. VEF partners reach voters in a variety of ways and engage with their community about voting in creative and culturally-appropriate ways, enabling them to serve as particularly trusted messengers.

*The Voter Education Fund is a first-of-its-kind, award-winning program that provides funds, training, and technical support for community-based organizations to do non-partisan voter education and voter registration in historically marginalized communities across King County.*

### Your signature matters. Make it match.

Your signature doesn't need to be fancy or even be legible, but it does have to match what's on file. If you're unsure of what's on file, a good place to look is your driver's license or state ID as we get many signatures from the Dept. of Licensing.

Keep your signature current to make sure we can count your ballot. You can learn more about your signature and why it matters at [kingcounty.gov/elections/signature](http://kingcounty.gov/elections/signature).

### Sign and date below (required)

Your signature must match what's on your voter registration record for your ballot to be counted.

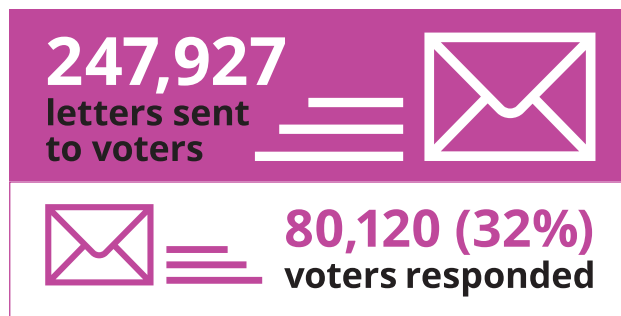
X \_\_\_\_\_ today's date / /

email or phone number (optional, in case there is an issue with your signature)

## Mailed nearly 250,000 signature update forms to voters to help avoid future challenges

Signatures change over time. Having an out-of-date signature on file can cause a signature challenge, and leave a vote uncounted. To help our voters get their current signature on file, we started reaching out proactively.

In May 2022, we began mailing signature update forms to registered voters to ask them to update the signature on file with us. This form arrives in bright pink, designed to catch the eye and inspire action, and was field tested by the KCE team to ensure that the messaging and layout made sense to regular voters.



After being translated into all languages we provide service in, these letters headed out in the mail in waves. Voters in zip codes with the highest signature challenge rates were mailed first, and we continue to work through zip codes with an above average signature challenge rate.

KCE paired the mailings with digital advertisements to build awareness ahead of the letter arriving in their mailboxes. In the same bright pink, digital banner ads were targeted to likely voters within the prioritized zip codes and linked to an informational page where voters could learn more about updating their signature and download the form. Delivered in English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese, these digital ads increased the return rate of signature update forms from approximately 20% to 32%, and were seen nearly one million times by voters in those target zip codes.

*The signature update mailing work is only possible because of the King County Jobs & Housing Program.*

*Data entry and quality control is behind every update on a voter's registration record here at KCE. As signature update forms come back from voters, those updates are made by staff hired through the Jobs & Housing Program. This program provides county jobs, housing support, connection with a case manager, career training, and a wide range of benefits to King County residents experiencing homelessness.*

*In 2022, KCE hired 9 new team members through the Jobs & Housing Program, expanding internal capacity and providing meaningful pathways to a career in election administration or public service.*



## Welcomed observers across the political spectrum

Radical transparency is a core value here at KCE. One important component of transparency is our longstanding, robust, bipartisan observer program. For several decades, we have trained observers from both major political parties, given them access to leads and supervisors for questions, and enabled them to observe every part of ballot processing from start to finish.

In 2021, we doubled the number of observers permitted on the secure ballot processing floor and expanded our training opportunities for those interested in observing both in the facility and out in the field at Vote Centers and ballot drop boxes. We were nationally recognized by our peers in election administration for that work.

This year, our work to build trust through transparency did not slow down. In the General election alone, we saw 316 unique observer visits. Throughout all elections, we easily eclipsed 500 observer visits. Each observer shift lasts two to four hours, depending on the observer and their schedule for the day. Observers received dedicated training with Ballot Processing staff as well as a tour of the facility before processing begins. While onsite, observers have complete access to supervisors and leads in each work area to ask questions in real-time.

This year we also welcomed non-partisan voters as official observers for the first time. In partnership with the League of Women Voters, voters who do not align themselves as members of either major political party joined our partisan observers.

KCE staff spent hundreds of hours answering observer questions and talking through processes from major to minute. We find that there is no better antidote to skepticism than seeing the process for yourself.



*"Having a robust observer program is imperative to educating the public about our election processes. I truly appreciate the folks that take time out of their days to come to our office and learn about the process. More often than not, this experience turns our observers into ambassadors. It's incredibly powerful for people to see and experience the process firsthand, especially with the current climate of misinformation online."*

*- Jerelyn Hampton, Ballot Processing Manager and Observer Coordinator*



## Launched text and email ballot alerts

For many years, voters have been able to track their ballots online using the My Voter Information tool on our website. In October 2022, KCE launched ballot alerts. Ballot alerts enable voters to sign up for text and/or email alerts about their ballot status from the time it is mailed to them to when it is counted by us.

Voters can opt-in to receive texts, emails, or both through their My Voter Information profile. Once subscribed, voters are set up to receive alerts for all future elections, and they can unsubscribe or update their contact information at any time.

Ballot alerts are currently available in English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese. In 2023, we will add Russian and Somali alerts as we begin to offer ballots and voting materials in those languages.

Ballot alerts mean voters no longer have to remember to login and check their ballot status. Alerts are delivered directly to them, sometimes within just minutes of their ballot moving through the process. Ballots received early in the voting period typically move through all steps of processing and verification within hours of being received at KCE Headquarters. This means a voter who drops their ballot in a drop box early in the voting period will likely receive two messages within the next day or two—that their ballot was received, and that their signature was verified and their ballot will be counted.

