



Prospective City Council Candidate Workshop

Please Note: Meeting will be recorded

April 24, 2025 | 5:00 pm

Join in person:

Mercer Island Community & Event Center,
Room 104 –
8236 SE 24th Street, Mercer Island, WA 98040

Join via Zoom: [Zoom link](#)

Meeting ID: 826 6270 4720; Passcode: 125906

Dial by your location: (253) 215-8782

AGENDA

Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review

Candidate Resources

- www.mercerisland.gov/citycouncil/page/serving-city-council
- www.kingcounty.gov/depts/elections/for-candidates.aspx
- www.pdc.wa.gov/learn/new-candidates

Council-Manager Form of Government

- City Manager as the Only Appointed Official
- International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Code of Ethics
- Code of Ethics for Municipal Officers (RCW Chapter 42.23)

Councilmember Commitment

- Compensation (MICC 3.42)
- Filing for Office
- Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) Filing

Councilmember Role & Responsibilities

- Meeting Commitment
- Councilmember Workload

Wrap-up

- Q&A
- Information Resources:
 - Council Candidate Orientation – June 2025 date to be determined
 - Council-Elect Orientation – December 2025, date to be determined
 - City Website <https://www.mercerisland.gov/>
- Staff:
 - Jessi Bon, City Manager (citymanager@mercerisland.gov)
 - Ali Spietz, Chief of Administration (ali.spietz@mercerisland.gov)
 - Andrea Larson, City Clerk (cityclerk@mercerisland.gov)

Serving on the City Council

Councilmember?

A candidate for City Council must be a:

- Resident of Mercer Island for at least one year
- Registered voter in Mercer Island *(to register to vote, you must be a citizen of the United States, a legal resident of Washington State and at least 18 years old by Election Day)*

Neither a Councilmember nor his/her spouse or interdependent family members may be employed by the City, except when the Councilmember's spouse was employed by the City before the election or appointment to the Council.

What are the primary election requirements?

Candidates who meet the legal qualifications above must file a Declaration of Candidacy with King County Elections within the filing period in May. Filing fees or filing fee petitions must accompany the Declaration of Candidacy at the time of filing. The filing fee is based on the salary in effect at the time of filing. The general election is in November, but the Primary Election Day is in August. If no more than two people file for a position, there is no primary election for that position.

What are the November election procedures?

Councilmembers are elected by registered voters of the City. Newly elected Councilmembers take office at the first Council meeting of the next year (following certification of election results by the King County Elections Officer).

What is the purpose of Council position numbers?

Washington State election law require that if more than one position with the same name (Councilmember) and district number (Mercer Island) will be voted upon during an election, the positions to be filled shall be designated by number. This means that candidates must file for a specific position on the Mercer Island City Council. Positions 1, 3, 5, and 7 are on the ballot in the same year and positions 2, 4, and 6 are on the same ballot two years later.

How often does the City Council meet?

Regular Council meetings are currently held the first and third Tuesday of each month at 5:00 pm. Council meetings are held in a hybrid format in the Slater Room Council Chambers at the Mercer Island Community & Event Center (8236 SE 24th Street, Mercer Island, WA 98040) and using Zoom. If a Study Session is needed, it is scheduled at the start of the meeting at 5 pm and Special Meetings are called as needed. The meeting schedule and start-times are subject to change. The Council also meets for annual Planning Sessions for goal setting and long-range planning purposes. These are usually held over a weekend, often starting on Friday afternoon and all day Saturday.

What time commitment is required?

The duties of a Councilmember involve an average minimum commitment of 30-40 hours per month for preparation, participation, and attendance at meetings (regular and special City Council meetings, Council subcommittee meetings, City board and commission meetings, community meetings and committee meetings for regional appointments). Prospective candidates are encouraged to contact a current Councilmember to ask what the experience is like and what is involved.

How long is a Councilmember's term?

Councilmembers are elected to a term of four years.

How are vacancies filled when a Councilmember leaves prior to the end of his or her term?

In case of a vacancy, the remaining Councilmembers will appoint someone to fill the vacancy until the next regularly scheduled election pursuant to [RCW 42.12.070](#) and as outlined in the City Council Rules of Procedure. The Council will publish a notice of the vacancy, the procedure by which the vacancy will be filled, and the application form on the City's website and distribute the information through other media channels. Interviews of candidates will take place during a meeting open to the public.

How are the Mayor and Deputy Mayor elected? What are the roles of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor?

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are elected from among the Councilmembers for a two-year term. At the first Council meeting of the even calendar years, the City Clerk will entertain a motion for "nominations" for a Councilmember to serve as Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Approval is by majority vote of Council members present. The Mayor presides at all Council meetings, votes as a Councilmember and does not have any veto power. The Deputy Mayor serves in the Mayor's absence.

Serving on the City Council**Mercer Island Offices Subject to Election**

Office	Current office holder
Council Position No. 2	Salim Nice
Council Position No. 4	Ted Weinberg
Council Position No. 6	Lisa Anderl
Council Position No. 7	Position vacancy due to the passing of Councilmember Jacobson (two-year term ends 12/31/2027)

Important Dates

Prospective Council Candidate Workshop	April 24, 2025
Candidate Filing	Monday, May 5 through Friday, May 9, 2025 at 5:00 pm
Deadline to Withdraw	Monday, May 12, 2025 at 5:00 pm
Council Candidate Orientation	June of odd calendar years (date TBD)
Primary Election	Tuesday, August 5, 2025
General Election	Tuesday, November 4, 2025
Councilmember-Elect Orientation	December 2025
First City Council Meeting	Tuesday, January 6, 2026

CITY ORGANIZATION

The City of Mercer Island is a non-charter, code city which operates under the Council-Manager plan of government as provided in Title 35A RCW. The seven-member, at large, City Council is elected by the residents on a non-partisan basis. The City Council is responsible for the adoption of policies necessary for the operation and growth of the City. The City Council appoints a City Manager to administer the affairs of the City.

CITY COUNCIL

The seven Councilmembers are elected at large for four-year terms. Elections are arranged so that three or four terms expire every two years. Councilmembers have the responsibility of establishing policy to govern the City Manager, adopting a budget for City revenues and expenditures, and performing all other actions necessary to govern the City, including the passage of ordinances and resolutions.

MAYOR

The Mayor is elected from among the Councilmembers for a two-year term. The Mayor is recognized as the chief spokesperson and head of the City government for all public, political, and ceremonial purposes, and by the governor for purposes of military law. They preside at all Council meetings and vote as a Councilmember on business before the Council. They have no full-time administrative duties.

CITY MANAGER

The City Manager is chief executive officer and the agent of the City Council in carrying out its decisions and policies. They are appointed by, and responsible to the Council for proper administration of City affairs for an indefinite term. The City Manager serves at the discretion of the Council. The appointment and removal of department managers is one of the powers given to the City Manager. They exercise general supervision and control over all officers and employees of the City. Another important duty is the preparation of the City budget, which they recommend to the City Council biannually.

The City Manager is responsible to the Council for the proper administration of all matters related to the City, including preparation of an annual budget, hiring & firing of City employees, supervision of City government, implementation of Council policies, and advising the Council on administrative questions.

Chapter 3.02 CITY MANAGER

3.02.010 Powers and duties.

The powers and duties of the city manager, appointed by the city council during the period that the council-manager plan of government is in effect in the city, shall be coextensive with those powers and duties prescribed by RCW 35A.13.080 and other laws of the state and ordinances of the city now in force or as hereafter amended.

(Added during 1980 codification)

3.02.020 Office full-time job—Oath.

Unless express authority to the contrary is hereafter granted by resolution of the city council, the city manager shall devote his/her full-time to the affairs of the city, and before undertaking the duties of his/her office the city manager shall take an official oath or affirmation in support of the government of the United States, the laws of the state, the ordinances of the city and the faithful performance of his/her duties.

(Ord. A-102 § 2, 1991; added during 1980 codification)

3.02.030 Provision for professional services.

The city manager shall be empowered to make by any reasonable contractual arrangement for professional services such as casualty and liability insurance for the city, actuarial appraisal of properties, and similar professional services as may from time to time be required. Such provision may be by appointment on a full-time or part-time basis, or by any reasonable contractual arrangement for such professional services.

(Ord. A-102 § 2, 1991; added during 1980 codification)

Chapter 3.04 INDEMNIFICATION OF CITY EMPLOYEES, OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTEERS

3.04.010 Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to protect city officers, employees and volunteers acting in good faith purporting to perform his or her official duties and to authorize the defense of any action or proceeding against such officer, employee or volunteer and to create a procedure to determine whether or not the acts or omissions of the officer, employee, or volunteer were, or in good faith purported to be, within the scope of his or her official duties.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

3.04.020 Definitions.

Unless the context indicates otherwise, the words and phrases used in this chapter shall have the following meanings:

Employee means any person who is or has been employed by the city. "Employee" does not include independent contractors.

Official means any person who is serving or has served as an elected city official, and any person who is serving or has served as an appointed member of any city board, commission, committee or other appointed position with the city. "Official" does not include independent contractors performing the duties of appointed positions.

Volunteer means any person who performs his or her services gratuitously for the benefit of the city and has no employer-employee relationship with the city.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

3.04.030 Legal representation.

- A. As a condition of service or employment with the city of Mercer Island, the city shall provide to an official, employee or volunteer, and any spouse or registered domestic partner of an official, employee or volunteer to the extent the community, as community is defined in RCW Chapter 26.16, is implicated, subject to the conditions and requirements of this chapter, and notwithstanding the fact that such official, employee or volunteer may have concluded service or employment with the city, such legal representation as may be reasonably necessary to defend a claim or lawsuit filed against such official, employee or volunteer resulting from any conduct, act or omission of such official, employee or volunteer performed or omitted on behalf of the city in his or her capacity as a city official, employee or volunteer, which act or omission is within the scope of their service or employment with the city.
- B. The legal services shall be provided by the office of the city attorney unless:
 - 1. Any provision of an applicable policy of insurance or self-insurance plan provides otherwise; or
 - 2. A conflict of interest or ethical bar exists with respect to said representation; or
 - 3. The city manager determines that the assignment of counsel other than the city attorney is necessary or prudent under the circumstances.
- C. In the event that outside counsel is retained under subsection B of this section, the city shall indemnify the official, employee or volunteer from the reasonable costs of defense; provided, that in circumstances where outside counsel is retained under subsection B of this section, the city controls the defense of the matter consistent with the contract with the outside counsel selected by the city.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

3.04.040 Exclusions.

- A. In no event shall protection be offered under this chapter by the city to:
 - 1. Any dishonest, fraudulent, criminal, intentionally wrongful or malicious act or course of conduct of an official, employee or volunteer;
 - 2. Any act or course of conduct of an official, employee or volunteer which is not performed on behalf of the city;

3. Any act or course of conduct which is outside the scope of an official's, employee's or volunteer's service or employment with the city; and/or
4. Any lawsuit brought against an official, employee or volunteer by or on behalf of the city.

Nothing herein shall be construed to waive or impair the right of the city council to institute suit or counterclaim against any official, employee or volunteer, nor to limit its ability to discipline or terminate an employee.

- B. The protections of this chapter shall not apply with respect to any accident, occurrence or circumstance for which the city or the official, employee or volunteer is insured against loss or damages under the terms of any valid insurance policy or self-insurance program; provided, that this chapter shall provide protection, subject to its terms and limitations, above any loss limit of such policy. The provisions of this chapter are intended to be secondary to any contract or policy of insurance owned or applicable to any official, employee or volunteer. The city shall have the right to require any official, employee or volunteer to utilize any such policy protection prior to requesting the protection afforded by this chapter.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

3.04.050 Determination of exclusion.

The determination of whether an official, employee or volunteer shall be afforded a defense by the city under the terms of this chapter shall be finally determined by the city council on the recommendation of the city manager. The city council may request the city attorney to provide an opinion or recommendation concerning the determination. The decision of the city council shall be final as a legislative determination of the council. Nothing herein shall preclude the city from undertaking an officer's, employee's or volunteer's defense under a reservation of rights.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

3.04.060 Representation and payment of claims—Conditions.

The protections of this chapter shall apply only when the following conditions are met:

- A. In the event of any incident or course of conduct potentially giving rise to a claim for damage, or the commencement of a suit, the official, employee or volunteer involved shall, as soon as practicable, give the city risk manager written notice thereof, identifying the official, employee or volunteer involved, all information known to the official, employee or volunteer involved, all information known to the official, employee or volunteer with respect to the date, time, place and circumstances surrounding the incident or conduct giving rise to the claim or lawsuit, as well as the names and addresses of all persons allegedly injured or otherwise damaged thereby, and the names and addresses of all witnesses.
- B. Upon receipt thereof, the official, employee or volunteer shall forthwith deliver any claim, demand, notice or summons or other process relating to any such incident or conduct to the city attorney, and shall cooperate with the city attorney, or an attorney designated by the city, and, upon request, assist in making settlement of any suit and enforcing any claim for any right of subrogation against any persons or organizations that may be liable to the city because of any damage or claim of loss arising from the incident or course of conduct, including but not limited to rights of recovery for costs and attorneys' fees arising out of state or federal statute upon a determination that the suit brought is frivolous in nature.
- C. Such official, employee or volunteer shall attend interviews, depositions, hearings and trials and shall assist in securing and giving evidence and obtaining attendance of witnesses all without any additional

compensation to the official, employee or volunteer and, in the event that an employee has left the employ of the city, no fee or compensation shall be provided. The city shall pay reasonable out-of-pocket expenses and costs (e.g., travel expenses, parking expenses, etc.) incurred by employees, officials and volunteers (including former employees, former officials and former volunteers) in connection with such attendance. All such expenses shall be approved by the city manager, or designee, and the city manager's determination shall be final.

- D. Such official, employee or volunteer shall not accept nor voluntarily make any payment, assume any obligations, or incur any expense relating to the claim or suit, other than for first aid to others at the time of any incident or course of conduct giving rise to any such claim, loss or damage.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

3.04.070 Effect of compliance with conditions.

If legal representation of an official, employee or volunteer is undertaken consistent with this chapter, all of the conditions of representation are met, and a judgment is entered against the official, employee or volunteer, or a settlement made, the city shall pay such judgment or settlement; provided, that the city may, at its discretion, appeal as necessary such judgment.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

3.04.080 Failure to comply with conditions.

In the event that any official, employee or volunteer fails or refuses to comply with any of the conditions of MICC 3.04.060, or elects to provide his/her own representation with respect to any such claim or litigation, then all of the protections of this chapter shall be inapplicable and shall have no force or effect with respect to any such claim or litigation.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

3.04.090 Reimbursement of incurred expenses.

- A. If the city determines that an official, employee or volunteer does not come within the provisions of this chapter, and a court of competent jurisdiction later determines that such claim does come within the provisions of this chapter, then the city shall pay any judgment rendered against the official, employee or volunteer and reasonable attorneys' fees incurred in defending against the claim. The city shall pay any attorneys' fees incurred in obtaining the determination that such claim is covered by the provisions of this chapter.
- B. If the city determines that a claim against a city official, employee or volunteer does not come within the provisions of this chapter, and a court of competent jurisdiction later finds that such claim does not come within the provisions of this chapter, then the city shall be reimbursed by the official, employee or volunteer for costs or expenses incurred in obtaining the determination that such claim is not covered by the provisions of this chapter.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

3.04.100 Conflict with provisions of insurance policies or self-insurance plan.

Nothing contained in this chapter shall be construed to modify or amend any provision of any policy of insurance or self-insurance plan where any city official, employee or volunteer thereof is the named insured. In the event of any conflict between this chapter and the provisions of any such policy of insurance or self-insurance plan, the policy or plan provisions shall be controlling; provided, however, that nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to limit or restrict any official's, employee's or volunteer's right to full protection pursuant to this chapter, it being the intent of this chapter and section to provide the protection detailed in this chapter outside and beyond insurance policies that may be in effect, while not compromising the terms and conditions of such policies by any conflicting provision contained in this chapter.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

3.04.110 Pending claims.

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to any pending claim or lawsuit against an official, employee or volunteer, or any such claim or lawsuit hereafter filed, irrespective of the date of the events or circumstances which are the basis of such claim or lawsuit.

(Ord. 17C-08 § 1)

Chapter Listing

Chapter 35A.13 RCW

COUNCIL-MANAGER PLAN OF GOVERNMENT

Sections

- 35A.13.010** City officers—Size of council.
- 35A.13.020** Election of councilmembers—Eligibility—Terms—Vacancies—Forfeiture of office—Council chair.
- 35A.13.030** Mayor—Election—Chair to be mayor—Duties.
- 35A.13.033** Election on proposition to designate person elected to position one as chair—Subsequent holders of position one to be chair.
- 35A.13.035** Mayor pro tempore or deputy mayor.
- 35A.13.040** Compensation of councilmembers—Expenses.
- 35A.13.050** City manager—Qualifications.
- 35A.13.060** City manager may serve two or more cities.
- 35A.13.070** City manager—Bond and oath.
- 35A.13.080** City manager—Powers and duties.
- 35A.13.090** Creation of departments, offices, and employment—Compensation.
- 35A.13.100** City manager—Department heads—Authority.
- 35A.13.110** City manager—Appointment of subordinates—Qualifications—Terms.
- 35A.13.120** City manager—Interference by councilmembers.
- 35A.13.130** City manager—Removal—Resolution and notice.
- 35A.13.140** City manager—Removal—Reply and hearing.
- 35A.13.150** City manager—Substitute.
- 35A.13.160** Oath and bond of officers.
- 35A.13.170** Council meetings—Quorum—Rules—Voting.
- 35A.13.180** Adoption of codes by reference.
- 35A.13.190** Ordinances—Style—Requisites—Veto.
- 35A.13.200** Authentication, recording and publication of ordinances.
- 35A.13.210** Audit and allowance of demands against city.
- 35A.13.220** Optional division of city into wards.
- 35A.13.230** Powers of council.

RCW 35A.13.010

City officers—Size of council.

The councilmembers shall be the only elective officers of a code city electing to adopt the council-manager plan of government authorized by this chapter, except where statutes provide for an elective municipal judge. The council shall appoint an officer whose title shall be "city manager" who shall be the chief executive officer and head of the administrative branch of the city government. The city manager shall be responsible to the council for the proper administration of all affairs of the code city. The council of a

noncharter code city having less than twenty-five hundred inhabitants shall consist of five members; where there are twenty-five hundred or more inhabitants the council shall consist of seven members: PROVIDED, That if the population of a city after having become a code city decreases from twenty-five hundred or more to less than twenty-five hundred, it shall continue to have a seven-member council. If, after a city has become a council-manager code city its population increases to twenty-five hundred or more inhabitants, the number of council offices in such city may increase from five to seven members upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the existing council to increase the number of council offices in the city. When the population of a council-manager code city having five council offices increases to five thousand or more inhabitants, the number of council offices in the city shall increase from five to seven members. In the event of an increase in the number of council offices, the city council shall, by majority vote, pursuant to RCW 35A.13.020, appoint two persons to serve in these offices until the next municipal general election, at which election one person shall be elected for a two-year term and one person shall be elected for a four-year term. The number of inhabitants shall be determined by the most recent official state or federal census or determination by the state office of financial management. A charter adopted under the provisions of this title, incorporating the council-manager plan of government set forth in this chapter may provide for an uneven number of councilmembers not exceeding eleven.

A noncharter code city of less than five thousand inhabitants which has elected the council-manager plan of government and which has seven council offices may establish a five-member council in accordance with the following procedure. At least six months prior to a municipal general election, the city council shall adopt an ordinance providing for reduction in the number of council offices to five. The ordinance shall specify which two council offices, the terms of which expire at the next general election, are to be terminated. The ordinance shall provide for the renumbering of council positions and shall also provide for a two-year extension of the term of office of a retained council office, if necessary, in order to comply with RCW 35A.12.040.

However, a noncharter code city that has retained its old council-manager plan of government, as provided in RCW 35A.02.130, is subject to the laws applicable to that old plan of government.

For the purposes of determining population under this section, cities may include or exclude the population of any state correctional facility located within the city.

[2011 c 14 s 2; 2009 c 549 s 3016; 1994 c 223 s 35; 1994 c 81 s 72; 1987 c 3 s 16; 1985 c 106 s 2; 1983 c 128 s 2; 1979 ex.s. c 18 s 24; 1979 c 151 s 34; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.010.]

NOTES:

Severability—1987 c 3: See note following RCW 3.70.010.

Severability—1979 ex.s. c 18: See note following RCW 35A.01.070.

Population determinations, office of financial management: Chapter 43.62 RCW.

RCW 35A.13.020

Election of councilmembers—Eligibility—Terms—Vacancies—Forfeiture of office—Council chair.

In council-manager code cities, eligibility for election to the council, the manner of electing councilmembers, the numbering of council positions, the terms of councilmembers, the occurrence and the filling of vacancies, the grounds for forfeiture of office, and appointment of a mayor pro tempore or deputy mayor or councilmember pro tempore shall be governed by the corresponding provisions of RCW

35A.12.030, 35A.12.040, 35A.12.050, 35A.12.060, and 35A.12.065 relating to the council of a code city organized under the mayor-council plan, except that in council-manager cities where all council positions are at large positions, the city council may, pursuant to RCW **35A.13.033**, provide that the person elected to council position one shall be the council chair and shall carry out the duties prescribed by RCW **35A.13.030**. Item 3.

[**2009 c 549 s 3017; 1994 c 223 s 36; 1975 1st ex.s. c 155 s 1; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.020.**]

RCW 35A.13.030

Mayor—Election—Chair to be mayor—Duties.

Biennially at the first meeting of the new council the members thereof shall choose a chair from among their number unless the chair is elected pursuant to RCW **35A.13.033**. The chair of the council shall have the title of mayor and shall preside at meetings of the council. In addition to the powers conferred upon him or her as mayor, he or she shall continue to have all the rights, privileges, and immunities of a member of the council. The mayor shall be recognized as the head of the city for ceremonial purposes and by the governor for purposes of military law. He or she shall have no regular administrative duties, but in time of public danger or emergency, if so authorized by ordinance, shall take command of the police, maintain law, and enforce order.

[**2009 c 549 s 3018; 1975 1st ex.s. c 155 s 2; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.030.**]

RCW 35A.13.033

Election on proposition to designate person elected to position one as chair—Subsequent holders of position one to be chair.

The city council of a council-manager city may by resolution place before the voters of the city, a proposition to designate the person elected to council position one as the chair of the council with the powers and duties set forth in RCW **35A.13.030**. If a majority of those voting on the proposition cast a positive vote, then at all subsequent general elections at which position one is on the ballot, the person who is elected to position one shall become the chair upon taking office.

[**2009 c 549 s 3019; 1975 1st ex.s. c 155 s 3.**]

RCW 35A.13.035

Mayor pro tempore or deputy mayor.

Biennially at the first meeting of a new council, or periodically, the members thereof, by majority vote, may designate one of their number as mayor pro tempore or deputy mayor for such period as the council may specify, to serve in the absence or temporary disability of the mayor; or, in lieu thereof, the council may, as the need may arise, appoint any qualified person to serve as mayor pro tempore in the absence or temporary disability of the mayor. In the event of the extended excused absence or disability of a councilmember, the remaining members by majority vote may appoint a councilmember pro tempore to serve during the absence or disability.

[2009 c 549 s 3020; 1969 ex.s. c 81 s 1.]

Item 3.

NOTES:

Effective date—1969 ex.s. c 81: "This 1969 amendatory act shall take effect July 1, 1969." [1969 ex.s. c 81 s 7.]

RCW 35A.13.040

Compensation of councilmembers—Expenses.

The salaries of the councilmembers, including the mayor, shall be fixed by ordinance and may be revised from time to time by ordinance, but any increase or reduction in the compensation attaching to an office shall not become effective until the expiration of the term then being served by the incumbent: PROVIDED, That compensation of councilmembers may not be increased or diminished after their election nor may the compensation of the mayor be increased or diminished after the mayor has been chosen by the council.

Until councilmembers of a newly organized council-manager code city may lawfully be paid as provided by salary ordinance, such councilmembers shall be entitled to compensation in the same manner and in the same amount as councilmembers of such city prior to the adoption of this council-manager plan.

Until a salary ordinance can be passed and become effective as to elective officers of a newly incorporated code city, the first councilmembers shall be entitled to compensation as follows: In cities having less than five thousand inhabitants—twenty dollars per meeting for not more than two meetings per month; in cities having more than five thousand but less than fifteen thousand inhabitants—a salary of one hundred and fifty dollars per calendar month; in cities having more than fifteen thousand inhabitants—a salary of four hundred dollars per calendar month. A councilmember who is occupying the position of mayor, in addition to his or her salary as a councilmember, shall be entitled, while serving as mayor, to an additional amount per calendar month, or portion thereof, equal to twenty-five percent of the councilmember salary: PROVIDED, That such interim compensation shall remain in effect only until a salary ordinance is passed and becomes effective as to such officers, and the compensation provided herein shall not be construed as fixing the usual compensation of such officers. Councilmembers shall receive reimbursement for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of their office, or the council by ordinance may provide for a per diem allowance. Procedure for approval of claims for expenses shall be as provided by ordinance.

[2009 c 549 s 3021; 1979 ex.s. c 18 s 25; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.040.]

NOTES:

Severability—1979 ex.s. c 18: See note following RCW 35A.01.070.

RCW 35A.13.050

City manager—Qualifications.

The city manager need not be a resident at the time of his or her appointment, unless such residency required by the council. He or she shall be chosen by the council solely on the basis of his or her executive

and administrative qualifications with special reference to his or her actual experience in, or his or her knowledge of, accepted practice in respect to the duties of his or her office. No person elected to membership on the council shall be eligible for appointment as city manager until one year has elapsed following the expiration of the term for which he or she was elected.

[2022 c 30 s 2; 2009 c 549 s 3022; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.050.]

RCW 35A.13.060

City manager may serve two or more cities.

Whether the city manager shall devote his or her full time to the affairs of one code city shall be determined by the council. A city manager may serve two or more cities in that capacity at the same time.

[2009 c 549 s 3023; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.060.]

RCW 35A.13.070

City manager—Bond and oath.

Before entering upon the duties of his or her office the city manager shall take an oath or affirmation for the faithful performance of his or her duties and shall execute and file with the clerk of the council a bond in favor of the code city in such sum as may be fixed by the council. The premium on such bond shall be paid by the city.

[2009 c 549 s 3024; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.070.]

RCW 35A.13.080

City manager—Powers and duties.

The powers and duties of the city manager shall be:

- (1) To have general supervision over the administrative affairs of the code city;
- (2) To appoint and remove at any time all department heads, officers, and employees of the code city, except members of the council, and subject to the provisions of any applicable law, rule, or regulation relating to civil service: PROVIDED, That the council may provide for the appointment by the mayor, subject to confirmation by the council, of a city planning commission, and other advisory citizens' committees, commissions, and boards advisory to the city council: PROVIDED FURTHER, That if the municipal judge of the code city is appointed, such appointment shall be made by the city manager subject to confirmation by the council, for a four year term. The council may cause an audit to be made of any department or office of the code city government and may select the persons to make it, without the advice or consent of the city manager;
- (3) To attend all meetings of the council at which his or her attendance may be required by that body;
- (4) To see that all laws and ordinances are faithfully executed, subject to the authority which the council may grant the mayor to maintain law and order in times of emergency;
- (5) To recommend for adoption by the council such measures as he or she may deem necessary or expedient;

- (6) To prepare and submit to the council such reports as may be required by that body or as he or she may deem it advisable to submit;
- (7) To keep the council fully advised of the financial condition of the code city and its future needs;
- (8) To prepare and submit to the council a proposed budget for the fiscal year, as required by chapter **35A.33** RCW, and to be responsible for its administration upon adoption;
- (9) To perform such other duties as the council may determine by ordinance or resolution.

Item 3.

[**2009 c 549 s 3025**; **1987 c 3 s 17**; **1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.080**.]

NOTES:

Severability—1987 c 3: See note following RCW **3.70.010**.

RCW **35A.13.090**

Creation of departments, offices, and employment—Compensation.

On recommendation of the city manager or upon its own action, the council may create such departments, offices, and employments as it may find necessary or advisable and may determine the powers and duties of each department or office. Compensation of appointive officers and employees may be fixed by ordinance after recommendations are made by the city manager. The appointive officers shall include a city clerk and a chief of police or other law enforcement officer. Pursuant to recommendation of the city manager, the council shall make provision for obtaining legal counsel for the city, either by appointment of a city attorney on a full time or part time basis, or by any reasonable contractual arrangement for such professional services.

[**1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.090**.]

RCW **35A.13.100**

City manager—Department heads—Authority.

The city manager may authorize the head of a department or office responsible to him or her to appoint and remove subordinates in such department or office. Any officer or employee who may be appointed by the city manager, or by the head of a department or office, except one who holds his or her position subject to civil service, may be removed by the manager or other such appointing officer at any time subject to any applicable law, rule, or regulation relating to civil service. Subject to the provisions of RCW **35A.13.080** and any applicable civil service provisions, the decision of the manager or other appointing officer, shall be final and there shall be no appeal therefrom to any other office, body, or court whatsoever.

[**2009 c 549 s 3026**; **1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.100**.]

RCW **35A.13.110**

City manager—Appointment of subordinates—Qualifications—Terms.

Appointments made by or under the authority of the city manager shall be on the basis of ability and training or experience of the appointees in the duties which they are to perform, and shall be in compliance with provisions of any merit system applicable to such city. Residence within the code city shall not be a requirement. All such appointments shall be without definite term.

Item 3.

[1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.110.]

RCW 35A.13.120

City manager—Interference by councilmembers.

Neither the council, nor any of its committees or members, shall direct the appointment of any person to, or his or her removal from, office by the city manager or any of his or her subordinates. Except for the purpose of inquiry, the council and its members shall deal with the administrative service solely through the manager and neither the council nor any committee or member thereof shall give orders to any subordinate of the city manager, either publicly or privately. The provisions of this section do not prohibit the council, while in open session, from fully and freely discussing with the city manager anything pertaining to appointments and removals of city officers and employees and city affairs.

[2009 c 549 s 3027; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.120.]

RCW 35A.13.130

City manager—Removal—Resolution and notice.

The city manager shall be appointed for an indefinite term and may be removed by a majority vote of the council. At least thirty days before the effective date of his or her removal, the city manager must be furnished with a formal statement in the form of a resolution passed by a majority vote of the city council stating the council's intention to remove him or her and the reasons therefor. Upon passage of the resolution stating the council's intention to remove the manager, the council by a similar vote may suspend him or her from duty, but his or her pay shall continue until his or her removal becomes effective.

[2009 c 549 s 3028; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.130.]

RCW 35A.13.140

City manager—Removal—Reply and hearing.

The city manager may, within thirty days from the date of service upon him or her of a copy thereof, reply in writing to the resolution stating the council's intention to remove him or her. In the event no reply is timely filed, the resolution shall upon the thirty-first day from the date of such service, constitute the final resolution removing the manager and his or her services shall terminate upon that day. If a reply shall be timely filed with the city clerk, the council shall fix a time for a public hearing upon the question of the manager's removal and a final resolution removing the manager shall not be adopted until a public hearing has been had. The action of the council in removing the manager shall be final.

RCW 35A.13.150**City manager—Substitute.**

The council may designate a qualified administrative officer of the city or town to perform the duties of manager:

- (1) Upon the adoption of the council-manager plan, pending the selection and appointment of a manager; or
- (2) Upon the termination of the services of a manager, pending the selection and appointment of a new manager; or
- (3) During the absence, disability, or suspension of the manager.

[1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.150.]

RCW 35A.13.160**Oath and bond of officers.**

All provisions of RCW 35A.12.080 relating to oaths and bonds of officers, shall be applicable to code cities organized under this council-manager plan.

[1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.160.]

RCW 35A.13.170**Council meetings—Quorum—Rules—Voting.**

All provisions of RCW 35A.12.110, as now or hereafter amended, and 35A.12.120, relating to council meetings, a quorum for transaction of business, rules and voting at council meetings, shall be applicable to code cities organized under this council-manager plan.

[1979 ex.s. c 18 s 26; 1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.170.]

NOTES:

Severability—1979 ex.s. c 18: See note following RCW 35A.01.070.

RCW 35A.13.180**Adoption of codes by reference.**

Ordinances of cities organized under this chapter may adopt codes by reference as provided in RCW 35A.12.140.

[1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.180.]

Item 3.

RCW 35A.13.190

Ordinances—Style—Requisites—Veto.

The enacting clause of all ordinances shall be as follows: "The city council of the city of do ordain as follows:" No ordinance shall contain more than one subject and that must be clearly expressed in its title.

No ordinance or any section or subsection thereof shall be revised or amended unless the new ordinance sets forth the revised ordinance or the amended section or subsection at full length.

No ordinance shall take effect until five days after the date of its publication unless otherwise provided by statute or charter, except that an ordinance passed by a majority plus one of the whole membership of the council, designated therein as a public emergency ordinance necessary for the protection of public health, public safety, public property or the public peace, may be made effective upon adoption, but such ordinance may not levy taxes, grant, renew, or extend a franchise, or authorize the borrowing of money.

[1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.190.]

RCW 35A.13.200

Authentication, recording and publication of ordinances.

Ordinances of code cities organized under this chapter shall be authenticated, recorded and published as provided in RCW 35A.12.150 and 35A.12.160.

[1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.200.]

RCW 35A.13.210

Audit and allowance of demands against city.

RCW 35A.12.170 shall apply to the audit and allowance of demands against the city.

[1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.210.]

RCW 35A.13.220

Optional division of city into wards.

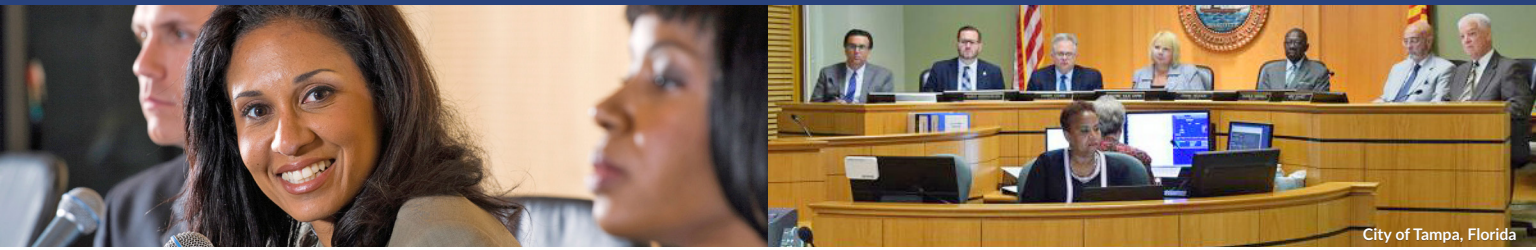
A code city organized under this chapter may be divided into wards as provided in RCW 35A.12.180.

[1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.220.]

RCW 35A.13.230**Powers of council.**

The council of any code city organized under the council-manager plan provided in this chapter shall have the powers and authority granted to legislative bodies of cities governed by this title as more particularly described in chapter **35A.11** RCW, except insofar as such power and authority is vested in the city manager.

[**1967 ex.s. c 119 s 35A.13.230.**]



City of Tampa, Florida

THE ROLE OF THE MAYOR OR CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL

Typically, the mayor or board chairperson in a council-manager community is a voting member of the governing body who may be either directly elected, as in 69 percent of council-manager communities, or who is selected by and from among their colleagues on the governing body. The mayor or chairperson is the public face of the community who presides at meetings, assigns agenda items to committees, facilitates communication and understanding between elected and appointed officials, and assists the governing body in setting goals and advocating policy decisions.

THE ROLE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Under the council-manager form, the elected officials (e.g. the council or board) are the legislative body and the community's policy makers. Power is centralized in this body, which approves the budget and adopts local laws and regulations, for example. The elected officials also focus on the community's big-picture goals, such as community growth and sustainability.

The elected officials hire a professional city, town, or county manager based on that person's education, experience, skills, and abilities and NOT on their political allegiances. The elected officials supervise the manager's performance, and if that person is not responsive and effective in their role, the elected officials have the authority to remove her or him at any time.



City of Cedar Park, Texas

THE MANAGER'S ROLE

The manager is an at-will employee who can be fired by a majority of the elected officials, consistent with local laws or any employment agreements. This person

- Prepares a budget for the governing body's consideration.
- Recruits, hires, supervises, and terminates government staff.
- Serves as the governing body's chief advisor by providing complete and objective information about local operations, discussing options, offering an assessment of the long-term consequences of decisions, and making policy recommendations.

20 carries out the policies established by the governing body.

WHAT ROLE DO RESIDENTS PLAY?

Under council-manager government, local governments often actively engage and involve their residents in community decision making. Residents can guide their community by serving on boards and commissions, participating in visioning and strategic planning sessions, and designing community-oriented local government services.

Council-Manager Form of Government

For more information, contact icma.org/contactus

@ICMA ICMAorg

To learn more about professional local government management, visit icma.org/professional-local-government-management



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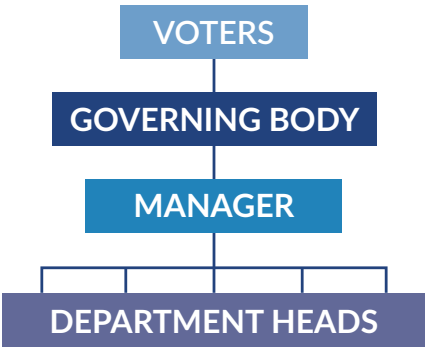
What it is, how it works, and the benefits to your community

What is the council-manager form of government?

The council-manager form is the most popular structure of government in the United States among municipalities with populations of 2,500 or more. It is one of several ways in which U.S. municipalities and counties can organize.

Under this form, residents elect a governing body—including a chief elected official, such as a mayor or board chairperson—to adopt legislation and set policy. The governing body then hires a manager or administrator with broad executive authority to carry out those policies and oversee the local government’s day-to-day operations.

The Council-Manager Form



What’s so special about the council-manager form of government?

Born out of the U.S. progressive reform movement at the turn of the 20th century, the council-manager form was created to combat corruption and unethical activity within local government by promoting nonpolitical management that is effective, transparent, responsive, and accountable.

The council-manager form of government recognizes the critical role of elected officials as policy makers, who focus on mapping out a collective vision for the community and establishing the policies that govern it. The form also recognizes the need for a highly-qualified individual who is devoted exclusively to the delivery of services to residents.

Think about the structure used by many corporations, in which the board of directors hires an experienced CEO, who is granted broad, executive authority to run the organization. While these boards establish the company’s overall policy on, the CEO oversees implementation of that policy.

What types of communities use the council-manager form of government?

Today more than 120 million people in the U.S. live in municipalities that operate under the council-manager form. Fifty-four percent of the more than 4,300 U.S. municipalities with populations of 10,000 or more use the form, as do 59 percent of the 347 municipalities with populations greater than 100,000. More than 800 counties also employ a similar system.

How can council-manager government benefit my community?

- **Flexibility**—The council-manager form can adapt to local needs and demands. While governing bodies in some council-manager communities are elected at large, for example, others are elected by district or by a combination of an at-large-and-by-district system to respond to local needs.
- **Clearly Defined Roles**—Under the council-manager form, there is a clear distinction between the administrative role of the manager and the political and policy roles of the governing body, lead by the mayor. The day-to-day operations of the local government organization reside with the appointed manager, allowing elected officials to devote their time and energy to policy development and the assessment of the effectiveness of those policies within the community.
- **A Roadmap for Success**—The council-manager form is the system of local government under which professional management is most likely to succeed. Under this system, professional managers can focus on service delivery, policy implementation, and performance management and can align the local government’s services with the values, mission, and policy goals defined by the community and elected officials.

How do we know that council-manager government works?

- The Equipt to Innovate Initiative—a framework of seven essential elements that define high-performance government and empower innovation—found in 2017 that top-performing cities in all but one element employed the council-manager form of government. In 2018, the study’s overall top performer was also council-manager.

- Two-thirds of Moody’s Aaa-bond-rated communities are run by professional local government managers, and many operate under the council-manager form of government.
- An IBM Global Business Services report titled “Smarter, Faster, Cheaper” found that cities that operate under the council-manager form of government are nearly 10 percent more efficient than those that operate under the mayor-council form.
- The National Civic League, America’s oldest advocate for community democracy, has endorsed council-manager government through its *Model City Charter* since 1915.
- The majority of communities recognized since 2013 with the National Civic League’s coveted All-America City Award have been council-manager.

Does it cost more for a community to adopt the council-manager form and hire a professional manager?

Many local governments have *reduced* their overall costs after hiring a professional manager. Savings can come from decreased operating costs, increased efficiency and productivity, improved revenue collection, and effective use of technology. The economic health of the community may also benefit from the implementation of improved business development and retention strategies.

How can my community adopt the council-manager form of government?

Methods vary from state to state, but most communities can adopt council-manager government through a charter, local ordinance, state enabling law, or by voter referendum. For information on how your community can adopt council-manager government, contact your state municipal league, state and local government association, or association of counties. You can find contact information for these organizations at icma.org/state-localgovassns or ncl.org/state-municipal-leagues.

Once my community adopts council-manager government, how do we hire a professional manager?

The vacancy is often announced in *Leadership Matters*, ICMA’s weekly e-newsletter; through the ICMA Job Center at icma.org/job-center; and through state league publications,

and qualified candidates are invited to apply. Elected officials may also hire an executive recruitment firm to assist them with the selection process. Interested parties may apply directly to the governing body or to the recruitment firm, which reviews the applications and interviews qualified candidates. *ICMA makes no recommendations regarding candidates.* Additional information on hiring a professional local government manager is available in ICMA’s *Recruitment Guidelines Handbook*. Visit icma.org/documents/recruitment-guidelines to download a copy.

What kind of educational and on-the-job experience do professional local government managers generally have?

Sixty-five percent of managers surveyed by ICMA indicated that they had earned a master’s (usually in public administration, business, or public policy), or other advanced degree. Survey respondents also said that they had spent an average of more than 20 years working in the local government management profession.

What is ICMA and why is membership in that organization important?

ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, is the professional and educational “home” for more than 12,000 appointed managers and administrators serving cities, towns, counties, other local governments, and regional entities in 40 countries throughout the world.

In addition to gaining access to valuable resources and lifelong professional development opportunities, appointed local government managers who are members of ICMA are bound by its Code of Ethics, which commits members to a set of ethical standards of honesty and integrity that go beyond those required by the law. This stringently enforced code specifies 12 ethical principles of personal and professional conduct, including dedication to good government. For more information, visit icma.org/ethics.

Finally, through its Voluntary Credentialing Program, ICMA recognizes individual members who are qualified by a combination of education and experience, adherence to high standards of integrity, and an assessed commitment to lifelong learning and professional development. ICMA members who meet these requirements may earn designation as an ICMA Credentialed Manager. For more information on ICMA’s Voluntary Credentialing Program, visit icma.org/voluntary-credentialing-program-overview.

ICMA CODE OF ETHICS

The mission of ICMA is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional local government management worldwide. To further this mission, certain principles, as enforced by the Rules of Procedure, shall govern the conduct of every member of ICMA, who shall:

1. We believe professional management is essential to efficient and democratic local government by elected officials.
2. Affirm the dignity and worth of local government services and maintain a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant.
3. Demonstrate by word and action the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in all public, professional, and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the trust and respect of the elected and appointed officials, employees, and the public.
4. Serve the best interests of the people.
5. Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts, and technical and professional advice about policy options; and collaborate with them in setting goals for the community and organization.
6. Recognize that elected representatives are accountable to their community for the decisions they make; members are responsible for implementing those decisions.
7. Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators. Refrain from participation in the election of the members of the employing legislative body.
8. Make it a duty continually to improve the member's professional ability and to develop the competence of associates in the use of management techniques.
9. Keep the community informed on local government affairs; encourage communication between the citizens and all local government officers; emphasize friendly and courteous service to the public; and seek to improve the quality and image of public service.
10. Resist any encroachment on professional responsibilities, believing the member should be free to carry out official policies without interference, and handle each problem without discrimination on the basis of principle and justice.
11. Handle all matters of personnel on the basis of merit so that fairness and impartiality govern a member's decisions pertaining to appointments, pay adjustments, promotions, and discipline.
12. Public office is a public trust. A member shall not leverage his or her position for personal gain or benefit.

Adopted by the ICMA Executive Board in 1924, and most recently revised by the membership in June 2020.

Chapter Listing

Chapter 42.23 RCW

CODE OF ETHICS FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICERS—CONTRACT INTERESTS

Sections

- 42.23.010** Declaration of purpose.
- 42.23.020** Definitions.
- 42.23.030** Interest in contracts prohibited—Exceptions.
- 42.23.040** Remote interests.
- 42.23.050** Prohibited contracts void—Penalties for violation of chapter.
- 42.23.060** Local charter controls chapter.
- 42.23.070** Prohibited acts.
- 42.23.900** Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521.

NOTES:

Cities, free passes, services prohibited: RCW 35.17.150.

County officers, general provisions: Chapter 36.16 RCW.

Ethics in public service act: Chapter 42.52 RCW.

Public employment, civil service: Title 41 RCW.

State officers, general provisions: Chapter 43.01 RCW.

RCW 42.23.010

Declaration of purpose.