For our first election offering ballot alerts, we focused on four key messages:

### **BALLOT ALERT**

Your ballot has been mailed. If you do not receive it within 5 days, call KC Elections at 206-296-8683.

### **BALLOT ALERT**

KC Elections has received your ballot. Learn more about how ballots are verified and counted at [kce.wiki/process](https://kce.wiki/process).

### **BALLOT ALERT - ACTION NEEDED**

KC Elections was unable to verify your signature. To make sure your vote counts, go to [kce.wiki/TrackMyBallot](https://kce.wiki/TrackMyBallot)

### **BALLOT ALERT**

Your signature has been verified and your ballot will be counted. Thanks for voting! Visit [kce.wiki/results](https://kce.wiki/results) for election results after 8 pm on Election Day.





For voters, ballot alerts look pretty simple. They sign up, get text messages, and then don't have to think about it again until the next election, when they get the alert that their ballot has been mailed. Enabling that ease for voters meant a herculean effort on a short timeline for KCE.

Connecting the election management system with the outbound messaging (TMS) system in a way that both protects voter information and provides sufficient data to ensure the right messages get to the right voter was challenging. KCE has a dedicated IT team, including an applications developer responsible for building and maintaining My Voter Information. Our team worked closely with King County's email and text vendor, Granicus, to custom-build an API (application programming interface) that seamlessly connected both systems.

In elections—particularly in the current climate of misinformation—it's critical that the correct voter gets the correct message at the correct time. An errant message could serve to fuel distrust and doubts, a possibility our team was especially sensitive about. Before launch, we had to make certain that each message went to its intended recipient and accurately reflected where that voter's ballot stood in the process.

In the months leading up to launch, our team extensively tested each step of the process to ensure voters could sign up with ease and that they would get messages they were meant to receive. Alerts were tested in all languages to ensure that every voter could sign up for ballot alerts in their preferred language from Day 1.

Early data suggests ballot alerts are an effective tool to reach voters. In particular, the alert notifying voters that their signature was being challenged showed remarkable effectiveness. In the November 2022 General election, more than 80% of subscribed voters with a signature challenge took action to cure the challenge, which was almost double the cure rate for other voters. In the February 2023 Special election, we saw subscribed voters turn out at a rate of 65%, whereas overall turnout for the election was 34%. We will continue to track these metrics and more as our subscriber base grows and we build out additional messages.

## Advocated for language access

Every five years, KCE is required to produce a report that examines language access in our elections. For twenty years, KCE has provided ballots and voting materials in Chinese, as required under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. In 2012, we added Vietnamese under the same requirement. And in 2015, the King County Council passed Ordinance 18086, which added Spanish and Korean to our suite of full-service languages.

In the language access report for 2022, our analysis showed the greatest need for ballots and voting materials in Russian and Somali, based on demographic data, community interviews, translation requests at providers, and more.

Of course, our work didn't end at identifying the need. Director Wise advocated for the addition of these languages and requested their inclusion in both the supplemental and biennial budgets.

With support from the Executive's Office and strong support from Council, both additional languages were funded in both budgets. KCE hired staff, printed materials, and got to work expanding access to democracy for voters with limited English proficiency.

## Created candidate filing data dashboard

Each year, for only one week in May, candidates officially declare their candidacies and file for office. This five-day window is the only opportunity to add their name to the ballot, and they have only until the Monday after to withdraw. After that deadline has passed, the ballot is set.

In 2022, we launched a [candidate filing data dashboard](#) to give candidates, campaigns, media, and voters the ability to easily see how many candidates had filed, when they filed, and what offices lacked any candidates at all.

As we often receive questions from local media and community partners about historical patterns, we also compiled data around historical trends and overlaid current candidate filing data with previous candidate filing periods to make it easy for staff to answer those questions at a glance.

This dashboard is one of many data visualizations KCE has added in the past two years. We will continue to add more in years to come. Data helps tell the story of our elections and our community. We are proud to be able to put this data at the fingertips of anyone interested in learning more about the story of the candidates running to represent us at all levels of government.

투표하세요!

投票!

ivota!

bỏ phiếu!

Голосуй!

codeyn!

## Helped incarcerated voters make their voices heard

In 2022, the state legislature dedicated money in the budget for county election offices to do voter education and registration for voters who are currently incarcerated but otherwise eligible to vote.

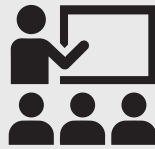
# In 2022



**90 detained voters registered**



**60+ returned surveys**



**8 teens at educational events partnered with DAJD and Seattle University**

In our state, as long as one is not serving a sentence of “total confinement” for a felony conviction, they are eligible to vote. Community custody status, legal fines and fees, and previous conviction status do not impact one’s right to vote, which means people held in county jails who are pre-trial or serving a misdemeanor sentence are eligible to vote from jail.

Our team went right to work, looking around the country at what other election offices are doing for incarcerated voters, coordinating with our colleagues at the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, and putting ideas into action.

In partnership with DAJD and with input from community partners, we produced a survey that was provided to detained voters when they were issued a bedroll. These surveys were specially designed to ensure the privacy of the voter by featuring self-adhesive and prepaid postage, ensuring that the voter would fill it out and seal it for mailing without the eyes of detention center staff on their answers.

From those surveys, we heard loud and clear that most detained voters know or think they are eligible to vote, but very few had heard of any resources or places to get information on how to register and fill out a ballot. We also saw on the survey a resounding need to have elections staff physically onsite in our county jails during an election.

In October, more than a dozen KCE staff members volunteered their Saturdays do in-person registration and ballot printing for voters detained in the downtown Seattle detention facility. We were able to get 90 people registered to vote, answer their questions, and issue them ballots right there on the spot. These voters were overwhelmingly grateful to our staff for being there and walking them through what they needed to do to cast their vote.