It is the purpose and intent of this chapter to revise and make uniform the laws of this state concerning the transaction of business by municipal officers, as defined in chapter 268, Laws of 1961, in conflict with the proper performance of their duties in the public interest; and to promote the efficiency of local government by prohibiting certain instances and areas of conflict while at the same time sanctioning, under sufficient controls, certain other instances and areas of conflict wherein the private interest of the municipal officer is deemed to be only remote, to the end that, without sacrificing necessary public responsibility and enforceability in areas of significant and clearly conflicting interests, the selection of municipal officers may be made from a wider group of responsible citizens of the communities which they are called upon to serve.

[1961 c 268 s 2.]

Definitions.

For the purpose of chapter 268, Laws of 1961:

- (1) "Municipality" shall include all counties, cities, towns, districts, and other municipal corporations and quasi municipal corporations organized under the laws of the state of Washington;
- (2) "Municipal officer" and "officer" shall each include all elected and appointed officers of a municipality, together with all deputies and assistants of such an officer, and all persons exercising or undertaking to exercise any of the powers or functions of a municipal officer;
- (3) "Contract" shall include any contract, sale, lease or purchase;
- (4) "Contracting party" shall include any person, partnership, association, cooperative, corporation, or other business entity which is a party to a contract with a municipality.

[1961 c 268 s 3.]

RCW 42.23.030

Interest in contracts prohibited—Exceptions.

No municipal officer shall be beneficially interested, directly or indirectly, in any contract which may be made by, through or under the supervision of such officer, in whole or in part, or which may be made for the benefit of his or her office, or accept, directly or indirectly, any compensation, gratuity or reward in connection with such contract from any other person beneficially interested therein. This section shall not apply in the following cases:

- (1) The furnishing of electrical, water or other utility services by a municipality engaged in the business of furnishing such services, at the same rates and on the same terms as are available to the public generally;
- (2) The designation of public depositaries for municipal funds;
- (3) The publication of legal notices required by law to be published by any municipality, upon competitive bidding or at rates not higher than prescribed by law for members of the general public;
- (4) The designation of a school director as clerk or as both clerk and purchasing agent of a school district;
- (5) The employment of any person by a municipality for unskilled day labor at wages not exceeding \$1,000 in any calendar month. The exception provided in this subsection does not apply to a county with a population of 125,000 or more, a city with a population of more than 1,500, an irrigation district encompassing more than 50,000 acres, or a first-class school district;
- (6)(a) The letting of any other contract in which the total amount received under the contract or contracts by the municipal officer or the municipal officer's business does not exceed \$3,000 in any calendar month.
- (b) However, in the case of a particular officer of a second-class city or town, or a noncharter optional code city, or a member of any county fair board in a county which has not established a county purchasing department pursuant to RCW 36.32.240, the total amount of such contract or contracts authorized in this subsection (6) may exceed \$3,000 in any calendar month but shall not exceed \$36,000 in any calendar year.
- (c)(i) In the case of a particular officer of a rural public hospital district, as defined in RCW 70.44.460, the total amount of such contract or contracts authorized in this subsection (6) may exceed \$1,500 in any calendar month, but shall not exceed \$24,000 in any calendar year.
- (ii) At the beginning of each calendar year, beginning with the 2006 calendar year, the legislative authority of the rural public hospital district shall increase the calendar year limitation described in this subsection (6)(c) by an amount equal to the dollar amount for the previous calendar year multiplied by the change in the consumer price index as of the close of the 12-month period ending December 31st of that previous calendar year. If the new dollar amount established under this subsection is not a multiple of \$10, the increase shall be rounded to the next lowest multiple of \$10. As used in this subsection, "consumer price

index" means the consumer price index compiled by the bureau of labor statistics, United States department of labor for the state of Washington. If the bureau of labor statistics develops more than one consumer price index for areas within the state, the index covering the greatest number of people, covering areas exclusively within the boundaries of the state, and including all items shall be used.

(d) The exceptions provided in this subsection (6) do not apply to:

(i) A sale or lease by the municipality as the seller or lessor;

(ii) The letting of any contract by a county with a population of 125,000 or more, a city with a population of 5,000 or more, or an irrigation district encompassing more than 50,000 acres; or

(iii) Contracts for legal services, except for reimbursement of expenditures.

(e) The municipality shall maintain a list of all contracts that are awarded under this subsection (6). The list must be made available for public inspection and copying;

(7) The leasing by a port district as lessor of port district property to a municipal officer or to a contracting party in which a municipal officer may be beneficially interested, if in addition to all other legal requirements, a board of three disinterested appraisers and the superior court in the county where the property is situated finds that all terms and conditions of such lease are fair to the port district and are in the public interest. The appraisers must be appointed from members of the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers by the presiding judge of the superior court;

(8) The letting of any employment contract for the driving of a school bus in a second-class school district if the terms of such contract are commensurate with the pay plan or collective bargaining agreement operating in the district;

(9) The letting of an employment contract as a substitute teacher or substitute educational aide to an officer of a second-class school district that has 300 or fewer full-time equivalent students, if the terms of the contract are commensurate with the pay plan or collective bargaining agreement operating in the district and the board of directors has found, consistent with the written policy under RCW **28A.330.240**, that there is a shortage of substitute teachers in the school district;

(10) The letting of any employment contract to the spouse of an officer of a school district, when such contract is solely for employment as a substitute teacher for the school district. This exception applies only if the terms of the contract are commensurate with the pay plan or collective bargaining agreement applicable to all district employees and the board of directors has found, consistent with the written policy under RCW **28A.330.240**, that there is a shortage of substitute teachers in the school district;

(11) The letting of any employment contract to the spouse of an officer of a school district if the spouse was under contract as a certificated or classified employee with the school district before the date in which the officer assumes office and the terms of the contract are commensurate with the pay plan or collective bargaining agreement operating in the district. However, in a second-class school district that has less than 200 full-time equivalent students enrolled at the start of the school year as defined in RCW **28A.150.203**, the spouse is not required to be under contract as a certificated or classified employee before the date on which the officer assumes office;

(12) The authorization, approval, or ratification of any employment contract with the spouse of a public hospital district commissioner if: (a) The spouse was employed by the public hospital district before the date the commissioner was initially elected; (b) the terms of the contract are commensurate with the pay plan or collective bargaining agreement operating in the district for similar employees; (c) the interest of the commissioner is disclosed to the board of commissioners and noted in the official minutes or similar records of the public hospital district prior to the letting or continuation of the contract; and (d) and the commissioner does not vote on the authorization, approval, or ratification of the contract or any conditions in the contract.

A municipal officer may not vote in the authorization, approval, or ratification of a contract in which he or she is beneficially interested even though one of the exemptions allowing the awarding of such a contract applies. The interest of the municipal officer must be disclosed to the governing body of the municipality and noted in the official minutes or similar records of the municipality before the formation of the contract.

Item 5.

[**2023 c 153 s 1; 2020 c 69 s 1; 2007 c 298 s 1; 2006 c 121 s 1; 2005 c 114 s 1; 1999 c 261 s 2; 1997 c 98 s 1; 1996 c 246 s 1.** Prior: **1994 c 81 s 77; 1994 c 20 s 1; 1993 c 308 s 1; 1991 c 363 s 120; 1990 c 33 s**

573; 1989 c 263 s 1; 1983 1st ex.s. c 44 s 1; prior: 1980 c 39 s 1; 1979 ex.s. c 4 s 1; 1971 ex.s. c 242 1961 c 268 s 4.]

Item 5.

NOTES:

Findings—Intent—1999 c 261: "The legislature finds that:

(1) The current statutes pertaining to municipal officers' beneficial interest in contracts are quite confusing and have resulted in some inadvertent violations of the law.

(2) The dollar thresholds for many of the exemptions have not been changed in over thirty-five years, and the restrictions apply to the total amount of the contract instead of the portion of the contract that pertains to the business operated by the municipal officer.

(3) The confusion existing over these current statutes discourages some municipalities from accessing some efficiencies available to them.

Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to clarify the statutes pertaining to municipal officers and contracts and to enact reasonable protections against inappropriate conflicts of interest." [**1999 c 261 s 1.**]

Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363: See notes following RCW **2.32.180.**

Purpose—Statutory references—Severability—1990 c 33: See RCW **28A.900.100** through **28A.900.102.**

Severability—1989 c 263: "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [**1989 c 263 s 3.**]

Severability—1980 c 39: "If any provision of this amendatory act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [**1980 c 39 s 3.**]

RCW 42.23.040

Remote interests.

A municipal officer is not interested in a contract, within the meaning of RCW **42.23.030**, if the officer has only a remote interest in the contract and the extent of the interest is disclosed to the governing body of the municipality of which the officer is an officer and noted in the official minutes or similar records of the municipality prior to the formation of the contract, and thereafter the governing body authorizes, approves, or ratifies the contract in good faith by a vote of its membership sufficient for the purpose without counting the vote or votes of the officer having the remote interest. As used in this section "remote interest" means:

- (1) That of a nonsalaried officer of a nonprofit corporation;
- (2) That of an employee or agent of a contracting party where the compensation of such employee or agent consists entirely of fixed wages or salary;
- (3) That of a landlord or tenant of a contracting party;
- (4) That of a holder of less than one percent of the shares of a corporation or cooperative which is a contracting party.

None of the provisions of this section are applicable to any officer interested in a contract, even if the officer's interest is only remote, if the officer influences or attempts to influence any other officer of the municipality of which he or she is an officer to enter into the contract.

[1999 c 261 s 3; 1961 c 268 s 5.]

Item 5.

NOTES:

Findings—Intent—1999 c 261: See note following RCW 42.23.030.

RCW 42.23.050

Prohibited contracts void—Penalties for violation of chapter.

Any contract made in violation of the provisions of this chapter is void and the performance thereof, in full or in part, by a contracting party shall not be the basis of any claim against the municipality. Any officer violating the provisions of this chapter is liable to the municipality of which he or she is an officer for a penalty in the amount of five hundred dollars, in addition to such other civil or criminal liability or penalty as may otherwise be imposed upon the officer by law.

In addition to all other penalties, civil or criminal, the violation by any officer of the provisions of this chapter may be grounds for forfeiture of his or her office.

[1999 c 261 s 4; 1961 c 268 s 6.]

NOTES:

Findings—Intent—1999 c 261: See note following RCW 42.23.030.

RCW 42.23.060

Local charter controls chapter.

If any provision of this chapter conflicts with any provision of a city or county charter, or with any provision of a city-county charter, the charter shall control if it contains stricter requirements than this chapter. The provisions of this chapter shall be considered as minimum standards to be enforced by municipalities.

[1999 c 261 s 5; 1961 c 268 s 16.]

NOTES:

Findings—Intent—1999 c 261: See note following RCW 42.23.030.

RCW 42.23.070

Prohibited acts.

(1) No municipal officer may use his or her position to secure special privileges or exemptions for himself, herself, or others.

(2) No municipal officer may, directly or indirectly, give or receive or agree to receive any compensation, gift, reward, or gratuity from a source except the employing municipality, for a matter connected with or related to the officer's services as such an officer unless otherwise provided for by law.

(3) No municipal officer may accept employment or engage in business or professional activity that the officer might reasonably expect would require or induce him or her by reason of his or her official position to disclose confidential information acquired by reason of his or her official position.

(4) No municipal officer may disclose confidential information gained by reason of the officer's position, nor may the officer otherwise use such information for his or her personal gain or benefit.

[1994 c 154 s 121.]

NOTES:

Effective date—1994 c 154: See RCW 42.52.904.

RCW 42.23.900

Construction—Chapter applicable to state registered domestic partnerships—2009 c 521.

For the purposes of this chapter, the terms spouse, marriage, marital, husband, wife, widow, widower, next of kin, and family shall be interpreted as applying equally to state registered domestic partnerships or individuals in state registered domestic partnerships as well as to marital relationships and married persons, and references to dissolution of marriage shall apply equally to state registered domestic partnerships that have been terminated, dissolved, or invalidated, to the extent that such interpretation does not conflict with federal law. Where necessary to implement chapter 521, Laws of 2009, gender-specific terms such as husband and wife used in any statute, rule, or other law shall be construed to be gender neutral, and applicable to individuals in state registered domestic partnerships.

[2009 c 521 s 104.]

Chapter 3.42 INDEPENDENT SALARY COMMISSION

3.42.010 Established.

There is created and established an independent salary commission.

(Ord. 04C-09 § 2)

3.42.020 Purpose—Function.

The independent salary commission shall review and establish the salaries of the mayor and the council members and exercise the powers and perform the duties established by RCW 35.21.015, as now existing or hereafter amended.

(Ord. 04C-09 § 2)

3.42.030 Membership.

- A. The independent salary commission shall consist of five members appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council.
- B. The independent salary commission shall serve without compensation.
- C. Each member of the independent salary commission shall serve a term of one year commencing upon appointment and terminating 12 months thereafter.
- D. If, for any reason, a vacancy occurs during the term of an independent salary commission member, the mayor shall appoint, with the approval of the city council, a new member to fill the unexpired term of that member.

(Ord. 04C-09 § 2)

3.42.040 Qualifications.

- A. No person shall be appointed to serve as a member of the independent salary commission unless that person is a citizen of the United States, a resident of the city for at least one year immediately preceding such appointment, and an elector of the county in which the member resides.
- B. No city officer, official, or employee of the city or any of their immediate family members may serve on the commission. "Immediate family member" as used in this section means the parents, spouse, siblings, children, or dependent relatives of the officer, official, or employee, whether or not living in the household of the officer, official, or employee.

(Ord. 04C-09 § 2)

3.42.050 Operation.

- A. The city manager will appoint appropriate staff to assist the independent salary commission.

- B. The independent salary commission shall keep a written record of its proceedings, which shall be a public record all in accordance with state law, and shall actively solicit public comment at all meetings which shall be subject to the Open Public Meetings Act pursuant to RCW Chapter 42.30.
- C. The independent salary commission shall meet as often as necessary in 2004 in order to file a schedule with the city clerk on or before October 1, 2004. Once a schedule has been filed, the commission will not meet until the city council reconvenes a new salary commission for purposes of further studying city council compensation.
- D. Three members shall constitute a quorum and the votes of three members shall be sufficient for the decision of all matters and the transaction of all business to be decided or transacted by the independent salary commission.

(Ord. 04C-09 § 2)

3.42.060 Responsibilities.

The independent salary commission shall have the following responsibilities:

- A. To study the relationship of salaries to the duties of the mayor and the city council members and to study the costs personally incurred by council members in performing such duties;
- B. To study the relationship of Mercer Island city council members' salaries and benefits to those salaries and benefits of council members in surrounding city jurisdictions and other current market conditions;
- C. To establish salary and benefits by either increasing or decreasing the existing salary and benefits for each position by an affirmative vote of not less than three members;
- D. To review and file a salary and compensation schedule with the city clerk not later than October 1, 2004, and if a salary commission is reconvened thereafter, by October 1 in any subsequent year.

(Ord. 04C-09 § 2)

3.42.070 Effective date—Salaries.

The city clerk will publish the commission's salary and compensation schedule and the schedule will become effective in the amounts, at the times, and under the conditions established in the schedule 30 days after publication, subject to referendum petition filed consistent with chapter 2.24 MICC. Once filed, the schedule shall be incorporated into the city budget without further action of the city council or salary commission. Consistent with state law, salary increases established by the commission shall be effective as to the mayor and all city council members regardless of their terms of office. Salary decreases established by the commission shall become effective as to incumbents at the commencement of their next subsequent terms of office. Existing salaries for the mayor and council members established by city ordinance and/or city budget shall remain in effect unless and until changed in accordance with the provisions of this chapter. The terms and conditions of the commission's adopted salary schedule will remain in effect until amended under the terms and conditions of a new salary schedule filed in accordance with this chapter.

(Ord. 04C-09 § 2)

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS 2004 CITY OF MERCER ISLAND SALARY COMMISSION

Summary of Recommendations

An increase from \$100 to \$200 per month for Council Members and an increase from \$200 to \$400 per month for the position of Mayor was approved by a 4 -1 vote at the September 16, 2004 meeting.

Composition of the Salary Commission

The Salary Commission is established by ordinance as an independent decision-making body charged with setting salaries for City of Mercer Island elected officials. The Commission is made up of five members. Commission members serve a one-year term and hold at least one meeting annually.

The 2004 Salary Commission is composed of the following members:

	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>End of Term</u>
Ken Glass	August 2, 2004	August 1, 2005
Cynthia Howe	August 2, 2004	August 1, 2005
Jane Meyer	August 2, 2004	August 1, 2005
Peter Orser	August 2, 2004	August 1, 2005
Hal Quinn	August 2, 2004	August 1, 2005

The Salary Commission must meet at least once during the year, and may meet any number of times necessary to establish salaries for the Mayor and Council.

Any new salary schedule must be filed with the City Clerk no later than October 1st. Once a schedule has been filed, the Commission will not meet until the City Council reconvenes a new Salary Commission for purposes of further studying City Council compensation.

Information Considered by the Commission

To arrive at a decision, the Salary Commission received the following information:

- Data from surrounding cities, including population, meeting frequency, typical length of meetings, monthly compensation for council members and mayors, other benefits provided, and annual city council budgets.
- A copy of Ordinance #98C-01, which officially adopted the Council's current salary, established on December 14, 1981.
- Expenses incurred by Council Members but not reimbursed.
- Number of hours spent (on a monthly basis) by Council Members conducting Council business, not including Council meeting times.
- The current budget narrative for Mercer Island's City Council.
- The Association of Washington Cities data for council members and mayors.

Proceedings and Discussions

September 16, 2004 – Initial Meeting and Final Vote

The Commission spent considerable time reviewing the data provided by staff, including data provided by neighboring cities, expenses incurred by Council Members but not reimbursed, hours spent by Council Members conducting Council business and the Association of Washington Cities data for council members and mayors. Members acknowledged that the Council's compensation was well below most council compensation of surrounding cities and determined that this alone, should not be the basis of an increase to compensation.

The consensus of the Commission was to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of Mercer Island City Council Members by establishing an increase to current compensation that takes into consideration the length of time since the last compensation adjustment, City budget constraints, public perception, and the ability to attract viable, qualified candidates for open Council positions. The Commission agreed that they would not support adding benefits as part of Council's compensation.

A discussion ensued around the fact that historically, there have been few uncontested Council vacancies, therefore supporting a conclusion that the level of compensation for Mercer Island Council Members is not a deterrent in attracting Council candidates. The consensus of the Commission was that being a council member should be about serving a civic duty and not about receiving compensation and benefits. It was also discussed that past Councils have deliberately chosen to keep the compensation at the level established in 1981. Considering this, the Commission determined that a substantial increase of the current amount was simply not warranted or defensible.

The Commission discussed applying an average cost of living adjustment of three percent each year, beginning in 1982 and ending in 2004. This increases the Council's compensation from \$100 per month to \$197 per month and the Mayor's compensation from \$200 per month to \$395 per month by the year 2004. The consensus of the Commission was that a more appropriate word relating to Council pay is "stipend" instead of "compensation".

MOTION: Moved by Quinn and seconded by Meyer to submit a salary schedule to the City Clerk on or before October 1, 2004, increasing the Council's stipend from \$100 per month to \$200 per month and the Mayor's stipend from \$200 per month to \$400 per month to be effective January 1, 2005. Motion carried 4 – 1.

The Commission also believed that a press release announcing the change to Council pay, including the points of consideration, would be appropriate. The consensus of the group was to name Peter Orser as the spokesperson for the Independent Salary Commission. Mr. Orser accepted.

Minority Report

The Commission agreed that it was important to note the reasons behind the 4 – 1 vote. One Commission Member remained unconvinced that an increase to Council pay was warranted at this time solely based on the fact that attracting qualified candidates to run for Council has not

been an issue. This Commission Member recognizes and appreciates the commitment and dedication required by those serving out Council terms, however believes that the service should be based on fulfilling a civic duty and not based on receiving compensation and benefits.

Respectfully Submitted:

Ken Glass

Date

Cynthia Howe

Date

Jane Meyer

Date

Peter Orser

Date

Hal Quinn

Date



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Running for Local Elected Office

This page provides an overview of the process for seeking local elected office in Washington State, including required qualifications, the filing process, primary and general elections, financial disclosures, political advertisements, and more.

IMPORTANT: Filing week has changed! Beginning in 2024, the candidate filing period has been moved up about one week and now starts the first Monday in May (see [RCW 29A.24.050](#)). The candidate filing week for 2025 will be May 5-9.

What this page covers: This page focuses on running for local governing body or executive positions such as city councilmember, mayor, county commissioner, county auditor, sheriff, fire district commissioner, school board director, etc.

What this page does *not* cover: This page does not address unique requirements to run for judicial offices or temporary elected positions such as political party precinct officers or charter review board members.

It also does not address elections in conservation districts, districts that require property ownership to vote (such as irrigation districts, diking/drainage districts, or weed control districts), or proposed new districts/new cities.

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Overview

There are thousands of local government elected positions in Washington State encompassing a wide range of functions and job duties in cities, towns, counties, and many types of special purpose districts. These elected positions are crucial to providing leadership and oversight for local governments, and any qualified individual can run for these offices.

Below is a summary of the various types of elected positions.

Cities and Towns

Washington has 281 cities and towns, all of which have a specific [classification](#) (first class, second class, code city, town, or unclassified) and [form of government](#) (mayor-council or council-manager) under state law.

All cities and towns are governed by an elected city council. In mayor-council cities and towns, voters also elect a mayor who serves as the city's chief administrative officer. Council-manager cities, on the other hand, designate one councilmember to serve as a ceremonial mayor – usually selected by the other councilmembers – and hire a professional city manager.

To see the classification and form of government of any city or town, refer to MRSC's [Washington City and Town Profiles](#).

City and town officials are generally elected in odd-numbered years ([RCW 29A.04.330](#)). All city and town offices are nonpartisan ([RCW 29A.52.231](#)), meaning no party affiliations will be listed on the ballot. A "full" or "regular" term for most city officials is four years.

Charter cities: There are 10 [first class cities](#) – Aberdeen, Bellingham, Bremerton, Everett, Richland, Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver, and Yakima – and one home rule charter code city (Kelso) that may have slightly different election provisions.

In addition, one unclassified city (Waitsburg) continues to operate under its original territorial charter and conducts its own independent elections. In these cities, be sure to consult the election provisions in the city charter.

Counties

There are 39 counties in Washington, most of which are governed by an elected board of county commissioners. Several home rule charter counties have county councils instead.

Each county also has a number of other independently elected county positions, typically including an assessor, auditor, county clerk (superior court), prosecuting attorney, sheriff, treasurer, and sometimes a coroner. For more information on these different offices and their general duties, see our page [County Elected and Appointed Officials](#).

Unlike cities, towns, and special purpose districts, most county offices are partisan, meaning that each candidate will self-identify a party affiliation that will be listed on the ballot ([RCW 29A.04.110](#)). However, the candidate does not have to be endorsed by the party or have any formal affiliation with a party, and candidates may also choose to express no party preference.

Most county officials are elected during even-numbered years (see [RCW 29A.04.321](#) and [RCW 36.16.010](#)), except for certain home rule counties or filling certain unexpired terms resulting from a [vacancy](#). A "full" or "regular" term for county officials is typically four years (see [RCW 36.16.020](#) and [RCW 36.32.030](#)).

Home rule charter counties: There are seven [home rule charter counties](#) – Clallam, Clark, King, Pierce, San Juan, Snohomish, and Whatcom – that may be governed by a county council instead of a board of commissioners and have adopted somewhat different election provisions by charter, such as designating additional elected positions, making certain offices nonpartisan, or holding regular elections in odd-numbered years. In these counties, be sure to consult the election provisions in the county charter.

"Special Purpose Districts" – Fire Districts, Ports, Public Hospitals, Schools, Utility Districts, Etc.

In addition to Washington's cities, towns, and counties, there are hundreds of special purpose districts that perform specialized functions.

"Special purpose district" is a generic term that broadly encompasses many different government types. While there are varying definitions, MRSC uses the term broadly to refer to any local government that is not a city, town, or county. This includes:

- Cemetery districts
- Fire protection districts and regional fire authorities
- Park and recreation districts
- Port districts
- Public hospital districts (PHDs)
- Public utility districts (PUDs)
- School districts
- Water-sewer districts
- And many others

Most of these special purpose districts are governed by elected commissioners or directors, although some districts (such as library districts or transit districts) are governed by appointed officials or trustees instead.

Most special purpose district officials are elected in odd-numbered years ([RCW 29A.04.330](#)), although there are exceptions for districts where property ownership is required to vote as well as PUDs and conservation districts.

All special purpose district offices are nonpartisan, meaning no party affiliations will be listed on the ballot ([RCW 29A.52.231](#)). The length of a "full" or "regular" term for special purpose district officials is typically four or six years, depending on the agency type.

Unique provisions: There are unique election provisions for conservation districts ([chapter 89.08 RCW](#)) and districts requiring property ownership to vote, such as irrigation districts ([chapter 87.03 RCW](#)), various diking, drainage, or flood control "special districts" ([Title 85 RCW](#)), or weed control districts ([chapter 17.04 RCW](#)). These unique provisions are not discussed on this page, so consult the relevant laws for those jurisdiction types.

Who Can Run for Office?

In order to hold *any* elective public office in Washington State, a person must meet the qualifications in [RCW 42.04.020](#) and [RCW 29A.24.075](#) and be an "elector" (as defined in the Washington State Constitution, [Article VI, Section 1](#)) of the city, county, or special purpose district in which they are running for office.

To summarize these various requirements: at the time a candidate *files their declaration of candidacy with the county elections office* – typically in early May – the candidate must:

- Be a United States citizen,
- Be 18 years of age or older,
- Be a registered voter within the jurisdiction/district they seek to represent (all candidates should make sure their voter registration information is up-to-date),
- Be a resident of the state, county, and precinct for at least 30 days before they file the declaration of candidacy, and
- Not be currently incarcerated for a felony (see below).

Some offices may have additional requirements in state law or local charter, so consult your local government and county elections office to confirm the requirements.

For instance, in optional municipal code cities, each candidate must be a city resident for at least one year to hold office. See [RCW 35A.12.030](#) (mayor-council code cities) and [RCW 35A.13.020](#) (council-manager code cities). MRSC takes the position that this means one year before the date of the general election. See, generally, *In re Contested Election of Schoessler*, 140 Wn.2d 368 (2000).

Meanwhile, any candidate for the position of county prosecuting attorney must also be admitted as an attorney in the State of Washington (see [RCW 36.27.010](#)).

Felony Convictions

If a person has been *disqualified from voting* due to a felony conviction, they are not eligible to run for office. See the Washington State Constitution [Article VI, Section 1](#) and [Section 3](#).

Specifically, this applies to all persons convicted of an "infamous crime" as defined in [RCW 29A.04.079](#), which means "a crime punishable by death in the state penitentiary or imprisonment in a state or federal correctional facility," but not including adjudication in juvenile court or convictions for misdemeanors or gross misdemeanors.

However, a convicted felon's voting rights are automatically restored once the person is no longer incarcerated. See [RCW 29A.08.520](#).

To summarize, convicted felons may *not* run for office while they are incarcerated for a felony, but they *may* run for office once they are no longer incarcerated for the felony.

However, an elected official must forfeit their office if they are convicted of a felony *while in office*. See [RCW 42.12.010](#)(5).

Which Offices Are Up for Election?

At least two weeks before the candidate filing period each year, and often significantly earlier, each [county elections office](#) will post a list of all positions that are scheduled to be voted upon this year (see [WAC 434-215-005](#)).

For each position, these postings typically include the name of the incumbent, the term length and type, whether the position is partisan or nonpartisan, and any associated filing fee.

Term Length and Type

It is important to understand the different term lengths and types (see [RCW 29A.24.020](#)) for positions that will be on the ballot for each election:

- **"Regular" or "full" term:** This is a regularly scheduled election and the normal length of time an elected official serves in the office. For city and county positions, this is typically four years. However, there are a few positions with shorter terms – for instance, some elected positions in certain first class cities (according to city charter) and council position seven in second-class cities (see [RCW 35.23.051](#)). For special purpose districts, the regular term length is typically four or six years depending on the agency type and applicable state laws.
- **"Unexpired" term:** This means the office was *not* originally scheduled to be on the ballot this year, but the person who was elected to the position left before the end of their regular term, creating a [vacancy](#). While the position may have been temporarily filled by appointment, it must appear again on the general election ballot and the winner will serve the remainder of the original full term. As a result, this "unexpired" term will be shorter than the regular/full term.
- **"Short and full" term:** This means that the office *was* originally scheduled to be on the ballot this year, but the person who was elected to the position left before the end of their regular term, creating a [vacancy](#). While the position may have been temporarily filled by appointment, it will appear on the general election ballot as originally scheduled. The winner will technically serve two terms – a "short" term that starts immediately after the election certification and ends December 31, and then the subsequent "full" term starting on January 1. See [RCW 29A.04.169](#).

Term limits: There are no term limits in state law for local elected officials, and many local governments lack the legal authority to impose term limits. However, some charter cities, charter counties, or optional municipal code cities do have the authority to voluntarily adopt term limits (see [AGO 1991 No. 22](#)), so elected officials within such jurisdictions should consult their local rules.

Elected Official Salaries

Many elected officials are eligible to receive some sort of salary or compensation for their service, but the amounts vary depending on the type of agency, the applicable state laws, and local policies.

Some officials are paid a fixed salary regardless of the number of hours or days worked, while others are paid on a per diem or per-meeting basis, and some are not paid anything other than expense reimbursements. County officials are generally paid more than city or special purpose district officials. Elected officials also *might* be eligible to receive benefits in certain cases.

For more information on this topic, see our page on [Salaries, Compensation, and Benefits for Local Elected Officials](#).

Holding Multiple Government Offices

Washington does not have a "resign to run" law, so any current government employee or official can run for local elected office as long as they are otherwise eligible to hold office.

However, if a candidate who already holds another office wins the election, there are potential conflicts of interest that might require the individual to give up one of their positions.

State law prohibits holding certain positions simultaneously. For instance, a public hospital district commissioner cannot also be an employee of the same public hospital district ([RCW 70.44.040\(3\)](#)). In this example, the hospital employee could *run* for the position of hospital commissioner while still on staff, but if the employee *won* the election they would have to resign their staff position to assume the elected office.

There are similar prohibitions, with limited exceptions, for optional municipal code cities – see [RCW 35A.12.030](#) for mayor-council code cities and [RCW 35A.13.020](#) for council-manager code cities.

Other statutes or local charters/codes may provide additional restrictions on dual office-holding, so always consult the state laws and local rules applicable to your jurisdiction(s).

In addition, the common law (court-made) doctrine of incompatible offices says that the same person may not hold two or more "public offices" simultaneously if those offices would be considered "incompatible" with one another – for instance, if one position is subordinate to the other or if there

would be a conflict of interest between the two positions. For more information on this topic, see our page on [Incompatible Offices](#).

Even if the offices are compatible, there could be potential financial conflicts of interest – for instance, if the official is in a position to vote on a collective bargaining agreement that would cover their position as a paid employee. There could also be blurred lines of authority if, for instance, a city employee who reports to an elected mayor was elected to city council. The jurisdiction's attorney may need to provide legal advice depending on the facts of the situation.

Appearing On the Same Ballot More than Once. A candidate's name may not appear more than once on the same ballot ([RCW 29A.36.201](#)). If a candidate is interested in two offices that would both be on the same ballot, the candidate must choose just one of those positions to file for and run for that office. The only exceptions are for precinct committee officers or temporary elected positions such as charter review board members or freeholders.

Prohibited Use of Public Facilities

Current government officials or employees who are running for office or seeking reelection must be careful to keep their election activities separate from their work activities and may not use "public facilities" (such as a work computer, printer, vehicle, or company time) to support their election campaign.

For more information, see our page on [Use of Public Facilities in Election Campaigns](#).

Conflicts of Interest

State law prohibits local elected officials from having financial conflicts of interest, with limited exceptions.

For instance, an elected official on a governing body (city council, board of commissioners/directors, etc.) generally may not have a financial interest in a contract with their own agency, since the governing body has the authority to approve such contracts and the official has a personal financial stake in the decision. This applies to collective bargaining agreements as well as private contracts.

Violations can result in civil penalties, voiding of a contract, and possible forfeiture of office.

Even if the official does not vote on the contract or has recused themselves, a conflict of interest still exists. Unless there is a qualifying exception, the only ways to avoid the conflict of interest are either to resign from office and proceed with the contract on a private basis, or to remain in office but forgo the contract.

Some agencies have also adopted their own local codes of ethics that are stricter than state law.

Any candidate who has a financial interest in a contract with a local government, has a spouse or dependent with a financial interest in such a contract, or who might be interested in such a contract in the future, should review the relevant laws/policies and carefully consider the impact of the conflict before seeking office within that government.

For more information on these topics, see our pages on [Ethics and Conflicts of Interest](#) and [Local Codes of Ethics](#).

Filing the Declaration of Candidacy

To run for office, an individual must file a declaration of candidacy with the county filing officer during the filing period and submit the required filing fee or petition, if applicable.

The filing officer is typically the county auditor or, for some counties, the head of the elections office; for simplicity's sake, we will refer to the filing officers and their departments as the "county elections office."

Important: A summary of the filing process is below, but always refer to the candidate filing guide produced by [your county elections office](#) which will contain the specific requirements for your county.

Candidates might be required to file with the state Public Disclosure Commission (PDC), as described later, *before* filing the declaration of candidacy with the county elections office if they have already publicly stated that they are running for office or engaged in certain other campaign-related activities.

Regular Filing Period and Declaration of Candidacy

The regular candidate filing period lasts for five days, beginning at 8:00 AM the first Monday in May and ending at 5:00 PM on Friday of the same week ([RCW 29A.24.050](#)).

Each candidate must complete the declaration of candidacy form ([RCW 29A.24.031](#)) provided by their county elections office. Candidate filings are typically submitted online, but they may also be submitted in-person (see [RCW 29A.24.040](#)) or by mail ([RCW 29A.24.081](#)).

Each candidate will also be asked, either during the filing process or shortly thereafter, to provide information for the local voters' pamphlets that will be mailed to voters shortly before the primary and general elections – such as a brief biography, candidate statement, and photo. See [RCW 29A.32.241-.250](#). The deadline for candidate submissions is typically right after the filing deadline. Candidates are strongly encouraged to submit this information as it provides a chance for voters to get to know them better and make an informed decision.

Candidate names and nicknames. For their first name, a candidate is allowed to use a nickname by which they are commonly known, but the last name must be the last name under which the candidate is registered to vote. Candidates may *not* include a nickname designed intentionally to mislead voters, and they may *not* include a nickname that indicates a present or past occupation/military rank, a position on a policy issue, or the candidate's political affiliation. See [RCW 29A.24.060](#).

If a person files a declaration of candidacy using a false name or a name similar to an existing candidate with the intent to confuse and mislead the voters, they may be charged with a felony under [RCW 29A.84.320](#). If two or more candidates genuinely have very similar names that might confuse voters, the filing officer may include additional information to distinguish between the candidates (see [WAC 434-215-060](#)).

Filing Fees

The filing fee for each office depends on the [salary or compensation for that office](#); see [RCW 29A.24.091](#). Your county elections office will list the filing fee for each office, but here is a summary of how the fees are calculated. (Write-in filing fees are slightly different, as discussed later.)

Annual salary for the office	Filing fee
No annual salary, or compensation is on per-meeting or per diem basis	No fee
\$1,000 or less per year	\$10
More than \$1,000 per year	1% of annual salary

Any candidate who lacks sufficient assets or income to pay the filing fee may file a petition instead; see [RCW 29A.24.091](#)(4). The petition must follow the format and requirements prescribed by [RCW 29A.24.101](#) and contain the signatures of registered voters within the jurisdiction. The number of signatures must be at least as great as the number of dollars of the filing fee. For instance, if the filing fee is \$120, the candidate may submit a petition with at least 120 valid signatures instead.

Withdrawing

Any candidate who filed for office during the regular candidate filing period may withdraw their declaration of candidacy no later than 5:00 PM on the Monday following the last day of the regular filing period ([RCW 29A.24.131](#)).

The candidate must submit a signed request that their name not be printed on the ballot; the filing fee is non-refundable.

Withdrawing after the official withdrawal deadline: Any candidate who unofficially "withdraws" after the withdrawal deadline will still appear on the respective primary or general election ballot, unless a court orders their removal.

If a candidate who unofficially withdrew after the withdrawal deadline is one of the top two vote-getters in the primary election, they will still advance to the general election. If the candidate receives the most votes at the general election, they will be considered elected to office.

If the candidate has changed their mind and again wishes to serve, they could assume office if otherwise qualified. If the candidate still does not wish to serve, they may either assume office and then resign, creating a [vacancy](#), or they could refuse to assume the office, in which case the

governing body could declare the seat vacant and then fill it by appointment.

If No One Files – Special Filing Period

If the withdrawal deadline has passed and no one has filed for a particular office, there is a "void in candidacy" for the office. See [RCW 29A.24.141](#). A void in candidacy also occurs if the only candidates who filed have either died or been disqualified.

When such a void occurs before the primary election, the filing officer must open a special filing period for three normal business days and provide notice to the public and the news media within the county (see [RCW 29A.24.181](#)). Any candidates who file during the special filing period will appear on the general election ballot, and no primary will be held. The candidate receiving the most votes in the general election will be declared the winner.

There is no withdrawal period for candidates who file during a special filing period.

If the special filing period has passed and *still* no one has filed for office, or if the void occurs after the primary election, a "lapsed election" occurs. See [RCW 29A.24.191-220](#). The position is considered stricken from the ballot, no write-in votes will be counted, and the incumbent will "hold over" or remain in office for another term. If the incumbent does not wish to serve another term, they may resign and create a [vacancy](#) that will be filled by appointment.

Financial Disclosures and PDC Reporting

Within two weeks of "becoming a candidate," most candidates for local office must file a C-1 candidate registration form with the state [Public Disclosure Commission](#) (PDC), as well as an F-1 personal financial affairs statement, in accordance with [chapter 42.17A RCW](#) (which will be reorganized as [Title 29B](#) beginning January 1, 2026).

There are certain exemptions – for instance, candidates seeking election in small jurisdictions usually do not have to file financial disclosures. See [RCW 42.17A.135](#) and the PDC guidance on [Who Files the F-1 Report](#).

Important: You might be required to file PDC reports *before* you file a declaration of candidacy with the county elections office. For PDC purposes, you become a "candidate" (as defined in [RCW 42.17A.005](#)) and trigger reporting requirements the first time you:

- Receive contributions or make campaign-related expenditures,
- Reserve advertising space or facilities to promote your candidacy,
- Authorize someone else to do any of those activities,
- Publicly state that you are seeking office, or
- File the declaration of candidacy with the county elections office.

It is important to be aware of the exact date that your candidacy begins. To avoid triggering the reporting requirements inadvertently or earlier than intended, a person exploring whether to run should say that they are "thinking about running" for office.

In addition, candidates who are required to file with the PDC must report their campaign contributions and expenses using either "mini reporting" or "full reporting" depending on the amount of money they intend to raise or spend. Candidates who are required to file an F-1 statement will also be required to file annual F-1 statements during their time in office, if they are elected.

The PDC is the agency responsible for campaign finance rules and for investigating potential campaign violations. Candidates who violate the financial disclosure requirements can face penalties ranging from civil fines to, if a court finds that the violation probably affected the election outcome, the voiding of the election itself (see [RCW 42.17A.750](#)).

For more information, carefully review the [PDC resources for candidates](#), which includes training videos and live online classes.

Political Advertisements and Campaign Signs

Any political advertisements must identify the ad sponsor(s), although the requirements vary depending on the type of ad. For more information, see the PDC webpage on [Sponsor ID: What to Include](#).

Many political candidates use social media to help spread the word.

Candidates for local office, including incumbents seeking reelection, should

use a personal social media account rather than an official account for all campaign-related activities. However, if the official is elected to office, they may then want to refrain from using personal social media accounts for work-related matters to reduce potential First Amendment or public records liability.

Temporary campaign signs must comply with local and state sign regulations. Campaign signs are generally permitted within the local right-of-way, especially if the area has served as a traditional public forum. (For example, in an area where "for sale" signs, advertisements, or notices of lost animals have been allowed.)

However, campaign signs are not allowed within the state highway right-of-way. In addition, placing campaign signs on private property or in the parking strip abutting private property requires the property owner's permission.

For more information about political advertising and campaign signs, see the [PDC's Political Advertising Guide](#), which recommends checking with the local public works department for guidance on where campaign signs can be placed, when they can be installed, and when they must be removed.

If a political sign has been legally placed, no one may remove or deface the sign without authorization, and defacement or improper removal is a misdemeanor ([RCW 29A.84.040](#)).

During the 18-day voting period, no campaign-related activities are allowed within 25 feet of ballot drop boxes. There is a similar prohibition on campaign-related activities inside of or within 100 feet of entrances to voting centers and student engagement hubs ([RCW 29A.84.510](#)).

Candidates are allowed by law to purchase voter data from their county elections office to be used for political purposes ([RCW 29A.08.720](#)).

The Primary Election

Depending on the office and how many people file, a primary election *might* be held on the first Tuesday in August ([RCW 29A.04.311](#)) to narrow the field to the top two candidates. As noted earlier, no primary will be held following a special filing period.

Partisan Primaries

For partisan county offices, a primary election will be held for each "full" or "regular" term office, even if only one or two candidates have filed.

If more than two candidates file, the top two vote-getters in the primary will advance to the general election, regardless of political party.

If only one or two candidates file, the same candidate(s) will appear again on the general election ballot. However, no primary will be held for an *unexpired* partisan position (caused by a vacancy) if there is only one candidate who has filed for the position. That candidate would only appear on the general election ballot.

See [RCW 29A.52.112](#).

Nonpartisan Primaries

If the candidate withdrawal deadline has passed and there are only one or two candidates who have filed for a particular nonpartisan office, there will be no primary election for that office and the candidate(s) will advance directly to the general election. See [RCW 29A.52.220](#).

In addition, no primary election is held for park and recreation districts or cemetery districts, regardless of how many candidates file for the office. Instead, all candidates will appear on the general election ballot. See [RCW 29A.52.220\(2\)](#).

Primary Election Procedures

The order in which the candidates appear on the ballot (and in the voters' pamphlet) will be determined randomly by lot, which must be conducted publicly and may be witnessed by the media and by any candidate ([RCW 29A.26.131](#)).

Ballots are mailed to voters at least 18 days before the primary, with longer timelines for service members and overseas voters ([RCW 29A.40.070](#)). The first election results will be released shortly after the polls close at 8 PM on Election Day, with the results updated each day afterward as more ballots are received and tabulated.

Each county canvassing board must certify the election results 14 days after the primary ([RCW 29A.60.190](#)). The top two candidates will advance to the general election, and any defeated candidates must wrap up their campaigns and file any necessary reports with the PDC. See the PDC resources for [After the Election](#) and [Wrapping Up a Candidacy](#).

If the third-place candidate is especially close to the second-place candidate, the election may go to a mandatory recount, or one of the candidates may request a recount, as discussed on our page [Local Elections Administration](#).

The General Election

The general election is held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November ([RCW 29A.04.321](#)).

If a primary election was held for a given position, the top two candidates will be listed on the general election ballot, with the candidate who received the most votes in the primary listed first ([RCW 29A.36.170](#)).

If no primary election was held, all the candidates will be listed on the general election ballot, with the order of appearance determined randomly by lot (see [RCW 29A.36.170](#), [29A.52.220](#), and [29A.36.131](#)).

Ballots are mailed to voters at least 18 days before the general election, with longer timelines for service members and overseas voters ([RCW 29A.40.070](#)). The first election results will be released shortly after the polls close at 8 PM on Election Day, with the results updated each day afterward as more ballots are received and tabulated.

Each county canvassing board must certify the election results 21 days after the general election ([RCW 29A.60.190](#)). If the election is especially close, it may go to a mandatory recount, or one of the candidates may request a recount, as discussed on our page [Local Elections Administration](#).

Write-In Candidates

Instead of voting for the candidate(s) printed on the ballot in a primary or general election, any voter may write in the name of a different person, even if that person has not filed for office and is not an official candidate. Some candidates may even organize a write-in campaign if they missed the filing deadline.

However, for write-in votes to be counted, the person whose name is written in must declare their candidacy and pay the required write-in filing fees, if any, no later than 8 PM on Election Day.

The write-in filing fee for each office depends on the [salary or compensation for that office](#) as well as when the candidate files; see [RCW 29A.24.091](#). Your county elections office can tell you what the write-in filing fee is for any office, but below is a summary of how write-in fees are calculated.

Annual salary for the office	Write-in filing fee if filing more than 18 days before election	Write-in filing fee if filing 18 days or less before election
No annual salary, or compensation is on per-meeting or per diem basis	No fee	No fee
\$1,000 or less per year	No fee	\$25
More than \$1,000 per year	No fee	1% of annual salary

A person may only file as a write-in candidate for one position on the ballot, and they may not file a write-in campaign if their name already appears elsewhere on the ballot, unless the only office for which they are listed is precinct committee officer or a temporary elected position such as charter review board member or freeholder.

In addition, a candidate who filed for the primary election (either during the regular candidate filing or as a write-in candidate), but failed to advance to the general election, may not file as a write-in candidate for the same position at the general election.

See [RCW 29A.60.021](#) and [RCW 29A.24.311-.320](#).

After the General Election

After the election, all candidates must wrap up their campaigns and file any necessary reports with the PDC. See the PDC resources for [After the Election](#) and [Wrapping Up a Candidacy](#).