Additionally, through a partnership with the Seattle University School of Law, our team was able to provide an educational program to teens at the King County Youth & Family Justice Center. From why it's important to vote, to how to register, to the rules around who is eligible, we covered a variety of topics to help these young people understand their rights and feel prepared to vote when the time comes.

Most of the teens in attendance hadn't thought much about voting yet, but one said "I thought I lost my rights the minute I stepped foot in here. I didn't think I would ever get to vote or that voting would ever apply to me. Now I know it does."

That one workshop on voting may or may not turn those teens into lifelong voters. But it did give them the information they need to decide for themselves if and how to participate, rather than opting out by default because of not knowing their rights or the law.

We are looking to build on this work in 2023 and continue to have an in-person presence in our detention facilities during election times and in between.

## Learning from other jurisdictions.

*As we shaped our work here in King County, we sought out other jurisdictions who have worked in detention facilities to reach eligible voters.*

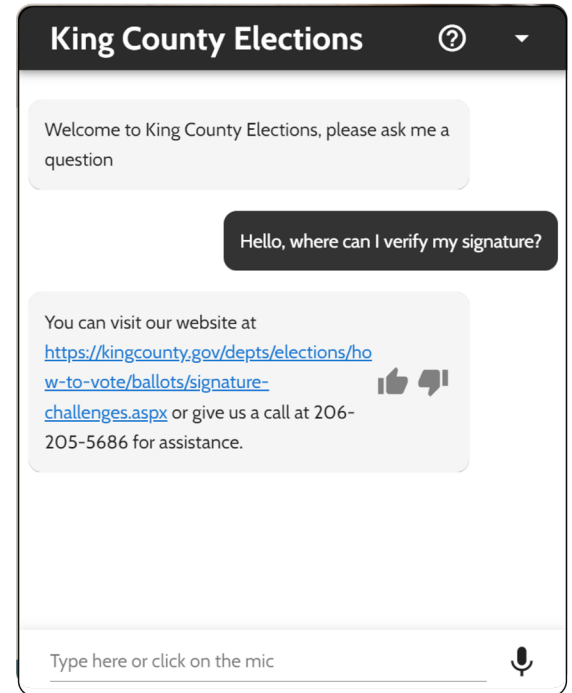
*The KCE team connected with the Pierce County Auditor's Office following the August Primary election to hear their experience with registering voters and issuing ballots in their county jail facility. We also heard from folks at Chicago Votes about their successful jail outreach programs and lessons learned over their years of work with detained voters. It was invaluable for our team to be able to ask questions, hear what hurdles they experienced, and understand more about the unique work that is election administration within jail facilities.*

## Added customer service chatbot to [kingcounty.gov/elections](https://kingcounty.gov/elections)

In each election, KCE receives hundreds, or even thousands, of questions from voters via phone and email. Most of these questions deal with the same topics: how to register to vote, how to get a replacement ballot, where ballot drop boxes are located, or how to check if their ballot has been received or counted.

In October 2022, KCE added a ChatBot feature to [kingcounty.gov/elections](https://kingcounty.gov/elections) to answer these simple questions and point voters to the resources they need online to register and vote.

ChatBot is pre-loaded with some of the most common questions encountered during and between elections and is available not only in English but also in Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese on the language-specific KCE webpages. The questions and answers are consistent across language and provide links to the relevant webpages in each language. This new feature helps voters get the information they need quickly and easily while reducing the number of calls and emails our team must respond to.



## Celebrated National Voter Registration Day with our pro-team partners

Every September, National Voter Registration Day is celebrated across the country as a day to highlight the importance of getting—and being—registered to vote ahead of the General election. While we often partner with various organizations to spread the word about National Voter Registration Day, this year we were especially excited to have the support and partnership of seven of Seattle’s professional sports teams.

KCE drafted a script and collaborated with teams to ensure a product we could all be proud of. On National Voter Registration Day, September 20, seven teams promoted the video and voter registration on their social media platforms to encourage all fans—no matter their team allegiance—to register to vote and get involved in their democracy.



[Watch the video here.](#)



## Registered new citizens at naturalization ceremonies

There is no better time to register to vote than on someone's very first day as a United States citizen. Voting is a habit that can last a lifetime, and registering new voters at their naturalization ceremonies helps build that habit and underscore the importance of weighing in on issues big and small.

Throughout the year, KCE staff attended full day naturalization ceremonies to register new voters and talk about the importance of voting and security of our elections. In addition to putting a friendly, human face on the institution of voting, these ceremonies provide an opportunity for KCE staff to answer questions, walk new voters through what they need to know to cast their ballots, and highlight our language access services.

This year we helped dozens of new voters get registered and find the tools they need to make their voices heard.



*KCE staff and community partners register newly naturalized United States citizens on July 4, 2022.*

## Served more than 5,000 voters on Election Day

During Primary and General elections, KCE operates seven Vote Center locations across the county to help voters get registered after the online voter registration deadline has passed, issue replacement ballots, and provide assistive voting devices for voters with disabilities.