The winning candidate will begin transitioning from campaign mode to their new governance role. Many newly elected officials will have a few weeks to prepare before taking office on January 1, but some officials will take office almost immediately after the election results are certified in late November.

To assume office, the official must post the required bonds (if any) and take the oath of office, as described on our page [Official Bonds and Oaths of Office](#).

While not required, it is courteous for a losing candidate to concede to the winning candidate and congratulate them, which encourages civility and helps strengthen our country's longstanding democratic traditions. Similarly, the winning candidate should be gracious toward the losing candidate(s).

Recommended Resources

Below are additional resources for local elective candidates or potential candidates to review:

- **[WA Secretary of State: County Elections Offices in Washington State](#)** – Provides contact information for elections offices in all 39 counties, which in turn provide detailed candidate filing guides
- **[Public Disclosure Commission: For Candidates](#)** – Information on financial disclosure registration and reporting
- **[Association of Washington Cities: So You Want to Be an Elected Official](#)** – Overview of the roles and responsibilities of city and town elected officials

Last Modified: March 20, 2025

Disclaimer: MRSC is a statewide resource that provides general legal and policy guidance to support local government entities in Washington State pursuant to [chapter 43.110 RCW](#). MRSC website content is for informational purposes only and is not intended as legal advice, nor as a substitute for the legal advice of an attorney. You should contact your own legal counsel if you have a question regarding your legal rights or any other legal issue.

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2025 Candidate Manual



A letter from the Director

Dear candidates and campaign managers,

First, I want to say a big thank you for stepping up to run (or to support your candidate to run) for office. Your decision to run for office means voters have more choices on their ballot when it's time to vote, and that matters. When voters see candidates that reflect their beliefs and values, they are more likely to turn out and get involved.

Running for office is hard, and I say that as someone who has been through it a few times. You are putting yourself out there and on the record about what you believe in. You are dedicating time to speak and listen to your neighbors and community. When you're thinking about running, navigating deadlines and paperwork should not be an obstacle that gets in your way. That's why we're here to help here at King County Elections!

I encourage you to read through this manual and keep it bookmarked during your time as a candidate. It provides an overview of everything you need to know to officially file as a candidate, submit a voters' pamphlet statement, and much more. We update this manual each year to reflect all changes to the candidate filing processes and requirements.

I also believe it's critically important that candidates and campaigns both have and provide accurate and reliable information about voting in King County. Our team of professional election administrators conduct accurate, secure, and accessible elections for 190+ jurisdictions and 1.4 million registered voters. We welcome questions about how elections are run, from voter registration to tabulation and everything in between. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

Best of luck in your campaign,

Julie Wise, Director
King County Elections

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Legend

-  This symbol denotes important deadlines.
-  This symbol denotes general information.
-  This symbol denotes important information.
-  This symbol denotes contact information.

 Information contained in the Candidate Manual is subject to change. Consult the online manual for the most updated information.



Contact us

mail/office 919 SW Grady Way
Renton, WA 98057

phone 206-296-1565

fax 206-296-0108

email election.services@kingcounty.gov

online kingcounty.gov/elections

2025 Election Calendar

Important election dates and deadlines for candidates.

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Candidate filing dates

The key filing dates for 2025 are:

- Online: Monday, May 5 at 8 a.m. through Friday, May 9 at 5 p.m.
- In-person: Monday, May 5 at 8 a.m. through Friday, May 9 at 5 p.m.

King County Elections strongly recommends filing online as it is fast, easy, and convenient.

The withdrawal deadline for 2025 is:

- Monday, May 12 at 5 p.m.

Primary and general election dates

The primary and general election dates for 2025 are:

- Primary election: August 5
- General election: November 4

Even-numbered years are when federal, state, legislative and some judicial offices appear on the general election ballot. Odd-numbered years are when county, port, some judicial, city, school and special purpose district offices appear on the general election ballot.

Primary and general election calendar

Red boxes indicate primary election dates and blue boxes indicate general election dates.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May	4	5 Candidate filing begins In-person: 8 a.m. Online: 8 a.m.	6	7	8	9 Candidate filing ends In-person: 5 p.m. Online: 5 p.m.	10
	11	Candidate filing RCW 29A.24.050					17
	18	12 Last day for candidates to withdraw (due by 5 p.m.) RCW 29A.24.131	13	14	15	16	24
		19	20 Local voters' pamphlet submissions due by 5 p.m.	21	22	23	

Primary and general election calendar (continued)

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	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
June	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13 Local voters' pamphlet proofs emailed to candidates for review	14
	15	16 Candidate responses for local voters' pamphlet proofs & campaign contact information updates due by 5 p.m.	17	18	19 Elections office closed in observance of Juneteenth	20 Overseas, service, and out of state ballots mailed Online voter guide available Ballot tracker available	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30					

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July			1	2	3	4 Elections office closed in observance of Independence Day	5
	6	7	8	9	10		12
	13	14	15 Local voters' pamphlet mailed to all residential households in King County	16 Ballots mailed Vote Center at King County Elections opens	17 Ballot drop boxes open Last day to file as a write-in candidate without paying a filing fee, due by 4:30 p.m.	18	19
	20	21 1st day candidates may submit a local voters' pamphlet statement for the general election	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28 Deadline to register or update an existing registration online or by mail	29	30	31		

Primary and general election calendar (continued)

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	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August						1	2 Additional Vote Centers open
	3	4	5 Election Day Deadline to register in person and vote Last day to file as a write-in candidate by 8 p.m.	6	7	8 Local voters' pamphlet submissions for the general due by 5 p.m.	9
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19 Election certification RCW 29A.60.190	20	21 Deadline to file application for recount by 4:30 p.m. RCW 29A.64.011	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31						

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
September		1 Elections office closed in observance of Labor Day	2	3	4	5 Local voters' pamphlet proofs sent to candidates for review	6
	7	8 Candidate responses for local voters' pamphlet proofs + campaign contact information updates due by 5 p.m.	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18	19 Overseas, service, and out of state ballots mailed Online voter guide available Ballot tracker available	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	28	29	30				

Primary and general election calendar (continued)

Item 7.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
October				1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13 Elections office closed in observance of Indigenous Peoples' Day	14 Local voters' pamphlet mailed to all residential households in King County	15 Ballots mailed Vote Center at King County Elections opens	16 Ballot drop boxes open Deadline to file as a write-in candidate without paying a filing fee by 4:30 p.m.	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27 Deadline to register or update an existing registration online or by mail	28	29	30	31	

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
November							1 Additional Vote Centers open
	2	3	4 Election Day deadline to register in person and vote Last day to file as a write-in candidate by 8 p.m.	5	6	7	8
	9	10	11 Elections office closed in observance of Veterans Day	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25 Election certification RCW 29A.60.190	26	27 Elections office closed in observance of Thanksgiving	28 Elections office closed in observance of Thanksgiving	29
	30						

Primary and general election calendar (continued)

Item 7.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
December		1 Deadline to file application for recount RCW 29A.64.011	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25 Elections office closed in observance of Christmas	26	27
	28	29	30	31			

Filing to be a Candidate

How to file for office.

chapter

02

Item 7.

Becoming a candidate

To become a candidate, you must complete and file a Declaration of Candidacy and, at the time of filing, possess the qualifications specified by law required for the office and be properly registered to vote in the district represented by the office. Information about residency requirements can be found at the end of this chapter.

To find out which offices you can file for this year, view the [Offices Subject to Election](#) on our website. This list includes the offices up for election, the current incumbent, where to file your Declaration of Candidacy, filing fee information and voters' pamphlet submission information.

When to file

The candidate filing period begins the first Monday in May and ends the following Friday.

All Declarations of Candidacy must be received by 5 p.m. on the last day of the filing period. Declarations of Candidacy received after this date, regardless of the postmark, are invalid. No late filings will be accepted.

Candidates may file online starting at 8 a.m. on the first day of filing until 5 p.m. on the last day of filing. Mailed Declarations of Candidacy may be submitted in advance up to ten business days before the filing period begins. Filings received prior to this date will be returned to the candidate. Contact the Elections office to discuss filing in person.

Where to file

All candidates will file online via the Secretary of State's Candidate Filing portal.

The following offices must file with the Office of the Secretary of State:

- President and Vice President
- US Senator
- US Representative
- State offices
- State Senator and Representative for all Legislative Districts
- State Supreme Court



Filing deadlines

Mail

April 21 - May 9, 5:00 p.m., regardless of postmark

In-person

May 5, 8:00 a.m. - May 9, 5:00 p.m.

Online

May 5, 8:00 a.m. - May 9, 5:00 p.m.



Office of the Secretary of State Elections Division

360-902-4180

elections@sos.wa.gov

sos.wa.gov/elections

- Court of Appeals, Division No. 1, District, No. 1
- King County Superior Court

Contact the Office of the Secretary of State for more information about filing in person with their office.

Candidates for the following offices must file with King County Elections:

- County offices
- District Court
- Cities and Towns (Exception: City of Milton files with Pierce County)
- Municipal Court
- Schools (Exception: Fife School District No. 417 files with Pierce County)
- Special Purpose Districts where a majority of the voters are registered in King County (Note: East Pierce Fire & Rescue and Rural Pierce County Library System file with Pierce County, Snoqualmie Pass Fire and Rescue and Snoqualmie Pass Utility District file with Kittitas County)

Cost to file

Filing fees or filing fee petitions must accompany the Declaration of Candidacy at the time of filing. The filing fee is based on the salary in effect at the time of filing. Candidates can pay the filing fee online using a credit card or debit card. Candidates paying the filing fee with cash or check should contact the Elections office for information about filing in person.

Filing fees are not refundable, even in the event of a withdrawal. If a candidate withdraws and re-files for a different position, a second filing fee must be paid for the new position.

A candidate who lacks sufficient assets or income at the time of filing to pay the filing fee should contact our office as soon as possible to receive more information about your options.

To view filing fee information for offices subject to election this year, view the [Offices Subject to Election](#) on our website. This list includes the offices up for election, the current incumbent, where to file your Declaration of Candidacy, filing fee information and voters' pamphlet submission information.

Filing fee petitions

Those planning to submit a filing fee petition or who lack the funds to pay their filing fee should contact our office as soon as possible to receive more information about options.

Getting ready to file

Item 7.

Before you file for office, you will need to:

- Verify that your voter registration information is current. You can [verify your voter registration information](#) online.
- Verify the office and position for which you are filing. You are responsible for filing for the correct office. Remember, filing fees are not refundable. If you withdraw and re-file for a different position, you must pay a second filing fee for the new position.
- Make sure you meet the qualifications for that office. You are responsible for ensuring that you meet all qualifications of the office.
- Decide how you want your name to appear on the ballot.
- If filing for a partisan office, know how you want your party preference information to appear on the ballot.
- Have your campaign contact information ready.

Your name on the ballot

When filing for office, you must input your name exactly as you wish it to appear on the ballot. You may use a nickname by which you are commonly known as your first name, but your last name must be the name under which you are registered to vote. For example, if you are registered to vote as William Smith but are commonly known as Bill, you may use Bill Smith for your ballot name.

You may not use a nickname that denotes present or past occupation or military rank, use a nickname that denotes your position on issues or political affiliation, or use a nickname designed to intentionally mislead voters.

Make sure you input your ballot name correctly; you cannot make any corrections once you submit your Declaration of Candidacy.

Partisan offices - party preferences

For a partisan office, you may choose to state a political party that you personally prefer. A preference does not imply that you have been nominated or endorsed by the party, or that the party approves of or associates with you.

If you choose to state a party preference, enter the name of the party (must be 18 characters or less). The first letter of the party preference will be capitalized (i.e., Democratic). If you use an acronym or initials, each letter will be capitalized whether or not use you periods (i.e., GOP or G.O.P.). Your party preference will appear below your name as "(Prefers _____ Party)".

If you choose not to state a party preference, "(States No Party Preference)" will appear on the ballot.

Make sure you input your party preference exactly as you wish it to appear on the ballot; you cannot make any changes once you submit your Declaration of Candidacy.

How to file your Declaration of Candidacy

Filing your Declaration of Candidacy is important and as a best practice, King County Elections recommends that you submit your Declaration of Candidacy as early as possible during filing week. Our office cannot accept late submissions.

All candidates will file online via the Secretary of State's Candidate Filing portal. Online candidate filing opens on Monday, May 5, 2025, at 8 a.m. and is available 24 hours a day until Friday, May 9, 2025, at 5 p.m.

Candidates will receive a confirmation email when their filing has been received and again when their filing has been approved.

Watch this [online training tutorial video](#) that will guide you through the steps to file for office online. The tutorial will be available by April 1, 2025.

King County Elections strongly recommends filing online. Completing your Declaration of Candidacy through the online portal is fast, easy and convenient.

If you will be out of town and will not have computer access during the week of candidate filing, you may submit your Declaration of Candidacy by mail beginning on April 21, 2025. Filings submitted by mail must be received by 5:00 p.m. on May 9, 2025, regardless of postmark. Filings received by mail prior to April 21, 2025, will be returned to the candidate.

Once filed, a Declaration of Candidacy may not be altered. If you decide during the filing period to change the Declaration of Candidacy, you must first withdraw and then re-file.

Withdrawal of candidacy

The deadline for withdrawing from office is the Monday following filing week.

To withdraw, you must submit a signed request that your name be removed from the ballot. A [Withdrawal of Candidacy form](#) will be available on our website. The form is also available via a link in the confirmation email sent to candidates who filed for office online.

No filing fees will be refunded, even in the event of a withdrawal.



Item 7.

How to: File for office



Clicking on the image above will link to a brief tutorial on how to file for office online. The tutorial will be available by April 1.



Filing deadlines

Mail

April 21 - May 9, 5:00 p.m., regardless of postmark

In-person

May 5, 8:00 a.m. - May 9, 5:00 p.m.

Online

May 5, 8:00 a.m. - May 9, 5:00 p.m.



Deadline to withdraw candidacy

May 12, 2025, 5:00 p.m.

No double filings

A candidate's name cannot appear on the ballot more than once, except for precinct committee officer.

Residency Requirements

All candidates must be registered to vote within the district they are running to represent. Before filing, confirm your voting districts using the [My Voter Information tool](#) on our website.

Every ten years following the Census, electoral districts are redrawn. This is done to make sure that each district represents an equal number of residents.

Congressional, state legislative, and County Council districts were redrawn in 2021. The City of Seattle and some special purpose districts with internal boundaries completed redistricting in 2022.

Your district may have changed in either process. Be sure to check your voting districts using the [My Voter Information tool](#).

Office	Requirements
County offices	Candidates must be at least 21 years of age, residents and registered voters of King County. County Council candidates must be residents and registered voters of their County Council district. (King County Charter)
Court of appeals judges	Candidates must be residents for not less than one year at the time of appointment or initial election in the district for which his or her position was created and admitted to practice law in the courts of the State of Washington for not less than five years prior to taking office. (RCW 2.06)
Fire, water & sewer districts	Candidates must be qualified electors (registered voters) of district. (RCW 42.04)
Municipal court judges (other than Seattle Municipal Court)	Candidates must be qualified resident electors of King County and admitted to practice law in the courts of record of the State of Washington. (RCW 3.50)
Non-charter code cities	Candidates must be registered voters at the time of filing and residents for at least one year on Election Day. (RCW 35A.12.030) Note: All cities in King County are "non-charter code" cities, except the city of Seattle and the towns of Beaux Arts Village, Hunts Point, Skykomish and Yarrow Point.
Park & recreation districts	Candidates must be resident electors (registered voters) of district. (RCW 36.69, 54.12)
Port districts	Candidates must be registered voters of King County. (RCW 53.12)
School districts	Candidates must be registered voters of the district or director district. Mercer Island, Vashon Island and Skykomish School District candidates need only be registered voters in the school district. Candidates of all other school districts must be registered voters in their director district. (RCW 28A.315, 29A.24)

Office	Requirements
State legislature	Candidates must be qualified voters in the district. (State Constitution, Article II, Section 7)
State offices	Candidates must be qualified electors of the State of Washington. (State Constitution, Article III, Section 25)
Supreme, superior, and Seattle municipal court judges	Candidates must be registered voters of Washington State and admitted to practice law in the courts of record of the State of Washington. (State Constitution, Article IV, Section 17; Article III, Section 25; RCW 35.20)
District court judges	Candidates must be a registered voter of the district court and electoral district and admitted to practice law in the state of Washington. (RCW 3.34)
US representative	Candidates must be at least 25 years of age, US citizens and residents of the state for which they shall be chosen. (US Constitution, Article II)
US senate	Candidates must be at least 30 years of age, US citizens and residents of the state for which they shall be chosen. (US Constitution, Article II)

Write-in Candidate

Information on how to file as an official write-in candidate.

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Item 7.

Becoming a write-in candidate

In order to have votes counted for a race, write-in candidates must file a [Declaration of Write-in Candidacy](#). The Declaration of Write-in Candidacy form will be made available on our website in May. At the time of filing, you must possess the qualifications specified by law required for the office and be properly registered to vote in the district represented by the office. You cannot file to be a write-in candidate if you are already on the ballot (except for precinct committee officer) and/or have already filed for the same office at the preceding primary.

To find out which offices you can file for this year, view the [Offices Subject to Election](#) on our website. This list includes the offices up for election, the current incumbent, where to file and filing fee information.

When to file

Declarations of Write-in Candidacy must be received by 8 p.m. on the primary or general election day. Declarations of Write-in Candidacy received after this date, regardless of the postmark, cannot be accepted. Candidates that file 19 days prior to election day or earlier do not have to pay a filing fee.

Where to file

The following offices must file with the Office of the Secretary of State:

- President and Vice President
- US Senator
- US Representative
- State offices
- State Senator and Representative for all Legislative Districts
- State Supreme Court
- Court of Appeals, Division No. 1, District No. 1
- King County Superior Court

Contact the Secretary of State's Office for more information about filing with their office.



Deadline to file as write-in candidate

Primary Election: August 5, 2025, 8 p.m.

- Deadline to file without paying a filing fee: July 17, 2025, 4:30 p.m.

General Election: November 4, 2025, 8 p.m.

- Deadline to file without paying a filing fee: October 16, 2025, 4:30 p.m.



Office of the Secretary of State Elections Division

360-902-4180

elections@sos.wa.gov

sos.wa.gov/elections

The following offices must file with King County Elections:

- County offices
- District Court
- Cities and Towns (Note: City of Milton files with Pierce County)
- Municipal Court
- Schools (Note: Fife School District No. 417 files with Pierce County)
- Special Purpose Districts where a majority of the voters are registered in King County (Note: East Pierce Fire & Rescue and Rural Pierce County Library System file with Pierce County, Snoqualmie Pass Fire and Rescue and Snoqualmie Pass Utility District files with Kittitas County)

Cost to file

The filing fee is based on the timing of when the declaration is filed. Write-in candidates that file 19 days or earlier before an election do not pay a filing fee. Write-in candidates that file 18 days or less before an election must pay a filing fee amount. For offices with an annual salary of more than \$1,000, the filing fee amount is 1% of the annual salary. For all other offices, the filing fee amount is \$25. Filing fees or filing fee petitions must accompany the Declaration of Write-in Candidacy at the time of filing.

Filing fees are not refundable, even in the event of a withdrawal. If a write-in candidate withdraws and re-files for a different position, a second filing fee must be paid for the new position.

A candidate who lacks sufficient assets or income at the time of filing to pay the filing fee should contact our office as soon as possible to receive more information about options.

To find out filing fee information for offices subject to election this year, view the [Offices Subject to Election](#) on our website. This list includes the offices up for election, the current incumbent, where to file your Declaration of Write-in Candidacy and filing fee information.

Filing fee petitions

Those planning to submit a filing fee petition or who lack the funds to pay their filing fee should contact our office as soon as possible to receive more information about options.

Results

Write-in votes are not tabulated for individual write-in candidates unless there is a declared write-in candidate for that race and enough write-in votes are cast to meet the thresholds required for individually tallying those votes.

Qualifying for the ballot

Names of write-in candidates will not appear on the ballot or in the voters' pamphlet.

If a write-in candidate qualifies for the general election by earning a sufficient number of votes in the primary, the candidate's name will be printed on the general election ballot and in the general election voters' pamphlet.

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Withdrawal of write-in candidacy

Withdrawals of write-in candidacy must be received before 8 p.m. on the date of the primary or general election.

To withdraw, you must submit a signed request. A [Withdrawal of Candidacy form](#) will be made available on our website in May.

No filing fees will be refunded, even in the event of a withdrawal.

Voters' Pamphlet Information

Guidelines and information on how to submit your voters' pamphlet information.

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Item 7.

Where to file

The [Secretary of State's Office](#) accepts voters' pamphlet submissions for federal, statewide, legislative, Court of Appeals and Superior Court offices. All other offices file with their county elections office. **The voters' pamphlet guidelines and deadlines in this manual only pertain to candidates who file with King County Elections.**

Where to file and word limits for each office will be listed in the [Offices Subject to Election](#) on our website by March 10, 2025. Please note, candidates for multi-county local races will need to file their voters' pamphlet materials with the county that the declaration of candidacy was filed.

When to file

Our office must receive your voters' pamphlet submission for the primary election no later than Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 5:00 p.m., regardless of postmark.

You have the option of submitting a new statement for the general election. If you choose to submit a new statement and/or photo for the general election, you can begin filing as early as Monday, July 21, 2025. Your voters' pamphlet submission for the general election must be received by our office no later than Friday, August 8, 2025, at 5:00 p.m., regardless of postmark.

Submissions received after the deadline will not be accepted. No exceptions.

Your photo

You may submit one self-portrait of your head and shoulders. Use a light-colored background, but white is not recommended. Photos should be no more than five years old. Clothing or insignia that suggest a public office (i.e., judicial robes, law enforcement or military uniforms) are not allowed.

Your photo should not be digitally altered. Digital photos should be at minimum 300 dpi resolution and no smaller than 4 x 5 inches (1200 x 1500 pixels).

If you do not submit a photo the phrase "No photo submitted" will appear in the pamphlet.

If you decide during the filing period to change your submission, you must first withdraw and then re-file by the deadline. After the filing period, you are not allowed to change your photo.



Deadline to file voters' pamphlet information

Primary Election: May 20, 2025, 5:00 p.m.

General Election: August 8, 2025, 5:00 p.m.

Formatting

Space for each candidate is limited, so formatting is very important.

Format your statement as an essay; text must be written in paragraphs. Tables, lists and bullet points are not allowed, and will be changed to a block paragraph with a semicolon to separate each item. The number of paragraphs permitted is based on statement word limits:

- 150 words: three paragraphs
- 200 words: four paragraphs
- 300 words: six paragraphs

Only use italics to emphasize specific words or statements. Bold, underline and all caps is not allowed. Words or statements submitted with prohibited formatting will be changed to italics.

Correct

I approve of *justice* for all, *fairness* of the law and *rehabilitation*.

Incorrect

- I approve of:
- JUSTICE for all
 - **Fairness** of the law
 - Rehabilitation

Keep your statement simple and write in the narrative. Per RCW 29A.32.230(3), your statement must only be about you. Do not include references to your opponent(s). You may seek help when writing your statement but remember it is ultimately your responsibility. All or any part of a candidate statement may be rejected at the Elections Director's discretion if it contains obscene, profane, libelous and/or defamatory language.

Voters want to know why they should vote for you. Here are a few tips from voters:

- Treat this as a resume and edit carefully.
- Give your vision for the future. Be positive.

Sample statement in the printed voters' pamphlet.

Item 7.

Liz Darcy

(555) 555-5555
info@darcyformayor.com
www.darcyformayor.com



Education: Bachelor's in Economics, State University; Master's in Business Administration, State University

Occupation: Manager, Main Street Bank

Statement: We deserve a leader that will listen to our ideas and concerns and be proactive, not reactive, in their decision making. We deserve a leader that cares more about serving citizens than getting re-elected. We deserve a leader at city hall that can work with local businesses, instead of against them; a leader that has the knowledge to set the city on a successful course—not just for the next five years, but for the next five decades. *I am that leader.*

Born and raised in this town, my roots here run deep. My family has lived here for four generations, and my husband and I are raising our three beautiful children here. As manager of the bank for the last fifteen years, I have expanded our small business loan program, creating opportunities for local businesses and organizations to make a difference in our community. This successful program has reduced the vacancy rate on Main Street to zero, creating a prosperous, revitalized Downtown.

I am an active community volunteer: as head of the PTA, I have worked with other parents to create the best learning environment for our kids; and I helped to establish our city's block watch program, which keeps our neighborhoods safe and crime rates low.

As your mayor I will work to make our city a better place for all residents to live. I will listen to your ideas and provide forums for discussion and debate. I will make decisions based not just on immediate need, but with an eye toward the future. I will make city government more transparent and fiscally responsible.

I want to make our city the best it can be; together we can make a difference! *I humbly ask for your vote.*



Word limits

300 words: all countywide offices (Executive, Prosecuting Attorney, Assessor, Director of Elections, port district commissioners), County Council offices, City of Seattle offices, and jurisdictions having over 150,000 registered voters

200 words: District Court judges and jurisdictions having between 65,000 and 149,999 registered voters

150 words: all other offices and jurisdictions

- Write what you stand for or support.
- Describe your education, background and/or qualifications.
- Avoid technical terms that may not be generally understood.
- Do not criticize opponents.

Proofread carefully; your statement will be printed exactly as you submit it. You are not allowed to change your statement once it has been submitted.

Word limits

Word limits vary by office and can be found in the [Offices Subject to Election](#) on our website by March 10, 2025. In addition to the statement, each candidate may include a 10-word occupation line and a 15-word education line.

If no information is submitted for any of the sections, the statement “No information submitted” will appear in the pamphlet.

Your campaign contact information

Campaign contact information such as a phone number, email, and/or website is included in the pamphlet. Contact information does not count towards the word limits. Government web and email addresses, such as those ending in .gov, are not permitted. Mailing addresses are not published in the pamphlet.

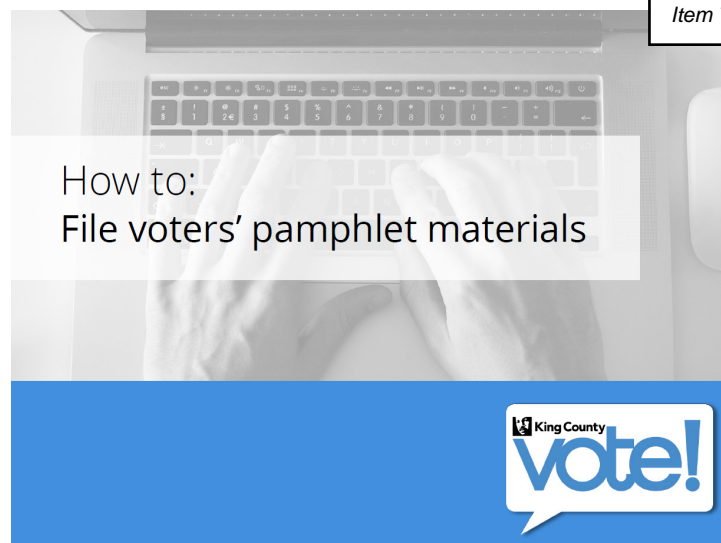
You may update your contact information for the print edition of the local voters’ pamphlet for the primary election until June 16, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. and until September 8, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. for the general election. Changes to your contact information on our website can be made at any time before the election.

How to submit your voters’ pamphlet information

Your voters’ pamphlet submission is important and as a best practice, King County Elections recommends that you submit your information as early as possible. Our office will not accept late submissions. No exceptions.

King County Elections recommends filing your voters’ pamphlet statement online. Filing online is both easy and convenient.

King County Elections will provide an online training tutorial that will guide you through how to file your voters’ pamphlet information



Clicking on the image above after April 1, 2025 will link to a brief tutorial on how to file your voters’ pamphlet information.



Deadline to file voters’ pamphlet information

Primary Election: May 20, 2025, 5:00 p.m.

General Election: August 8, 2025, 5:00 p.m.



Please submit your materials as soon as possible.

Once received, all information must be reviewed, translated into additional languages and prepared for printing. This all must happen in a very tight time frame. By submitting early, you are helping us manage our work flow and ensuring that King County voters will continue to receive a quality voters’ pamphlet.

online. The video will be made available through our [Running for Office webpage](#) by April 1, 2025.

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For the primary election, online voters' pamphlet filing opens on Monday, May 5, 2025, at 8 a.m. and is available 24 hours a day until Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Any candidates who have not completed their filing by 5:00 p.m. will be shut out of the system and their voters' pamphlet information rejected.

For the general election, online voters' pamphlet filing opens on Monday, July 21, 2025, at 8 a.m. and is available 24 hours a day until Friday, August 8, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Any candidates who have not completed their filing by 5:00 p.m. will be shut out of the system and their voters' pamphlet information invalidated.

If you submitted a statement and/or photo for the primary election, you are not required to resubmit for the general election. If our office does not receive a new statement and/or photo from you for the general election, the information you submitted for the primary election will appear in the general election pamphlet.

You also have the option of submitting your voters' pamphlet information by mail. If submitting by mail, you must also complete a King County Local Voters' Pamphlet Submission Form, which can be found on our website. Filings submitted by mail must be received by 5:00 p.m. on the last day to file, regardless of postmark.

If you decide during the filing period to change your submission, you must first withdraw and then re-file by the deadline. Once the voters' pamphlet statement deadline has passed, your voters' pamphlet statement and/or photo may not be altered.

Withdrawal of voters' pamphlet submission

You may withdraw your statement and photo and submit a new statement and photo prior to the submission deadline. If you withdraw your statement and photo and fail to resubmit a new statement and photo, no statement or photo will appear in the voters' pamphlet.

To withdraw, you must submit an email or written request withdrawing your original statement and photo. A Withdrawal of Local Voters' Pamphlet Submission Form can be found on our website. A link to this form is also in the email confirmation sent to candidates who file online. The withdrawal form is not necessary when withdrawal is requested by email.

Reviewing your submission

Prior to publication of the local voters' pamphlet, King County Elections will email each candidate a proof of their statement. Upon receipt of the proof, candidates should ensure that there are no discrepancies between the proof copy and the information they submitted.

No changes to the originally submitted statements or photos will be accepted. The only changes that will be accepted are updates to the campaign contact information.



Deadline to withdraw voters' pamphlet information

Primary Election: May 20, 2025, 5:00 p.m.

General Election: August 8, 2025, 5:00 p.m.



Voters' pamphlet review deadlines

Primary Election: June 16, 2025, 5:00 p.m.

General Election: September 8, 2025, 5:00 p.m.

Campaign Contributions

Where to file campaign contribution information.

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Item 7.

Where to file

All candidates need to contact the [Washington State Public Disclosure Commission \(PDC\)](#) directly with any questions regarding the filing of public disclosure documents. We strongly encourage candidates to access all PDC information on their website.

Information for county offices (Assessor, County Council, Director of Elections, and Executive)

Candidates for King County elective office no longer must file a statement of financial and other interests with the King County Ethics Program.

All nominees for appointment to any County elective office (except for judicial offices), within two weeks of becoming a nominee and all elected officials who are defined as county employees, shall file a statement of financial and other interest with the King County Ethics Program. This requirement may be satisfied by filing a signed copy of the PDC F-1 report. For more information, contact the King County Ethics Program.

Contribution limits for county offices

All persons and organizations, including political committees, are prohibited from making contributions during the election cycle totaling more than \$2,400 in the aggregate to any candidate for Assessor, County Council, Director of Elections, or Executive.



Washington State Public Disclosure
Commission

877-601-2828
pdc.wa.gov



Ethics Program
King County Office of Civil Rights
& Open Government

206-263-7821
program.ethics@kingcounty.gov
kingcounty.gov/ethics

Ballot Order

Information about the order in which candidates and measures appear on the ballot.

Ballot order

State law determines the order of offices and measures on the ballot at the federal or state level. For local offices and measures, the order they appear on the ballot is established by the county.

Order of offices

The offices will appear in the following order:

- Federal Offices
 - President and Vice President of the United States
 - United States Senator
 - United States Representative
- State Offices
 - Governor
 - Lieutenant Governor
 - Secretary of State
 - State Treasurer
 - State Auditor
 - Attorney General
 - Commissioner of Public Lands
 - Superintendent of Public Instruction
 - Insurance Commissioner
 - State Senator
 - State Representative
- County Offices
 - County Executive
 - Prosecuting Attorney
 - Assessor
 - Director of Elections
 - County Council
- State and County Judicial Offices. These appear on the ballot sequentially by district and/or position within each category.
 - Justices of the Supreme Court
 - Judges of the Court of Appeals
 - Judges of the Superior Court
 - Judges of the District Court
- Countywide Special Purpose Districts
 - Port of Seattle
- Cities and Towns
 - Mayor
 - City Attorney
 - Other elective department positions
 - Council
 - Municipal Court Judge
- Special Purpose Districts. Directors or commissioners within each district shall be in the order of the position or director district numbers assigned to those offices.
 - Regional districts that are not countywide
 - Transportation
 - School
 - Fire
 - Water
 - Sewer
 - Sewer and water combined
 - Public hospital
 - Airport
 - Cemetery
 - Park and Recreation Districts
 - Park and Recreation Service Areas
 - Flood, Drainage or related districts

Order of measures

The measures will appear on the ballot in the following order:

- Initiatives to the people
- Referendum measures
- Referendum bills
- Initiatives to the Legislature and alternate proposals, if any
- Proposed Constitutional amendments
 - Senate Joint Resolutions
 - House Joint Resolutions
- Countywide ballot measures

All other local measures, if any, appear in the area dedicated to that jurisdiction and follow the offices. For example, a ballot measure for a city would appear on the ballot after the city council races. Local measures would appear in the following order:

- Initiatives
- Referendum measures
- Proposed charter amendments
- All other propositions

Measures are numbered sequentially within each of the above categories in the order they are received by King County Elections, unless otherwise indicated by the jurisdiction proposing the measures.

Order of candidates

After the close of the regular candidate filing period, King County Elections will conduct a lot draw to determine the order in which candidate names will appear on the primary election ballot.

For the general election ballot, the candidate receiving the most votes in the primary election will appear first and the candidate receiving the second highest number of votes will appear second. If a primary election is not required for an office, the candidate names will appear on the general election ballot in the order determined by the lot draw.

Voter Statistics and Data

Information about past voter turnout and how to request voter information.

Data Visualization Tool

Easily view [ballot return statistics](#) for each election on our website. This information is updated every two hours between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on business days during an active election.

General data request information

Current lists of voter registrations are public records. (RCW 29A.08.720)

This data may be used for political purposes only. Voter registration data may not be used for commercial purposes. (RCW 29A.08.720, 29A.08.740 and 42.56.070(9))

The official list of registered voters is made available by the Washington Secretary of State.

More information about how to access voter data is available readily on their [website](#).

Past election results

To research past election results and data, you can view our [website](#).

Requests for public records

To access any additional records produced by our agency, please make a public records request via our [records portal](#).

You can find more information about public records requests on our website.

Mail ballot status reports

The Washington Secretary of State provides reports regarding returned ballots during an election period. [Ballot return statistics](#) are posted after 5 p.m. each business day, beginning two weeks prior to Election Day and continuing until the election is certified. For questions about the data, contact elections@sos.wa.gov.

Office of the Secretary of State
Elections Division

360-902-4180
elections@sos.wa.gov
sos.wa.gov/elections

Voter Registration Guidelines

General information about voter registration drives.

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Item 7.

Voter registration drives

Every eligible person is encouraged to register to vote and to participate fully in all elections. Make sure the people of your community have a voice in the next election.

Tips for a successful drive:

- Plan your drive well in advance of voter registration deadlines.
- Consider coordinating with other groups to maximize your efforts.
- Obtain permission from the owner or manager before conducting drives on private property.
- Obtain forms from the Elections office or the Secretary of State's Office.
- Treat everyone the same.
- Know how to complete the form so you can assist individuals.
- Allow people to take a registration form and submit it themselves.
- Let people know they may fill out a form to update their existing registration (name change, address change, etc.)
- Assist people with disabilities only when they ask for help.
- Have contact information for the Elections office available to aid in referring people.
- Submit completed forms within 5 business days. You can submit completed forms by mail or in person to the Elections office.
- Return unused forms to the Elections office.

Do not...

- refuse to give anyone a registration form.
- offer gifts or promotional items for registering someone to vote unless you offer the same item to someone who does not register to vote.
- accept registrations you know to be fraudulent (see Voter Concern Information at the end of this chapter).

Completing the voter registration form

The below information is required on voter registration forms:

- voter's name;
- date of birth;*
- affirmation of United States citizenship;
- a Washington State residential address (include both mailing and residential addresses if mail is not delivered to the residential address);
- signature attesting to the truth of the information provided.

*16 and 17 year olds can now pre-register to vote. Registrants under the age of 18 will have their registrations held until they become eligible to vote.

Voter registration deadlines for the primary and general elections

Online or by mail:

- You can register to vote, or update your registration, online or by mail until 8 days before an election.
- Mailed registrations need to be received, not postmarked, by the 8 day deadline.
- If changes to an existing registration are not received online or by mail by this deadline, a voter may still vote using their previous voter registration record information, or make the necessary updates in person.

In-person, at any elections office in Washington State:

- You can register to vote, or update your registration, until 8 p.m. on election day.
- If a voter is unable to update their existing registration in person by this deadline, they may still vote using their previous voter registration record information.

Voter concern information

If you believe you have witnessed irregularities, discrimination or fraud, please report the incident by accessing the Hava Complaint [Form](#) on the Secretary of State's [website](#).

Clearly and specifically state your concern(s) and include events, dates, times, addresses and names pertaining to your concern(s).



King County Elections -
Voter Services

206-296-8683
elections@kingcounty.gov
kingcounty.gov/elections



Office of the Secretary of State
Elections Division

360-902-4180
elections@sos.wa.gov
sos.wa.gov/elections

Campaign Sign Regulations

General information about campaign sign regulations.

chapter

09

Item 7.

The role of King County Elections

King County Elections has **no** role in the regulation of campaign signs.

King County sign regulations

King County regulates all signs on county-owned property, easements and unincorporated road right-of-way, and unpermitted signs are not allowed in these locations (King County Code (KCC) 21A.20.040 and 21A.20.120C2). The county may remove and dispose of any unpermitted signs posted on county-owned property, easements or road right-of-way.

Political campaign signs may be displayed on private property with the property owner's consent. Any such signs, posters or handbills must be removed within 10 days following the election day, per King County Code (KCC) 21A.20.120C1. Although the campaign volunteers may agree to remove any sign, the property owner is ultimately responsible for compliance with the removal policy.

What to do about signs illegally placed

On private property:

- Property owners can contact the campaign headquarters and ask to have the sign removed.
- Advise the campaign about the error so it is not repeated.
- The King County Road Services Division has no authority over signs posted on private property.

On the road right-of-way in unincorporated King County:

- Call Road Services at 1-800-KC-ROADS (527-6237).

Report sign problems not related to road right-of-way issues:

- Call the campaign headquarters. If the campaign contact information is not listed on the sign, the King County Elections [website](#) lists all of the candidates and their campaign contact information.
- To file a formal complaint about damaged or stolen political campaign signs in unincorporated King County, contact the King County Sheriff's Office at 206-296-3311. It will be helpful to include such facts as license numbers, names and witnesses to the theft. Do not call 911.

How to retrieve signs removed from the right-of-way:

- Campaigns can call Road Services at 1-800-KC-ROADS (527-6237) to find out how to retrieve signs that maintenance crews have removed.
- Private property owners should contact the campaign headquarters to replace a sign that has been vandalized or stolen from their property.

Washington State sign regulations

RCW 47.42 and the Highway Advertising Control Act regulate signs on Interstate highways, primary highways and highways that are part of the Scenic and Recreational system. Signs on private property adjacent to these highways must comply with the Highway Advertising Control Act, rules contained in WAC 468-66 and applicable local agency sign codes. Signs placed within the right-of-way of any state highway are subject to removal by the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Per WAC 468-66-050 & RCW 47.36.180(1), temporary political campaign signs:

- are limited to a maximum size of 32 square feet;
- must not resemble an official traffic control sign;
- must be removed within 10 days following the election;
- be placed with permission of the property owner prior to placing sign.

For any questions about the placement of campaign signs along state highways, call 360-705-7294.



King County Department of
Transportation
Road Services Division
800-KC-ROADS (527-6237)
maint.roads@kingcounty.gov
kingcounty.gov/roads



Washington State Department of
Transportation
360-705-7294
wsdot.wa.gov

Observing Elections

Information about observing the elections process at King County Elections.

chapter 10

Item 7.

Take a self-guided tour of Elections

See democracy in action! You can walk the 1/5 mile “loop” circling our ballot processing area. See every step a ballot takes, from signature verification to opening and scanning.

King County Elections Headquarters features a viewing loop so that you can observe the election process in action. No reservations are needed for this self-guided tour.

The viewing loop is open on the dates listed below during weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with extended hours on election days.

Primary election: July 16 - August 19

General election: October 15 - November 25

On our website, you may take a [video tour of King County Elections](#) that walks you through every step of the process. Each video segment corresponds to a view point on our self-guided tour.

More information about [observer opportunities](#) can be found on our website; continue to check back for updates throughout the year.

Live election cams

See for yourself how ballots are processed by watching our [live election cams](#) (when an election is in process) which are available on our website.

Webcams in areas that ballots are being processed are live 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from the Monday after UOCAVA ballots are mailed through election certification.

Primary election live web cam dates: June 23 - August 19

General election live web cam dates: September 22 - November 25

The webcam in the warehouse will be turned on the Friday after ballots are mailed, 18 days before election day.

All other webcams will be turned on the day the Official Logic & Accuracy tests are conducted, 26 days before Election Day.

If we are not currently processing ballots, consider watching our [virtual tour video](#) to get an idea of what we do.

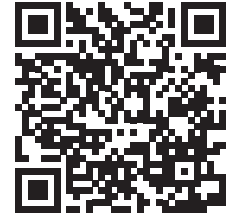


We hear you've decided to run for office...

• Step 1: Introduce yourself

You are a candidate once you publicly announce your candidacy, raise or spend money on your campaign, or **file during declaration week (May 5-9, 2025)**.

Within two weeks, register your campaign and file your personal financial affairs statement (F-1). See instructions and exceptions to this rule in the link to the right.



Registration and reporting basics

• Step 2: Consider your (reporting) options

Choose **mini** or **full** reporting. Unlike full-reporting, mini-reporting campaigns can raise or spend **no more than \$7,000, or \$500 from each contributor** without filing regular reports with the PDC (but must maintain records.)

Choose wisely! Mini reporting campaigns that exceed limits may face enforcement action. Switching to full reporting requires PDC approval and retroactive reporting.

• Step 3: Learn your responsibilities

Full-reporting campaigns must regularly report contributions and expenditures and abide by contribution limits, and all campaigns must follow political advertising rules and other requirements under **RCW 42.17A** and **WAC 390**.

"The public's right to know of the financing of political campaigns and lobbying and the financial affairs of elected officials and candidates far outweighs any right that these matters remain secret and private."

RCW 42.17A.001

• Step 4: Know your resources

Sign up today for one of the PDC's free online training sessions on:

- Disclosure 101: Candidates and Committees
- Understanding the F-1
- ORCA filing system demonstration



Training and resources for campaigns

Contact us: (360) 753-1111 pdc@pdc.wa.gov pdc.wa.gov

Title 2 ADMINISTRATION

Chapter 2.02 NONCHARTER CODE CITY

2.02.010 City classification.

The city of Mercer Island is classified as a noncharter code city, under the council-manager plan of government as set forth in RCW Chapter 35A.13, endowed with all the applicable rights, powers, privileges, duties and obligations of a noncharter code city as set forth in RCW Title 35A, as the same now exists, or may be provided hereafter, including any and all supplements, amendments, or other modifications of said title at any time hereafter enacted.

(Ord. 442 § 1, 1978)

Chapter 2.04 CITY COUNCIL—OFFICERS

2.04.010 City council positions.

The city council members shall continue to hold office until their successors are elected and qualified at the next biennial municipal election to be conducted as provided in RCW Chapter 35A.29. The four existing city council positions which terms will expire January 14, 1980, shall be elected for four-year terms in the 1979 municipal elections. The three existing city council positions, which terms expire January 11, 1982, shall be elected for new four-year terms in the 1981 municipal elections. Thereafter the requisite number of city council positions shall be filled by election biennially as the terms of their predecessors expire and shall serve for terms of four years. The positions to be filled on the city council shall be designated by consecutive numbers and shall be dealt with as separate offices for all election purposes as provided by RCW Chapter 35A.29.

(Ord. 442 § 3, 1978)

2.04.020 Reserved.

Editor's note(s)—Repealed by Ord. 04C-09; § 2.04.020, pertaining to designated salaries, is repealed upon the effective date of any schedule filed with the Mercer Island city clerk by the independent salary commission described in chapter 3.42.

2.04.030 Eligibility to hold elective office.

No person shall be eligible to hold elective office under the council-manager plan of government unless he shall have been a resident of the city for a period of at least one year next preceding his election, and a registered voter. A mayor or councilman shall hold within the city government no other public office or employment except as permitted under the provisions of RCW Chapter 42.23.

(Added during 1980 codification)

Chapter 2.06 CITY COUNCIL—MEETINGS

2.06.010 Regular meetings—Date and time.

Regular meetings of the city council will be held on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. When a meeting day falls on a legal holiday, such meeting shall be held on the first business day following.