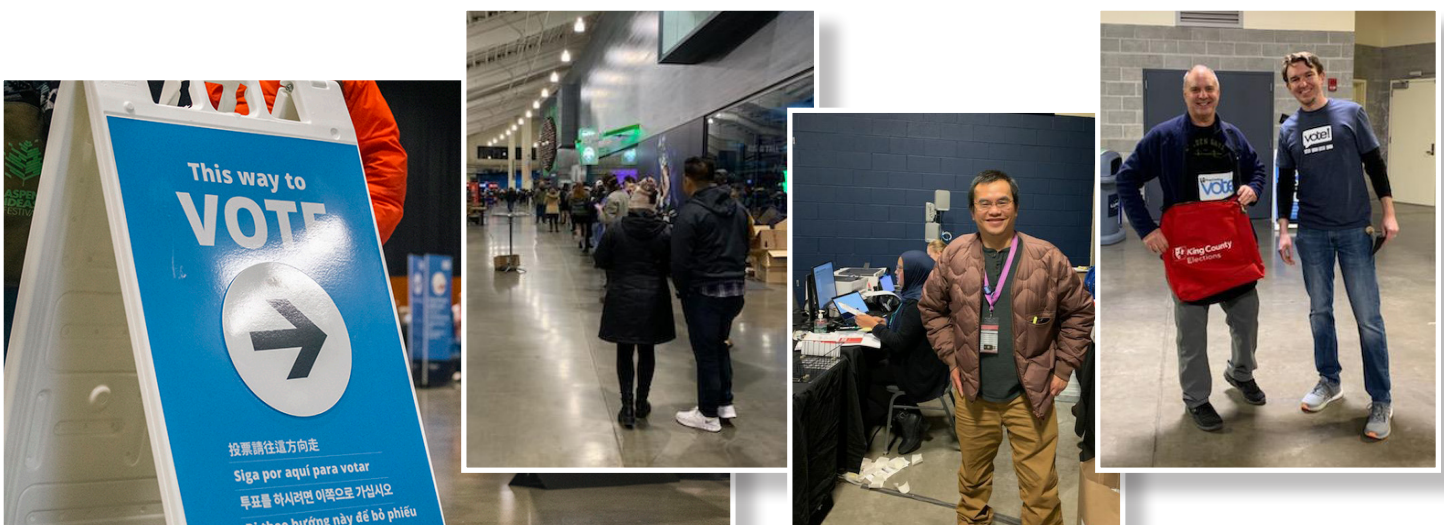
In November 2022, we saw thousands of voters on Election Day. Nearly 1,000 voters registered for the very first time on Election Day— young people and new King County residents lined up to make sure they could get their votes in and counted for the midterm election.

*"I led our team at the University of Washington Student Engagement Hub and it was so uplifting to see the nearly 600 voters who filtered in and out throughout the day. Students, neighbors, and UW staff all came by for help getting registered or getting their ballot.*

*The students were incredibly earnest and engaged. So many of them expressed their thanks for being there on campus and it was a great atmosphere! As a Husky myself, it made me really proud to see that culture of voting alive and well on campus."*

*– Angela Kubota Wolbert, Candidate & Jurisdiction Coordinator*

When last-minute voters showed up in droves, the entire KCE team met the challenge. Leadership and front-line staff alike deployed to Vote Centers and Student Engagement Hubs around the county to ensure each and every voter who was in line to vote at 8 p.m. sharp was able to make their voice heard.



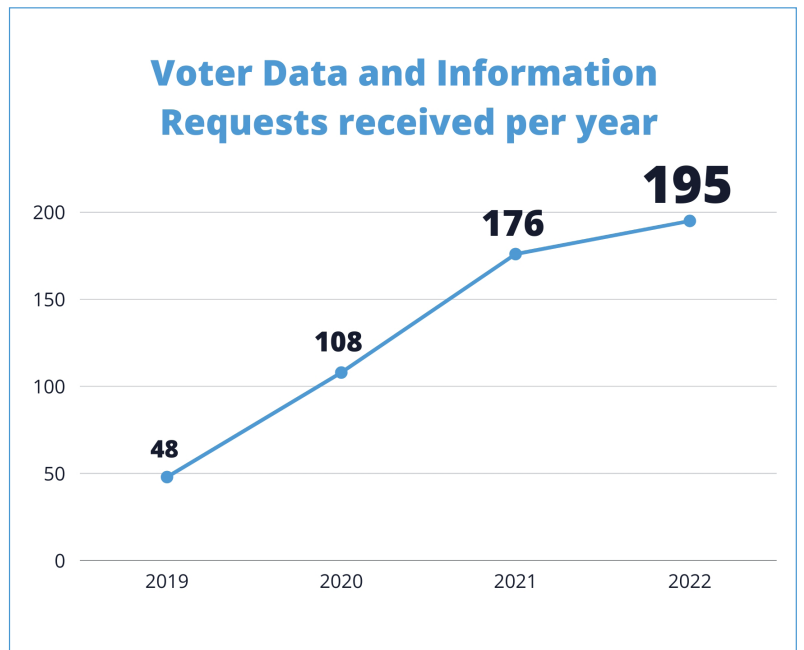
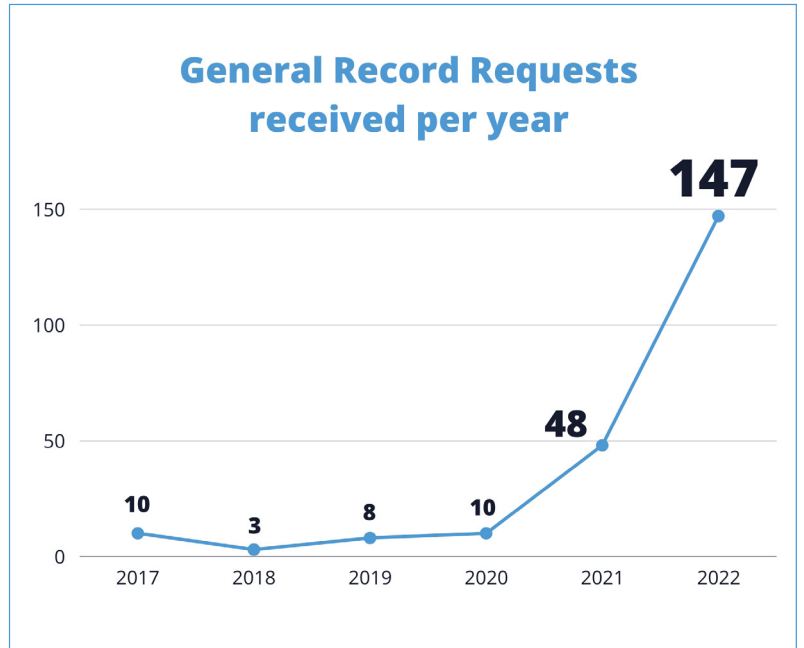
*Vote Centers were busy and staff kept a smile on their face until every voter was served.*

## Fielded a record number of public records requests

Prior to 2020, KCE typically received just a handful of public records requests a year. In 2022, we received well over a hundred. In addition to the sheer volume, these requests have become significantly more complicated and require far more legal consultation because they often include sensitive and legally protected information.

Our bill with the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office has more than doubled in the past two years, and this sustained increase in requests led KCE to bring on a new full-time staff member to coordinate these requests in accordance with both the law and our high customer service standards.

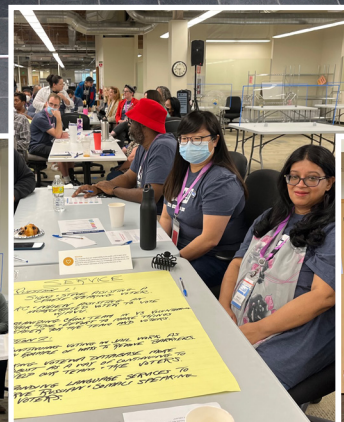
Access to public records is crucial. We've prioritized the resources to ensure that we can not only provide records in a timely manner but also explain what they mean and provide a level of customer service that is unmatched across the country.





## Together again

In September, our team gathered in person for a day of team-building at KCE Headquarters. It was the first time in a long time that the entire team had gathered in person, in one place, for a whole day. We spent the day together talking about our shared values and goals as an organization, diving into records management, and had some time to simply enjoy each other's company outside of the hustle and bustle of our daily work. Councilmember Girmay Zahilay also joined us to share his elections story and a few encouraging words with our staff.



## Led across the board

KCE is committed to removing barriers to voting. We know our work has a ripple effect on elections and democracy that can be felt across the country. When our values are combined with our exceptional ballot processing and operations teams, high level of customer service and community outreach, and tone-setting work in election communications and voter education, KCE cannot help but set the standard for accurate, secure, and accessible elections.

## Co-Chaired Legislative Committee for the Washington State Association of Auditors to protect and expand voting rights

Director Wise partnered with Auditor Skip Moore of Chelan County to lead the Auditors and Directors of Elections in bringing the voices of election administrators to Olympia. Under this leadership, the elections community united to advocate for increased protections to voter privacy and election security and operational changes to increase efficiency, and saw the inclusion of vital funding for enfranchising eligible voters in county jails in the state budget.

## Won the Guardian Award for exemplifying the Election Center's Principles and Standards of Conduct

Each year, the Election Center awards election offices across the country for their best practices and programs, as shared through their Professional Practice Paper program. The Election Center is the national association of election administrators, and these awards are particularly meaningful as they are judged by our colleagues working in elections around the United States.

Since the 2020 Presidential election, interest in observing election activities and ballot processing has grown exponentially. KCE has doubled the number of observers allowed on the ballot processing floor at one time, as well as provided in-person and virtual training for observers interested in watching ballot processing or observing at ballot drop boxes or Vote Centers.

We were honored to win this highly competitive award and be recognized for this vital work.



## Won the Election Center's Eagle Award for innovative use of technology

In addition to winning the Guardian Award, we also took home the Election Center's Eagle Award for innovative use of technology. We won this award the previous year for our custom-built app suite that provides real-time routing and tracking of our ballot collection teams while out in the field. In 2022, we won for the virtual processes and trainings we built during the pandemic and have continued due to their success and efficiency.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, many trainings and work sessions were held in-person. With the expanded use of online platforms and tools, the KCE team has implemented, and then improved upon, everything from ballot and voters' pamphlet proofing to signature verification training, and more.



## Led statewide Washington Election Communicators workgroup

King County is one of the few counties in the state with a dedicated Communications team in the Elections department. Most counties have no positions resourced for communications or outreach, though they, like we, receive more questions and scrutiny than ever. As the tide of misinformation grows, the need to communicate with voters proactively and consistently grows along with it.

With little existing infrastructure for communications in the elections arena, the KCE team stepped in to lead a workgroup for counties to come talk through hot topics, coordinate talking points on trending issues, and share resources to create more consistency and more support for election administrators across the state.

Particularly in smaller counties, where Elections staff number two or three for the entire breadth of election tasks, technical experts in elections are often left to figure out how to communicate about the work effectively in the face of misinformation and baseless accusations. Through this workgroup, we sought to create a resource and a place to learn. Auditors, election managers, and communications staff came together to share insights, walk through possible crisis scenarios, and share tips on working with local media.

The benefits were quickly apparent. We saw our colleagues around the state engage with local media more than ever, creatively assist voters on social media and out in the community, and we saw more proactive efforts toward transparency when issues arose. The Communicators workgroup built bridges between counties across the state to reach out, ask questions, and talk to each other about how we talk to voters.

We will continue to lead this work into 2023 and beyond and look forward on building on the group's success in the lead up to the 2024 Presidential election.

*"Having this forum to connect with my counterparts across the state has been invaluable. Elections are fast-paced, highly visible, and have many moving pieces, and it's important to get it right when we're explaining how they're conducted. WA Election Communicators has surfaced issues as they begin to pop up in other places, which has only allowed our team to be even more prepared when those very same questions come from our voters."*

*- Halei Watkins, Communications Officer*

## Served on the VoteWA Advisory Board and Executive Steering Committee

VoteWA is the election management and voter registration system based at the Secretary of State's Office and which all counties in the state use to manage voter rolls and administer elections. The system was launched in 2019 and our KCE team continues to be hands-on and engaged with VoteWA to ensure that the system works well for us and our voters.

As the largest county in the state, KCE is often able to illuminate bugs or escalate issues that only emerge at the level of processing our team does every single day. Our team is diligent in reporting those bugs and issues, testing fixes in partnership with the Secretary of State's Office, and talking through ways to improve the system for both voters and election administrators alike.