(Ord. 20C-27 § 1; Ord. 20C-10 § 1; Ord. 20C-03 § 1; Ord. 17C-19 § 1; Ord. 06C-08 § 1; Ord. A-116 § 1, 1994; Ord. A-114 § 1, 1994; Ord. A-94 § 1, 1992; Ord. 516 § 1, 1981)

(Ord. No. 22C-01, § 1, 1-18-2022; Ord. No. 23C-01, § 1, 1-3-2023)

2.06.020 Meeting place.

The regular meeting place of the city council shall be at Mercer Island Community and Event Center, 8236 SE 24th Street, Mercer Island, Washington, or at such other place as the city council may designate and direct at a previous meeting.

(Ord. A-94 § 2, 1992; Ord. 516 § 2, 1981; Ord. No. 23C-13, § 1, 9-5-2023)

2.06.030 Open public meetings.

All meetings of the city council and of committees thereof shall be open to the public, unless an executive session thereof is authorized in accordance with law.

(Ord. 17C-19 § 1; Ord. 516 § 3, 1981)

2.06.040 Presiding member.

Meetings of the council shall be presided over by the mayor, if present, or the mayor pro tempore if one has been appointed, or by a member of the council selected by a majority of the council members at such meeting. Appointment of a council member to preside over the meeting shall not in any way abridge his right to vote on matters coming before the council at such meeting.

(Added during 1980 codification)

2.06.050 Quorum—Rules—Voting.

- A. At all meetings of the council a majority of the councilmembers shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business unless otherwise provided by law. The council shall determine its own rules, bylaws and order of business, and may establish rules for the conduct of council meetings and the maintenance of order. At the desire of any member, any question shall be voted upon by roll call and the ayes and nays shall be recorded in the minutes.
- B. The passage of any ordinance, grant or revocation of franchise or license, and any resolution for the payment of money, shall require the affirmative vote of at least a majority of the whole membership of the council.

(Ord. 17C-19 § 1; added during 1980 codification)

2.06.060 Robert's Rules of Order.

Robert's Rules of Order, revised, shall govern the deliberations of the council, except when in conflict with any rule established by the council.

(Added during 1980 codification)

2.06.070 Powers of council.

The city council shall have the powers and authority granted to legislative bodies of cities governed by RCW Title 35A as more particularly described in RCW Chapter 35A.11, except insofar as such power and authority is vested in the city manager.

(Added during 1980 codification)

Chapter 2.08 CITY OFFICE HOURS

2.08.010 Location of City Hall.

The City Hall for the city shall be at 9611 S.E. 36th Street, Mercer Island, Washington.

(Ord. 95C-009 § 1; Ord. 190 § 1, 1968)

2.08.020 Hours of business and holidays.

A. Unless otherwise specified by the city manager, City Hall shall be open for the transaction of business Monday through Friday during the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with the exception of the following legal holidays:

1. New Year's Day;
2. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday;
3. Presidents' Day;
4. Memorial Day;
5. Juneteenth (beginning in 2022);
6. Independence Day;
7. Labor Day;
8. Veterans Day;
9. Thanksgiving Day;
10. Day after Thanksgiving Day;
11. Christmas Day;
12. One additional holiday as designated by the city manager each year.

- B. When a holiday falls on Sunday, the following Monday shall be observed as a holiday.
- C. When a holiday falls on Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be observed as a holiday.
- (Ord. 190 § 2, 1968; Ord. A-43 § 1, 1985; Ord. No. 21C-24, § 1, 10-19-2021)

Chapter 2.10 OFFICIAL CITY NEWSPAPER

2.10.010 Official city newspaper.

The Mercer Island Reporter shall be the official city newspaper.

(Ord. 80 § 1, 1963)

So you want to be an elected official...

Practical information for
people running for office in
Washington's cities and towns



Why are you running for election to a local office?

This is a question that every candidate will be asked – and a question that every candidate must carefully consider.

Most often, people run for office because they are deeply committed to their city or town and want to influence the community's direction. At times, people run because they are passionate about a single issue or problem. A single controversy – such as a land use or zoning decision – could dominate an entire election campaign.

But once the election is over, things change. Candidates who have won an election based on their position on a single issue soon discover that they are responsible for a much broader array of challenges. The platform they ran on may not even be on the council's agenda. Getting it placed there will only be possible if they are willing and able to work cooperatively with other members of the council, many of whom will have their own issues to champion.

In order to be effective, elected officials must work as part of a team to establish a shared vision for the future, develop goals and plans that make that future possible, and work with their colleagues and constituents to enact the local policies and laws that will ultimately lead to accomplishment.

Holding a public office is an act of service to the public – that is, service to all the residents of a city or town, not just those who share your views or those who voted for you. It is a challenge that requires every office holder to rise above the fray, to reach beyond comfort zones, and to work with others with whom they may have significant differences.

Rising to that challenge is what makes democracy work. It's what makes shaping our shared future possible. It's what others have done before us. And it's what has made our cities and towns places we can be proud of.

Getting elected as a councilmember or mayor brings a special status. It also comes with the obligation to look beyond yourself and cultivate the qualities of collaboration, teamwork, and civility.

Elected officials set the tone for the civic life of their community. When elected officials demonstrate how to differ with one another respectfully, find principled compromises, and focus on the common good, community members often will too. When elected officials get mired in blame, recrimination, or division, civic progress can grind to a halt, and the city's sense of common purpose can fracture.

To govern well, elected leaders must help each other and the public stay focused on the future and on the common good. That can be an uphill struggle when the passions of the moment lead to demands for instant solutions, or when there is a deep division over a single issue that threatens to push longer-term problems aside. There will always be occasions when elected officials differ among themselves. But the mark of leadership is the ability to handle those differences in ways that move the agenda forward, build trust, and create a civic culture of mutual respect that makes progress possible.

When elected officials get mired in blame, recrimination, or division, civic progress can grind to a halt.

Cities provide services that are vital to community health, safety, and economic activity. While specific city-provided services may vary, most cities provide public safety, land use and planning, parks, and public works such as street maintenance and construction, water, sewer, and/or stormwater management. Understanding the role of elected officials is critical to ensure proper planning, oversight, and delivery.

Policymaking vs. administration

Councils are legislative bodies – that is, they are elected to make major policy decisions and pass budgets. The basic job of councilmembers is to find the balance among themselves that represents the best interests of the majority of residents, while respecting the rights of all.

Councilmembers make policies, but mayors (in mayor-council cities) and city managers (in council-manager cities) are responsible for their implementation and administration. Learning the difference between these two key functions – policymaking and administration – and respecting the boundaries between them is critical to a well-run government.

The separation of powers between legislative and administrative functions serves not only as a check on the exercise of authority between the two branches of local government, but also as a way to promote their efficient day-to-day operation and staff direction.

Understanding your city's form of government and classification

Different cities have different forms of government. The most common form of government is the mayor-council form. This form consists of an elected mayor (elected at-large) who serves as the city's chief executive officer and a council (elected either at-large or from districts) that is responsible for formulating and adopting policies. In mayor-council cities, a professional administrator may assist the mayor with day-to-day operations.

Cities by classification & form

Class	Mayor-council	Council-manager	Total
First	6	4	10
Second	5	0	5
Town	68	0	68
Code	147	50	197
N/A	1	0	1
Total	227	54	281

The second most common form of city government is the council-manager form. The council-manager form consists of an elected council, which is responsible for policymaking, and a professional city manager (appointed by the council) who is responsible for administration. The city manager is accountable to the council and is responsible for implementing the council's policies. Although mayors in council-manager cities have no administrative or executive duties, they do serve as the chair of the council and often play a prominent political leadership role.

It is also important to know your city's classification – first class city, second class city, town, or code city. Many state laws differ depending upon the classification, such as the specific powers and responsibilities of a mayor.

First class and code cities have broad home rule powers granted in both the state constitution and statute. Cities may determine their structure and regulate under their police powers, as long as they do not conflict with the state constitution or laws. In Washington, more than 200 code and first class cities have broad home rule powers and have been granted all powers available to other classes of cities.

The third branch

Cities can choose to run their own municipal courts or contract with the county or another city to provide court services. Approximately one-third of cities run their own courts with elected or appointed judges. Full-time judges are elected. Part-time judges are either appointed by the mayor (mayor-council cities) or the manager (council-manager cities), and may be subject to council confirmation. Although the city council may determine the court's budget, the judge is responsible for running the court, including supervising court staff, and is not subject to council or executive oversight.

Working with other jurisdictions

City elected officials' jobs don't stop at the city limits. The city's streets must connect with county roads and state highways. Similarly, cities must work with other jurisdictions and many levels of government to achieve collective goals. In some cases, this can involve complex, technical inter-jurisdictional agreements for services such as public safety, sewage treatment, or other utilities.

Cities must abide by state and federal laws and regulations, and can benefit from state and federal funding programs. There may also be special purpose districts for fire protection, ports, transit, sewer and water, cemeteries, libraries, and a host of other specific functions that interact with city government. Residents have the right to expect that these relationships are well-managed, efficient, and collaborative—and it's up to elected officials to make this happen.

Celebrating community achievements and promoting civic pride

City elected officials also serve as champions for civic achievement. By appearing at ribbon-cutting ceremonies, participating in charity events, and attending celebrations of student achievement, elected officials bring recognition and attention to the values of civic engagement and individual accomplishment. This might not be in the elected leader's official job description, but it is an important part of how elected leaders can bring out the best in their communities and strengthen the traditions that build civic pride.

Ethics

You may think of yourself as an ethical and law-abiding person, but that may not be enough to keep you on the right side of the law once you are elected. There are specific laws and high ethical standards of conduct for elected officials, and becoming thoroughly informed about them is important.

All city officials must abide by strict laws regarding ethics in government. These laws aim to prevent favoritism and ensure that elected officials are truly serving the public rather than reaping personal benefits from their positions.

State laws that city elected officials must abide by include:

No special privileges – Elected officials must pay the same fees for permits or services as any other resident. They cannot receive or give any special privileges, discounts, or exemptions or use any city resources for private purposes. For example, a city official cannot borrow a city pickup truck for the weekend or arrange for it to be used by a friend or relative.

No gifts or rewards from private

sources – Elected officials may not receive gifts that are in any way connected to their public service. For instance, if a councilmember votes for a specific project and a constituent sends a thank you gift of tickets to a concert or game, the tickets must be returned.

No disclosure of confidential

information – Elected officials may not disclose confidential information or use it for personal gain. This means that you may not accept a job or engage in a business that might require you to disclose confidential information you gained from your city position.

No conflicts of interest – Elected officials may not have any financial interest in any public contracts made through their office with the city they serve. This includes contracts for employment, sales, leases, and purchases. (There are limited exceptions to this rule in small cities with a population under 10,000.)

In addition, elected officials may not vote on any matter that would have a personal direct financial impact on them. This prohibition does not include matters that have a general impact, such as taxes or utility rates.

Conflicts of interest can also include “remote” interests – interests that would not personally benefit you, but might benefit people or organizations with whom you have a special relationship. For instance, if you are on the governing board of a nonprofit organization seeking a contract with the city, you must disclose your interest and you may not vote on that contract or attempt to influence the votes of others.

Open public meetings

The Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) requires that all council meetings (and meetings of planning commissions, library boards, and other public bodies) be open to the public, except under special circumstances, such as discussing a lawsuit, a confidential personnel issue, or a real estate transaction.

This also means that elected officials cannot meet informally and make decisions out of the public eye.

Whenever a quorum of the council is present, city business cannot be the topic of discussion unless the public has been notified and the meeting is open to them.

If this act is violated, there may be personal penalties for the elected officials involved. In addition, any final action that is taken in a meeting which did not comply with the Open Public Meetings Act is null and void.

Public access to records

The Public Records Act (PRA) gives any person full access to a wide range of information about how government does business. Most information relating to the conduct of government that is prepared, owned, used, or retained by a city is presumed to be a public record that must be made available to the public for inspection and copying. This includes papers, photos, maps, videos, and electronic records (such as email, text messages, and social networking sites). It also includes reports that are prepared for government by hired contractors.

All cities must make these records available for everyone. There are a limited number of exemptions from disclosure for some personnel records and other confidential matters.

Required OPMA and PRA training

Under the Open Government Trainings Act, every elected local or statewide official that is also a member of a “governing body,” must receive both open public meetings and records trainings. This must occur no later than 90 days after taking the oath of office or assuming duties. “Refresher” training must occur at intervals of no more than four years.

Adopting a city budget

One of the most challenging tasks for local elected officials is developing and adopting annual city budgets. They can be complex and technical documents that are important expressions of a city's vision, values, priorities, and strategic goals. Budgets are also a tool for evaluating past performance, as elected leaders and staff make note of what was accomplished in the past year and how actual costs compared to estimated projections.

Mastering the budget process can be a steep learning curve for newly-elected leaders. There are guiding state laws about the timing and content of city budgets. Once in office, elected officials soon find that the budget is such an important policy document that they can't be effective unless they fully understand it, and can explain it to their constituents.

Budgets are important expressions of a city's vision, values, priorities, and strategic goals.

Comprehensive planning, growth management, and environmental protection

Every city needs to plan for growth in order to provide a healthy future for its residents. Cities adopt comprehensive plans that spell out a specific vision for how the city will develop, while protecting critical natural resources and open space. Engaging the community in the process of developing a comprehensive plan ensures that everyone works together to create a shared vision for the future, and that everyone takes part in the work of achieving it.

Twenty-nine counties and the cities within them are required to or have chosen to create plans that conform to the state Growth Management Act (GMA). Once adopted, a city's comprehensive plan is used to guide decisions about zoning, subdivisions, and other regulatory matters. Local codes can create incentives for the kind of growth a city wants by providing such things as density bonuses for projects that provide affordable housing or preserve natural areas.

State and federal environmental laws and regulations also affect local comprehensive planning, because they require protection of certain natural resources such as clean drinking water and critical wildlife habitat. Learning about these laws and how they affect your city is an important part of an elected leader's job.

Keeping the comprehensive plan in mind – and keeping it in the public eye – ensures that the city stays focused on creating the future residents want for the next generation and beyond.

Publications

You can find many materials, publications, and other resources online. Below are a few highlighted publications that may be of value to you even before becoming an elected leader.

Association of Washington Cities, wacities.org

- *Mayor & Councilmember Handbook*
- *Small City Resource Manual: A guide for Washington's small cities and towns*

Municipal Research and Services Center, mrsc.org

- *Running for local elected office (resource page)*
- *Knowing the Territory: Basic Legal Guidelines for Washington City, County, and Special District Officials*

Training opportunities

After getting elected, there are regional workshops, statewide conferences, and eLearning opportunities to help you learn important laws and hone skills to become a more effective leader.

Highlighted trainings include:

- **OPMA and PRA eLearnings**
AWC and MRSC have two eLearnings available 24/7: Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Act

Certificate of Municipal Leadership



AWC's Certificate of Municipal Leadership (CML) program recognizes mayors and councilmembers for accomplishing training in five core areas:

- Roles, responsibilities, and legal requirements
- Public sector resource management
- Community planning and development
- Effective local leadership
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion



The Association of Washington Cities (AWC) serves its members through advocacy, education, and services. Founded in 1933, AWC is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan corporation that represents Washington's 281 cities and towns before the state legislature, the state executive branch, and with regulatory agencies. AWC also provides training, data and publications, and services such as the AWC Employee Benefit Trust, AWC Risk Management Service Agency, AWC Workers' Comp Retro, AWC Drug and Alcohol Consortium, AWC GIS Consortium, and AWC JobNet.

Promoting communication between cities and towns and developing broad public understanding of the important roles of cities and towns is part of our vision.

Association of Washington Cities
wacities.org

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Guidelines for Local Government Agencies in Election Campaigns

Cite as PDC Interpretation No. 04-02

USE OF THE GUIDELINES

These Guidelines are meant to aid and assist in compliance with the law.

This document is an educational tool that is an expression of the Commission's view of the meaning of **RCW 42.17A.555** and relevant administrative rules and case law involving local government and election campaign activity. It is intended to provide guidance regarding the Commission's approach and interpretation of how the statutory prohibition on the use of public facilities for campaigns impacts activities that may be contemplated by government employees and other persons who may seek to utilize those public facilities. Readers are strongly encouraged to review the statute and rules referenced in these Guidelines.

For ease of reference, the majority of this interpretation is in chart form. In part, the chart identifies categories of persons, some possible activities, and some general considerations. These illustrative examples in the columns of the chart are not intended to be exhaustive.

For example, the categories of persons identified are, in many cases, illustrative only and simply identify groups of persons more likely to undertake or consider undertaking the activity mentioned in the adjacent columns. If an activity is described as being viewed as "Permitted," it is viewed as permitted for all agency personnel otherwise having the authority under law or agency policy to undertake that action, not just the persons identified in the chart or in a particular column. The same approach is applied to the "Not Permitted" column. Further, the remarks in the chart's "General Considerations" column have relevance for the entire section and are not limited to the specific bullet point immediately to the left of the general consideration.

As noted in the Basic Principles section below, hard and fast rules are difficult to establish for every fact pattern involving agency facilities that may occur.

*School Districts are directed to **Guidelines for School Districts in Election Campaigns, Interpretation 01-03.**

Situations may arise that are not squarely addressed by the guidelines or that merit additional discussion. The PDC urges government agencies to review the guidelines in

their entirety, and to consult with their own legal counsel and with the PDC. The PDC can be reached at <mailto:pdc@pdc.wa.gov>, 360/753-1111 or toll free at 1-877-601-2828.

Use of public office or agency facilities in campaigns - Prohibition - Exceptions. RCW 42.17A.555

No elective official nor any employee of his or her office nor any person appointed to or employed by any public office or agency may use or authorize the use of any of the facilities of a public office or agency, directly or indirectly, for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition. Facilities of a public office or agency include, but are not limited to, use of stationery, postage, machines, and equipment, use of employees of the office or agency during working hours, vehicles, office space, publications of the office or agency, and clientele lists of persons served by the office or agency. However, this does not apply to the following activities:

(1) Action taken at an open public meeting by members of an elected legislative body or by an elected board, council, or commission of a special purpose district including, but not limited to, fire districts, public hospital districts, library districts, park districts, port districts, public utility districts, school districts, sewer districts, and water districts, to express a collective decision, or to actually vote upon a motion, proposal, resolution, order, or ordinance, or to support or oppose a ballot proposition so long as (a) any required notice of the meeting includes the title and number of the ballot proposition, and (b) members of the legislative body, members of the board, council, or commission of the special purpose district, or members of the public are afforded an approximately equal opportunity for the expression of an opposing view;

(2) A statement by an elected official in support of or in opposition to any ballot proposition at an open press conference or in response to a specific inquiry;

(3) Activities which are part of the normal and regular conduct of the office or agency.

(4) This section does not apply to any person who is a state officer or state employee as defined in RCW 42.52.010.

Notes:

Finding -- Intent -- 2006 c 215: "(1) The legislature finds that the public benefits from an open and inclusive discussion of proposed ballot measures by local elected leaders, and that for twenty-five years these discussions have included the opportunity for elected boards, councils, and commissions of special purpose districts to vote in open public meetings in order to express their support of, or opposition to, ballot propositions affecting their jurisdictions.

(2) The legislature intends to affirm and clarify the state's long-standing policy of promoting informed public discussion and understanding of ballot propositions by allowing elected boards, councils, and commissions of special purpose districts to adopt resolutions supporting or opposing ballot propositions." [2006 c 215 § 1.]

General applications of RCW 42.17A.555 WAC 390-05-271

- (1) RCW 42.17A.555 does not restrict the right of any individual to express his or her own personal views concerning, supporting, or opposing any candidate or ballot proposition, if such expression does not involve a use of the facilities of a public office or agency.
- (2) RCW 42.17A.555 does not prevent a public office or agency from (a) making facilities available on a nondiscriminatory, equal access basis for political uses or (b) making an objective and fair presentation of facts relevant to a ballot proposition, if such action is part of the normal and regular conduct of the office or agency.

Definition of normal and regular conduct. WAC 390-05-273

Normal and regular conduct of a public office or agency, as that term is used in the proviso to RCW 42.17A.555, means conduct which is (1) lawful, i.e., specifically authorized, either expressly or by necessary implication, in an appropriate enactment, and (2) usual, i.e., not effected or authorized in or by some extraordinary means or manner. No local office or agency may authorize a use of public facilities for the purpose of assisting a candidate's campaign or promoting or opposing a ballot proposition, in the absence of a constitutional, charter, or statutory provision separately authorizing such use.

Similar prohibitions on the use of public facilities by state employees and state officers are described in a memorandum from the Attorney General's Office regarding RCW 42.52 and available at <http://www.ethics.wa.gov>.

BASIC PRINCIPLES

1. Public facilities may not be used to support or oppose a candidate or ballot proposition. RCW 42.17A.555. Facilities include local government agency equipment, buildings, supplies, employee work time, and agency publications. The statute includes an exception to the prohibition for "activities which are part of the normal and regular conduct of the office or agency."
2. The Public Disclosure Commission holds that it is not only the right, but the responsibility of local government to inform the general public of the operational and

maintenance issues facing local agencies. This includes informing the community of the needs of the agency that the community may not realize exist. Local governments may expend funds for this purpose provided that the preparation and distribution of information is not for the purpose of influencing the outcome of an election.

3. Public employees do not forfeit their rights to engage in political activity because of their employment. Neither may agency employees be subjected to coercion, pressure, or undue influence to participate in political activity or to take a particular position. Public officials and employees should make it clear that any participation is personal rather than officially sponsored.
4. Supervisory personnel have a duty to know, apply, and communicate to their staffs the difference between acceptable information activities and inappropriate promotional activities in support of local government ballot measures.
5. Local elected officials are free to support agency ballot issues and engage in other political activities as long as such activities do not make use of government facilities, time or resources and do not either pressure or condone employees' use of agency facilities, time or resources to support ballot issues.
6. The PDC is charged with enforcing **RCW 42.17A.555**. This requires consideration and analysis of activities, which may or may not be determined to be in violation of the statute. The PDC has, over the years, developed methods of considering and analyzing activities engaged in by public offices. Among the factors considered are the normal and regular conduct and the timing, tone, and tenor of activities in relation to ballot measure elections. As in any matter where intent is to be considered, hard and fast rules, which will be applicable to all situations, are difficult to establish.

The combination of a number of activities into a coordinated campaign involving close coordination between agency activities and citizens' committee activities which closely resembles traditional election campaign activities and which is targeted at and/or occurs close in time to a ballot measure election is likely to draw close scrutiny and careful consideration by the PDC as to whether a violation has occurred.

- 7.a. Historically, the PDC has routinely advised and held that with respect to election-related publications, one jurisdiction-wide objective and fair presentation of the facts per ballot measure is appropriate.