## Shared best practices with colleagues and partners across the country

As more and more election offices scale up their vote-by-mail systems, many have looked to King County as a model. With more than a decade of experience in vote-by-mail, KCE has seen it all when it comes to vote-by-mail. More than happy to share our expertise, Director Julie Wise and other members of the team presented at conferences, on webinars, and on panels throughout the year.

From talking about how we secure our elections to crisis and contingency planning to new innovations in election accessibility, KCE shares best practices, lessons learned, and templates to help democracy thrive not just here at home, but across the country.



*KCE staff presented best practices to colleagues across the country and toured the Denver Elections facility to learn about their use of 3D printing technology.*

## Building on our success

In 2023, we look forward to providing ballots and voting materials in Russian and Somali for the first time, building on our work to expand voting access to incarcerated voters, and welcoming a new cohort to our award-winning Voter Education Fund (VEF).

We will host virtual candidate workshops to walk potential candidates through the dates, deadlines, and requirements of running for office in King County. Partnering with the City of Seattle and the Public Disclosure Commission, these workshops will also feature presentations about campaign finance rules and the City's Democracy Voucher program.

We will expand our ballot alerts program to include more messages and reminders to voters, in more languages, and we will grow our subscriber base.

We will continue our work to make signatures less challenging for voters through our signature update mailings and expanded education. We will also explore innovative solutions with our voters, community partners, and other election administrators across the state.

Our ballot processing team will continue to set the standard in this country for accurate and accountable elections. We reconcile down to the ballot every single day during an election and are at nearly 30 consecutive elections without a single discrepancy. We will continue to open our doors to observers, welcome them in, answer their questions, and build trust.

Our Voter Services team will undoubtedly answer thousands of phone calls and emails from voters of all walks of life, while maintaining accurate and precise voter rolls. Through our state's partnership with the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), we will compare data from sources across the country to ensure each and voter record is up-to-date to ensure that every voter gets the right ballot at the right time.

We will combat misinformation by providing reliable and accessible information about how elections are run, and what voters need to know to make their voices heard.

We will also conduct accurate, secure, and accessible elections for our 1.4 million registered voters and 190+ jurisdictions. We expect to see well over 600 candidates file for office in King County in May 2023 and are well into planning for the 2024 Presidential Primary and General elections.



# Voter turnout

(total ballots returned / active registered voters)

## Appendix A

### 2022 General



### 2022 Primary



### 2021 General



### 2021 Primary



### 2020 General



### 2020 Primary



### 2019 General



### 2019 Primary



### 2018 General



### 2018 Primary



### 2017 General



### 2017 Primary



### 2016 General



### 2016 Primary



### 2015 General



### 2015 Primary



### 2014 General



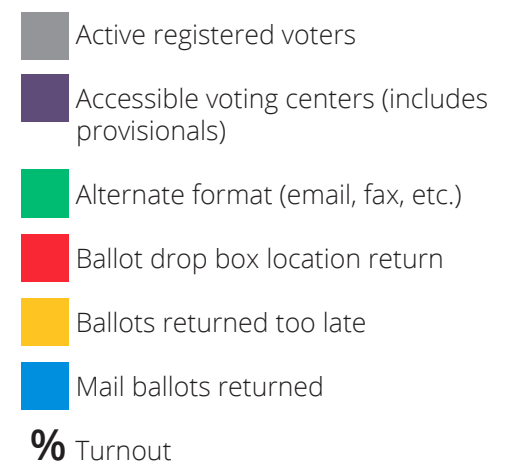
### 2014 Primary



### 2013 General



### 2013 Primary



The turnout calculation is based on the number of ballots returned divided by the number of active registered voters.

King County Elections Historical Turnout Information						Included in Total Ballots Counted		
Election	Active Registered Voters**	Turnout*	Total ballots returned	Total ballots counted	Mail ballots counted on Election Day (first report)	Provisional ballots issued (includes those issued by other counties)	Provisional ballots counted	Ballots cast in Accessible voting units (AVU)
General 2022	1,383,660	66%	991,641	896,022	440,474	0	0	11
Primary 2022	1,396,280	39%	547,605	538,144	291,558	0	0	5
Apr Special 2022	73,862	32%	23,651	23,123	19,333	0	0	0
Feb Special 2022	1,157,773	31%	362,172	356,876	238,243	2	0	1
Dec Recall 2021	77,579	54%	41,534	41,033	32,129	3	0	0
General 2021	1,400,321	44%	616,084	607,869	311,424	12	0	7
Primary 2021	1,411,796	35%	493,554	485,241	242,221	13	0	3
Apr Special 2021	66,596	37%	24,407	24,126	18,198	0	0	0
General 2020	1,420,898	87%	1,231,504	1,220,062	1,033,582	73	16	46
Primary 2020	1,360,706	56%	764,512	750,165	357,582	13	0	1,223
Presidential Primary 2020	1,346,414	56%	752,171	720,404	467,993	43	0	3,955
Feb Special 2020	371,382	33%	122,965	120,895	90,053	0	0	23
General 2019	1,330,308	49%	653,645	645,685	312,930	0	1	0
Primary 2019	1,320,580	35%	463,144	455,142	279,144	1	0	0
Apr Special 2019	209,898	34%	71,198	69,817	55,537	0	0	0
Feb Special 2019	560,181	32%	178,740	172,153	99,385	0	0	0
General 2018	1,294,184	76%	981,439	968,106	661,655	270	155	0
Primary 2018	1,283,855	43%	557,604	546,550	316,459	29	23	0
Apr Special 2018	112,253	30%	34,143	33,580	25,954	1	0	0
Feb Special 2018	732,461	32%	236,335	233,082	178,001	3	0	0
General 2017	1,279,345	43%	554,163	546,200	292,466	18	15	0
Primary 2017	1,295,691	34%	444,479	437,453	242,057	4	1	0
Apr Special 2017	8,725	53%	4,629	4,567	3,978	0	0	0
Feb Special 2017	63,706	40%	25,366	24,902	18,654	0	0	1
General 2016	1,288,327	82%	1,054,564	1,041,613	615,025	761	428	5,027
Primary 2016	1,240,245	37%	456,955	448,263	232,810	30	22	211
May Presidential Primary 2016	1,233,778	33%	406,298	390,743	317,724	49	31	124
Apr Special 2016	375,199	32%	121,287	119,287	98,091	5	0	14
Feb Special 2016	627,083	29%	179,706	176,617	146,101	2	1	28
General 2015	1,193,706	40%	474,363	467,608	246,090	47	34	274
Primary 2015	1,183,771	25%	295,181	289,596	204,938	12	7	98
Apr Special 2015	1,185,271	25%	299,172	293,372	250,437	1	1	24
Feb Special 2015	86,955	37%	31,755	31,090	26,053	1	0	5
General 2014	1,181,076	55%	644,192	631,020	331,228	130	85	760
Primary 2014	1,175,330	30%	351,927	344,583	266,539	12	5	86
Apr Special 2014	1,174,773	39%	454,197	445,190	363,788	0	0	121
Feb Special 2014	630,721	32%	199,192	195,646	160,447	0	0	9
General 2013	1,175,879	48%	562,549	551,665	262,790	41	35	358
Primary 2013	1,187,888	29%	347,020	340,236	244,529	4	4	106
Apr Special 2013	103,028	29%	29,480	28,974	25,642	0	0	0
Feb Special 2013	414,028	33%	136,706	136,706	134,116	0	0	16
Jun Recall 2013	2,947	50%	1,476	1,476	1,453	0	0	0



## Voters verified with voting

Election	Mail voters verified as voting	Total voters verified	Active registered voters	% of voters verified
November 8, 2022	896,149	896,149	1,383,660	65%
August 2, 2022	538,187	538,187	1,396,280	39%
April 26, 2022	23,124	23,124	73,862	31%
February 8, 2022	356,919	356,919	1,157,773	31%
December Recall 2021	41,040	41,040	77,579	54%
November General 2021	607,936	607,936	1,400,321	44%
August Primary 2021	485,302	485,302	1,411,796	35%
April Special 2021	24,129	24,129	66,596	37%
November 3, 2020	1,220,062	1,220,062	1,420,898	87%
August 4, 2020	764,512	764,512	1,360,706	56%
March 10, 2020	720,404	720,404	1,346,414	56%
February 11, 2020	122,965	122,965	371,382	33%
November 5, 2019	645,730	645,730	1,330,308	49%
August 6, 2019	455,183	455,183	1,320,580	34%
April 23, 2019	69,827	69,827	209,828	33%
February 12, 2019	172,170	172,170	560,739	31%
November 6, 2018	968,206	968,206	1,294,184	75%
August 7, 2018	546,608	546,608	1,283,855	43%
April 24, 2018	33,585	33,585	112,253	30%
February 13, 2018	233,106	233,106	732,461	32%
November 7, 2017	546,219	546,234	1,279,345	43%
August 1, 2017	437,498	437,499	1,295,691	34%
April 25, 2017	4,567	4,567	8,725	52%
February 14, 2017	24,908	24,909	63,706	39%
November 8, 2016	1,041,671	1,041,671	1,288,327	81%
August 2, 2016	448,263	448,263	1,240,245	36%
May 24, 2016	395,389	395,389	1,233,778	32%
April 24, 2016	119,314	119,314	375,199	32%
February 9, 2016	176,633	176,633	627,083	28%
November 3, 2015	467,625	467,625	1,193,706	39%
August 4, 2015	289,620	289,620	1,183,771	24%
April 28, 2015	293,397	293,397	1,185,271	25%
February 10, 2015	31,091	31,091	86,955	36%
November 4, 2014	631,046	631,046	1,181,076	53%
August 5, 2014	344,606	344,606	1,175,330	29%
April 22, 2014	445,224	445,224	1,174,773	38%
February 11, 2014	195,478	195,478	630,721	31%
November 5, 2013	551,712	551,712	1,175,879	47%
August 6, 2013	340,270	340,270	1,187,888	29%
June 25, 2013	1,453	1,453	3,000	48%
April 23, 2013	28,976	28,976	103,028	28%
February 12, 2013	134,126	134,126	414,028	32%

## Signature challenges 2012 - 2021

Election	Challenged and cured	Challenged and not cured	Total challenged	Total ballots returned	% challenged (total challenged / total ballots returned)	% cured (challenged and cured / total challenged)	% not cured (challenged and not cured / total challenged)	Total not cured (challenged and not cured / total ballots returned)
November 8, 2022	8,304	12,663	20,967	991,641	2.11%	39.61%	60.39%	1.28%
August 2, 2022	4,527	4,669	9,196	547,605	1.68%	49.23%	50.77%	0.85%
April 26, 2022	180	244	424	23,651	1.79%	42.45%	57.55%	1.03%
February 8, 2022	2,046	2,617	4,663	362,172	1.28%	43.88%	56.12%	0.72%
December Recall 2021	501	319	820	41,534	1.97%	61.1%	39.90%	0.77%
November General 2021	3,482	3,870	7,352	29480	1.19%	47.36%	33.85%	0.59%
August Primary 2021	3524	3,606	7,130	1476	1.44%	49.42%	38.24%	0.88%
April Special 2021	217	130	347	347020	1.42%	62.54%	32.96%	0.73%
November 3, 2020	10967	10505	21472	562549	1.74%	51.08%	38.06%	0.83%
August 4, 2020	5376	6870	12246	199192	1.60%	43.9%	39.15%	0.86%
March 10, 2020	18848	20509	39357	454197	5.23%	47.89%	43.63%	1.03%
February 11, 2020	915	989	1904	351927	1.55%	48.06%	37.91%	0.83%
November 5, 2019	2,484	3,067	5,551	644192	0.85%	44.75%	47.34%	1.07%
August 6, 2019	1,863	2,213	4,076	31755	0.88%	45.71%	45.15%	0.97%
April 23, 2019	353	419	772	299172	1.08%	45.73%	36.31%	0.47%
February 12, 2019	462	1,046	1,508	295181	0.84%	30.64%	47.41%	0.51%
November 6, 2018	4572	9053	13625	474363	1.39%	33.56%	42.92%	0.44%
August 7, 2018	2033	4400	6433	179706	1.15%	31.6%	49.36%	0.47%
April 24, 2018	228	329	557	121287	1.63%	40.93%	47.99%	0.39%
February 13, 2018	928	1521	2449	456955	1.04%	37.89%	44.57%	0.28%
November 7, 2017	2450	3712	6162	1054564	1.11%	39.76%	61.70%	0.83%
August 1, 2017	2107	2479	4586	25366	1.03%	45.94%	54.07%	0.97%
April 25, 2017	29	31	60	4629	1.30%	48.33%	51.67%	0.67%
February 14, 2017	209	246	455	444479	1.79%	45.93%	54.06%	0.56%
November 8, 2016	5413	8721	14134	554163	1.34%	38.3%	60.24%	0.67%
August 2, 2016	1592	1280	2872	236,335	0.63%	55.43%	62.11%	0.64%
April 24, 2016	517	477	994	34,143	0.82%	52.01%	59.07%	0.96%
February 9, 2016	874	852	1726	557,604	0.96%	50.64%	68.40%	0.79%
November 3, 2015	2803	2108	4911	981,439	1.04%	57.08%	66.44%	0.92%
August 4, 2015	1685	1519	3204	178,740	1.09%	52.59%	69.36%	0.59%
April 28, 2015	2457	1401	3858	71,198	1.29%	63.69%	54.27%	0.59%
February 10, 2015	373	307	680	463,144	2.14%	54.85%	54.29%	0.48%
November 4, 2014	7668	6892	14560	653,645	2.26%	52.66%	55.25%	0.47%
August 5, 2014	4806	2934	7740	122945	2.20%	62.09%	51.94%	0.80%
April 22, 2014	6050	4683	10733	751919	2.36%	56.37%	52.11%	2.73%
February 11, 2014	2670	1718	4388	764288	2.20%	60.85%	56.10%	0.90%
November 5, 2013	7619	4682	12301	1231064	2.19%	61.94%	48.92%	0.85%
August 6, 2013	5187	2550	7737	24,407	2.23%	67.04%	37.46%	0.53%
June 25, 2013	21	13	34	493,554	2.30%	61.76%	50.58%	0.73%
April 23, 2013	340	174	514	616,084	1.74%	66.15%	52.64%	0.63%
February 12, 2013	1590	942	2532	41,534	1.85%	62.8%	39.90%	0.77%

# King County Elections

## Historical Election Cost Allocations

Sum of Total										
Cost Category	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Administration	3,664,846	3,440,937	3,246,677	4,864,309	4,747,858	4,747,858	4,177,756	3,476,526	6,379,953	3,051,229
Advertising	34,578	95,767	53,820	347,142	188,304	188,304	164,028	293,634	284,523	348,855
Central Cost	3,918,668	3,790,386	3,388,199	350,925	3,282,084	3,282,084	1,720,616	1,265,295	1,690,888	2,919,686
Postage	1,154,899	752,900	712,452	600,745	919,032	919,032	600,325	444,008	527,280	350,587
Printing and Binding	4,922,254	2,726,330	4,323,613	2,913,160	2,872,808	2,872,808	2,759,974	1,601,188	2,714,159	2,130,565
Supplies, Repairs & Misc.	915,336	760,357	866,398	740,846	479,854	479,854	1,696,522	1,188,514	690,578	182,568
Transportation	30,294	8,085	9,783	9,180	15,917	15,917	54,546	22,481	13,888	3,785
Wages, Temporary Help, Benefits	2,583,702	1,725,284	3,477,430	1,699,938	1,906,644	1,906,644	3,727,119	1,179,404	1,644,397	4,562,024
Capital Cost Recovery	94,769	102,179	106,547	0	75,974	75,974	118,258	87,089	83,011	108,213
County Support	662,201	643,058	665,560	1,729,897	635,834	635,834	698,660	79,619	86,437	43,794
Overhead										
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>17,981,546</b>	<b>14,045,283</b>	<b>16,850,478</b>	<b>13,256,141</b>	<b>15,124,309</b>	<b>13,110,457</b>	<b>15,717,803</b>	<b>9,637,759</b>	<b>14,115,864</b>	<b>14,445,750</b>

Remove building lease payments:	0	0	0	0	0	(1,430,000)	(2,430,000)	(1,430,000)	(2,430,000)	(1,430,000)
<b>Comparative Adjusted Total:</b>	<b>17,981,546</b>	<b>14,045,283</b>	<b>16,850,478</b>	<b>13,256,141</b>	<b>15,124,309</b>	<b>11,680,457</b>	<b>13,287,803</b>	<b>8,207,759</b>	<b>11,685,864</b>	<b>13,015,750</b>

### Comments:

2016: Includes the Presidential Primary election, which increased total cost.

2017: Building lease payments were absorbed into the department's square footage central cost rates.

2016 to 2018: Cost increases due to State mandated and Council sponsored requirements for ballot drop box increases, pre paid postage for returned ballots, and outreach to community based organizations.

2018: General election experienced voter turnout similar to a presidential election, and therefore increased expense.

2019: Increased temporary labor compared to previous odd year elections due to implementation of Statewide VoteWA project.

2020: Includes the Presidential Primary election, which increased total cost . No April

2021: No February election. Recall election in December (City of Seattle Council District No. 3).