In addition, if an agency* has also customarily distributed this information through means other than a jurisdiction-wide mailing (e.g. regularly scheduled newsletter, website, bilingual documents, or other format), that conduct has also been permitted

under [RCW 42.17A.555](#) so long as the activity has been normal and regular for the government agency. For more discussion of fact sheets, see [this staff analysis](#).

b. The PDC will presume that every agency may distribute throughout its jurisdiction an objective and fair presentation of the facts for each ballot measure. If the agency distributes more than this jurisdiction-wide single publication, the agency must be able to demonstrate to the PDC that this conduct is normal and regular for that agency. In other words, the agency must be able to demonstrate that for other major policy issues facing the government jurisdiction, the agency has customarily communicated with its residents in a manner similar to that undertaken for the ballot measure.

c. Agencies are urged to read the definitions of "normal and regular" at [WAC 390-05-271](#) and [WAC 390-05-273](#). **Agencies need to be aware, however, that in no case will the PDC view a marketing or sales effort related to a campaign or election as normal and regular conduct.**

8. The PDC attributes publications or other informational activity of a department or subdivision as the product of the local agency as a whole.

9. Providing an objective and fair presentation of facts to the public of ballot measures that directly impact a jurisdiction's maintenance and operation, even though the measure is not offered by the jurisdiction, may be considered part of the normal and regular conduct of the local agency. The agency must be able to demonstrate that for other major policy issues facing the jurisdiction, the agency has customarily communicated with its residents in a manner similar to that undertaken for the ballot measure.

10. State law provides certain exemptions from the prohibition on the use of public office or agency facilities in campaigns for an elected legislative body, an elected board, council or commission of a special purpose district, and elected officials that are not afforded appointed officials. [RCW 42.17A.555 \(1\) and \(2\)](#) apply only to these elected bodies and elected officials.**

*Agency means any county, city, town, port district, special district, or other state political subdivision.

**See [Chapter 215, Laws of 2006](#) and [AGO 2005 No. 4](#).

Persons**Permitted****Not Permitted****General Considerations****Agency*
Administrators**

**(County
Administrator, City
Manager,
Executive Director,
Fire Chief, PUD
Manager, Etc.)**

- May inform staff during non-work hours^[1] of opportunities to participate in campaign activities.^[2]
- Are encouraged to communicate to staff the difference between acceptable and unacceptable activities related to a ballot measure.
- In the course of normal publications for the agency, may distribute an objective and fair presentation of the facts^[3] based on and expanded upon the information^[4] prepared by the agency in accordance with the normal and regular conduct of the agency.^[5]
- May speak at community forums and clubs to present factual and objective information on a ballot measure during regular work hours.
- May encourage staff and members of the public to vote, as long as such encouragement routinely occurs for other elections.
- May respond to questions regarding a ballot measure if such activity is consistent with his or her normal and regular duties.
- May wear campaign buttons or similar items while on the job if the agency's policy generally permits employees to wear political buttons.
- May engage in campaign activities on their own time, during non-work hours and without using public resources.

- Shall not pressure or coerce employees to participate in campaign activities.
- Shall not use internal memoranda solely for the purpose of informing employees of meetings supporting or opposing ballot measures.
- Shall not coordinate informational activities with campaign efforts, in a manner that makes the agency appear to be supporting or opposing a ballot measure.
- Shall not use public resources to operate a speakers' bureau in a manner that may be viewed as promoting a ballot measure.

- Has there been communications with staff and with union representatives regarding the prohibition on the use of the agency's internal mail or email system to support or oppose a ballot measure?
- Is the distribution of this information consistent with the normal practices of the agency (such as newsletters, websites, or some other format)?
- Is the information provided an objective and fair presentation of the facts?
- Is the activity consistent with the agency's normal and regular course of business?
- Do the materials accurately present the costs and other anticipated impacts of a ballot measure?
- For considerations regarding uniforms and related equipment, see pages 14-18.

**Community
Groups**

- May use agency facilities for meetings supporting or opposing a ballot measure to the extent that the facilities are made available on an equal access, nondiscriminatory basis, and it is part of the normal and regular activity of the jurisdiction.

- Shall not use agency facilities to produce materials that support or oppose a ballot measure.

**Local Elected
Legislative Body***

- May collectively vote to support or oppose a ballot measure at a properly noticed public meeting, where opponents of the measure are given an equal opportunity to express views.^[6]

- Shall not pressure or coerce agency management to participate in campaign activities.
- Shall not explicitly include passage of a ballot measure in the agency's annual goals.

Persons**Permitted****Not Permitted****General Considerations****Local Government
Elected Officials**

- May engage in political activities on his or her own time, if no public equipment, vehicle or facility is used. (An elected official may use his or her title but should clarify that he/she is speaking on his/her own behalf, and not on behalf of the agency. If the elected legislative body has adopted a resolution, the official can then speak on behalf of the agency.)
- May attend any function or event at any time during the day and voice his or her opinion about a candidate or ballot proposition as long as they are not being compensated and are not using any public equipment, vehicle or other facility.

- Shall not direct agency staff to perform tasks to support or oppose campaign activities or ballot measures.
- Shall not use public facilities or resources to engage in political activities.

- Is the elected official using staff time, a public vehicle, or other public resources?
- Has the agency adopted a resolution? If yes, the elected official can speak on behalf of the agency. If not, has the elected official made it clear that he or she is not speaking on behalf of the agency?
- Also see Uniforms and Related Equipment Section below.
- Also see Officials' Calendars Section below.

**Appointed Officials
(Boards,
Commissions, and
similar appointed
positions)**

- May engage in political activities on his or her own time, if no public equipment, vehicle or facility is used. An appointed official may use his or her title but should clarify that he/she is speaking on his/her own behalf, and not on behalf of the agency.
- May attend any function or event at any time during the day and voice his or her opinion about a candidate or ballot proposition as long as they are not being compensated and are not using any public equipment, vehicle or other facility.

- Shall not direct agency staff to perform tasks to support or oppose campaign activities or ballot measures.
- Shall not use public facilities or resources to engage in political activities.
- Shall not use public facilities to express a collective decision or actually vote upon a motion or resolution to support or oppose a ballot proposition.
- Shall not use public facilities to make a statement at a press conference or responding to an inquiry in support or opposition to any ballot proposition.

- Is the appointed official using staff time, a public vehicle, or other public resources?
- Has the appointed official made it clear that he or she is not speaking on behalf of the agency?
- Also see Uniforms and Related Equipment Section below.
- Also see Officials' Calendars Section below.

**Management Staff
or Their Designees**

- May speak at community forums and clubs to present an objective and fair presentation of the facts on a ballot measure during regular work hours.^[7]
- May fully participate in campaign activities, including meeting with citizens' campaign committees to plan strategies, during non-work hours and without the use of public resources.
- May inform staff during non-work hours of opportunities to participate in campaign activities.

- Shall not use public resources to operate a speakers' bureau in a manner that may be viewed as promoting a ballot measure.
- Shall not use public resources to promote or defeat a candidate or ballot measure.
- Shall not pressure or coerce employees to

- Is the management staff using public resources in a manner that promotes or opposes a candidate or a ballot measure?
- Does the presentation accurately present the costs and other anticipated impacts of a ballot measure?
- Does the agency have a policy permitting

Persons**Permitted**

- May respond to questions regarding a ballot measure if such activity is consistent with his or her normal and regular duties.
- May wear campaign buttons or similar items while on the job if the agency's policy generally permits employees to wear political buttons.
- May place window signs or bumper stickers on their privately owned cars, even if those cars are parked on government property during working hours.
- Are encouraged to communicate to staff the difference between acceptable and unacceptable activities related to a ballot measure.
- May encourage staff and members of the public to vote, as long as such encouragement routinely occurs for other elections.

Not Permitted

- participate in campaign activities.
- Shall not use agency resources to organize the distribution of campaign materials.

General Considerations

- employees to wear political buttons?
- For considerations regarding agency employees' calendars, see pages 27- 28.

Agency Employees

- May speak at community forums and clubs to present an objective and fair presentation of the facts on a ballot measure during regular work hours.
- May inform staff during non-work hours of opportunities to participate in campaign activities.
- May engage in campaign activities on their own time, during non-work hours and without using public resources.
- May respond to questions regarding a ballot measure if such activity is consistent with his or her normal and regular duties.
- May wear campaign buttons or similar items while on the job if the agency's policy generally allows employees to wear political buttons.
- May, during non-work hours, make available campaign materials to employees in lunchrooms and break rooms that are used only by staff or other authorized individuals.
- May place window signs or bumper stickers on their cars, even if those cars are parked on government agency property during working hours.
- May encourage staff and members of the public to vote, as long as such encouragement routinely occurs for other elections.

- Shall not use work hours or public resources to promote or oppose a candidate or ballot measure (such as gathering signatures, distributing campaign materials, arranging speaking engagements, coordinating phone banks, or fundraising).
- Shall not pressure or coerce other employees to participate in campaign activities.
- Shall not use agency resources to organize the distribution of campaign materials.

- Do the presentations accurately present the costs and other anticipated impacts of a ballot measure?
- Is the employee acting on his or her own time, during non-work hours?
- See section on Agency Employees' Calendars below.

Persons	Permitted	Not Permitted	General Considerations
Union Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May, during non-work hours, make available campaign materials to union members in lunchrooms and break rooms that are used only by staff or other authorized individuals. • May distribute campaign materials at union-sponsored meetings. • May post campaign materials on a bulletin board, if such a board is in an area that is not accessible to the general public and if such activity is consistent with the agency's policy and the collective bargaining agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shall not use the agency's internal mail or email system to communicate campaign-related information, including endorsements. • Shall not distribute promotional materials in public areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are campaign materials made available only in those areas used solely by staff or other authorized individuals? • Does such distribution occur during non-work hours?

Activities and Resources	Permitted	Not Permitted	General Considerations
Equipment and Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency employees, in the course of their employment, may use equipment (including but not limited to projectors and computers) to make an objective and fair presentation of the facts at community forums and clubs. • Agency employees, in the course of their employment, may produce information that is an objective and fair presentation of the facts using public resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public resources (including but not limited to internal mail systems, email systems, copiers, telephone) shall not be used to support or oppose a candidate or ballot measure, whether during or outside of work hours. • Citizens' campaign committees and other community groups shall not use agency equipment (including but not limited to internal mail systems, projectors, computers, and copiers) to prepare materials for meetings regarding ballot measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the presentations fairly and objectively present the costs and other anticipated impacts of a ballot measure?

Uniforms & Related Equipment Purchased with Non-Public Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency employees and campaigns may use uniforms that are not the property of the agency and are rented or purchased with non-public funds (such as campaign funds), to assist campaigns including to support or oppose ballot propositions. • These same provisions apply to related equipment including but not limited to: firearms; badges; nametags; holsters; handcuffs; jackets; belts; vests; agency patches, logos, insignias, emblems; and radios.
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Activities and Resources	Permitted	Not Permitted	General Considerations
CURRENT Uniforms & Related Equipment [8] Purchased with Public Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency employees may use or wear their own uniforms to assist a campaign including to support or oppose a ballot proposition. This use includes any part of the employee's own uniform (shirt, pants, shoes, hat, etc.). This use includes clothing that may not appear to be a uniform (example, detective's suit). "Own uniform" means: The employee has purchased the uniform. The agency has not issued, purchased or replaced the uniform, or has not reimbursed the employee for the employee's purchase of the uniform, in whole or in part (such as reimbursement to the employee through a clothing allowance used to pay for the item).[9] These same provisions apply to related equipment including but not limited to: firearms; badges; nametags; holsters; handcuffs; hats; jackets; belts; vests; agency patches, logos, insignias, emblems; and radios. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency employees shall not use or wear their agency-issued, agency-purchased, agency-owned or agency-replaced uniforms to assist a campaign or to support or oppose a ballot proposition. This prohibition applies to use of any part of such a uniform (shirt, pants, shoes, hat, etc.). This same prohibition applies to clothing that may not appear to be a uniform (example, a detective's suit). This same prohibition applies to related equipment including but not limited to: firearms; badges; nametags; holsters; handcuffs; jackets; belts; vests; shoes; agency patches, logos, insignias, emblems; and radios. Prohibited uses include but are not limited to using or wearing those uniforms at campaign functions or in political advertisements such as TV commercials. Exceptions for attending campaign functions in uniform may be made on a case-by-case basis under exigent circumstances.[10] Public funds shall not be used to rent or purchase uniforms to assist campaigns, or to support or oppose ballot propositions. This same prohibition applies to related equipment including but not limited to: firearms; badges; nametags; holsters; handcuffs; jackets; belts; vests; agency patches, logos, insignias, emblems; and radios. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are any public funds used to purchase, reimburse, or replace the uniforms or related equipment? See footnote 9.
CURRENT Uniforms & Related Equipment in Agency Photos and Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency photos and agency videos depicting agency employees wearing agency uniforms may be used by a campaign to assist a campaign including to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency employees shall not make special arrangements for or "stage" the taking of an agency photo or agency video of an employee in uniform so the photo or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the agency photo or agency video taken in the ordinary course of agency business, and not "staged" for a campaign?

Activities and Resources	Permitted	Not Permitted	General Considerations
	<p>support or oppose ballot proposition, if the photos or videos: (1) were made in the ordinary course of the agency's business, (2) were not "staged" for campaign purposes and, (3) are made available to a campaign on the same terms and conditions as any other member of the public would receive the photos or videos. For example, agency photos or agency videos could be provided in response to a public records request, or by other authorized agency policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This same provision applies to agency photos and agency videos depicting agency personnel wearing or using related equipment, including but not limited to: firearms; badges; nametags; holsters; handcuffs; jackets; belts; vests; agency patches, logos, insignias, emblems; and radios. 	<p>video can be used for campaign purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This same prohibition applies to related equipment including but not limited to: firearms; badges; nametags; holsters; handcuffs; jackets; belts; vests; agency patches, logos, insignias, emblems; and radios. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was a campaign provided an agency photo or agency video of an employee wearing a uniform in the same manner, and under the same conditions, as any other member of the public requesting the photo or video? For example, was the agency providing it in response to a public records request, or pursuant to authorized agency policies? • Does the campaign's ad make it clear to voters that the public agency is not endorsing or supporting the candidate or ballot measure, even though an employee in the photo/video is wearing a uniform? It is suggested that a disclaimer be added to the advertising to clarify that the photo/video has been obtained in the manner prescribed by the agency.
FORMER Uniforms & Related Equipment [see Footnote No. 8]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a uniform or piece of related equipment was previously purchased, issued, replaced or reimbursed by the agency and is no longer used by the agency, the item may be used by a campaign to assist a campaign, or support or oppose a ballot measure. • "No longer used by the agency" means the employee or agency has documented that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The uniform or equipment has exceeded its life expectancy as defined by the agency and/or has been officially retired by the agency; ○ The uniform or equipment has been given or sold to an employee or another 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the employee or campaign documented that the uniform or piece of related equipment is no longer used by the agency?

Activities and Resources**Permitted****Not Permitted****General Considerations**

- person following agency procedures; and,
- The agency has no expectation the uniform or equipment will be returned to or used by the agency in the future.

Meeting Facilities

- Agency meeting facilities, including audio visual equipment, may be used by campaign committees for activities on the same terms and conditions available to other community groups, subject to the provisions of the agency's policy.
 - Use of agency meeting facilities is permitted when the facility is merely a "neutral forum" where the activity is taking place, and the public agency in charge of the facility is not actively endorsing or supporting the activity that is occurring.
- Can community groups typically use agency facilities?
 - Are facilities made available to all groups on the same terms?
 - Has the agency adopted a policy regarding the distribution of campaign materials on agency property?
 - Is the meeting facility customarily made available on an equal access, nondiscriminatory basis for a variety of uses?

Lists

- Lists of names (such as agency vendors or customers) that a agency has obtained or created in the course of transacting its regular public business are subject to public disclosure requirements; thus, unless otherwise exempt, the lists must be released subject to public records requests.
 - Agencies may charge a preestablished fee to cover the costs of providing copies of such lists on an equal access, nondiscriminatory basis.
- Agencies shall not sell copies of such lists (though they may charge a pre-established fee to recover the costs of providing copies of the lists).
 - If a list is generally available as a public record, it cannot be denied to a person or group on the grounds that it might be used in a campaign.
- Is the list obtained or created in the course of the agency transacting its public business?
 - Are the fees charged no greater than necessary to cover the costs of providing copies?
 - Has the agency complied with established policy in responding to any public record requests?

Voting Information

- Agency personnel may encourage staff and members of the public to vote, as long as such encouragement routinely occurs for other elections.
 - Public facilities may be used to register people to vote and to do periodic poll checking.
- Agencies shall not pressure or coerce employees to vote.
 - Agencies shall not organize an effort to encourage staff to wear campaign buttons or display campaign materials.
- Is the activity related to providing voting information for elections, as opposed to advocating for or against a particular candidate or ballot measure?

Activities and Resources	Permitted	Not Permitted	General Considerations
Agency Publications (Specific to Elections)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies may develop an objective and fair presentation of the facts regarding agency needs and the anticipated impact of a ballot measure and may distribute it in the agency's customary manner. This information^[11] may be printed in various languages and communicated in other formats as required by the ADA. • In the course of regular publications for the agency, the agency may distribute an objective and fair presentation of the facts for each ballot measure in accordance with the normal and regular conduct of the agency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies shall not distribute election-related information in a manner that targets specific subgroups. Targeting does not refer to mailing information to agency constituencies such as community leaders, or some other group, or to the agency's regular distribution list to provide information in a manner that is consistent with the normal and regular conduct of the agency. • Agencies shall not publicize information supporting or opposing a candidate or ballot measure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the information provide an objective and fair presentation of the facts? • Is the timing, format, and style, including tone and tenor, of the information presented in a manner that is normal and regular for the agency? • Is the information distributed in a manner that is normal and regular for the agency? • Do the materials accurately present the costs and other anticipated impacts of a ballot measure? • Does the agency typically distribute information by newsletters, websites, or some other format?
Agency Publications (Regular)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies may include all or part of the information regarding agency needs and the anticipated impacts of a ballot measure in the agency's regular publications, such as agency and department newsletters. (For example, a department newsletter may specifically describe the projects and/or programs planned for that department.) • Agencies may inform staff and/or others of community meetings related to ballot measures if other such information is normally published in a newsletter or community calendar, and if both those supporting or opposing a ballot measure have the opportunity to appear on the calendar or in the newsletter. • Agencies may factually report jurisdictional support for a ballot measure, so long as it is the normal and regular conduct for the agency. (For example, a community newsletter that ordinarily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies shall not use internal memoranda or other agency publications to encourage employees to participate in campaign activities. • Agencies shall not publish materials supporting or opposing a candidate or ballot measure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agency routinely distribute such information? • Does the agency normally inform staff and/or parents of community activities and meetings? • Is the information presented in an objective and fair manner? • Is the agency engaging in significantly different activities during the time period immediately prior to the ballot measure compared to all other times of the year?

Activities and Resources	Permitted	Not Permitted	General Considerations
	<p>reports on governmental actions may report that the jurisdiction adopted a resolution supporting a ballot measure.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies may thank citizens for their support after an election in agency publications. 		
Reader Boards/Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information encouraging staff and members of the public to vote, or providing the dates of upcoming elections such as "vote on February __", may be posted, as long as such encouragement is customarily posted for elections other than just an agency's ballot measure. Agencies may thank citizens on their reader boards for their support after an election. May post objective and fair information at an agency or at a future site regarding anticipated improvements to be funded by a ballot measure that is specific to that agency or site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies shall not display a "Vote for ." sign or other promotional messages on reader boards or posters. Signs advocating for or against candidates or ballot measures shall not be posted on agency property in any area accessible to the general public. Publicly owned vehicles shall not be used to carry or display political material. 	
Surveys and Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies may conduct surveys and/or other community research, including demographic questions, to determine the community's priorities, public perception of performance, and/or to inform the community about agency programs and policies. Agencies may conduct community research (including but not limited to the use of questionnaires, surveys, workshops, focus groups, and forums) to determine the community's priorities for both programs and/or facilities and their associated total costs and projected dollars per thousand assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies shall not conduct surveys to determine what taxation level the public would support. Agencies shall not conduct surveys designed to shore up support or opposition for a ballot measure. Agencies shall not target registered voters or other specific subgroups of the jurisdiction in conducting their election-related surveys. Agencies shall not use survey results in a manner designed to support or oppose a candidate or ballot measure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the elected legislative body passed a resolution authorizing a measure to be placed on the ballot? (If so, actions may be more closely scrutinized.) Does the election-related survey target specific subgroups? Is the survey or community research consistent with normal and regular activities of the agency?

Activities and Resources	Permitted	Not Permitted	General Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The surveys and/or other community research can be conducted before or after the governing body has approved a resolution to place a ballot measure on the ballot. However, research conducted after the adoption of the resolution may be subject to greater scrutiny. • Agencies may publish survey results if it is consistent with the normal and regular conduct of the agency. 		
Technology (websites, emails, computerized calling systems)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An agency may develop an objective and fair presentation of the facts and post that information on its website, including information regarding agency needs and the anticipated impacts of a ballot measure. This information may be reformatted so that it is consistent with the manner in which the agency customarily presents information on its website. • Agency websites may permit viewers to make selections to learn about the anticipated impacts of a ballot measure for a specific division, or otherwise allow readers to explore issues in greater or lesser detail. • Agencies may update the information on their websites in a manner that is customary for the agency. • Staff may respond to inquiries regarding a ballot measure in an objective and fair manner, via email or by telephone, if it is part of their normal and regular duties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency computers, email systems, telephones, and other information technology systems shall not be used to aid a campaign for or against a candidate or ballot measure. • Electronic communication systems shall not be used to generate or forward information that supports or opposes a candidate or ballot measure. • Agency websites shall not be used for the purposes of supporting or opposing a candidate or ballot measure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the materials developed an objective and fair presentation of the facts? • Is the agency engaging in significantly different activities during the time period immediately prior to the ballot measure compared to all other times of the year? • Do the materials accurately present the costs and other anticipated impacts of a ballot measure? • Has there been communications with staff and with union representatives regarding the prohibition on the use of the agency's technology to support or oppose a ballot measure?
Agency Calendars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency officials, appointees and employees may place on their individual agency calendar the basic information that he/she is scheduled to be out of the office to attend campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency officials, appointees and employees shall not use, nor direct their staff to use, public facilities or resources to arrange or plan campaign activities, or to assist with a campaign activity. Arranging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the scheduling activity limited to calendaring for the official, appointee or employee? • Is the calendaring limited to the ministerial act of placing only basic information

Activities and Resources	Permitted	Not Permitted	General Considerations
	<p>events. They may synchronize their personal electronic calendars with agency electronic calendars so long as only basic information gets placed on the agency calendar about campaign events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency officials, appointees and employees may respond to public inquiries, including from campaigns, about the employee's, appointee's or official's availability on his/her schedule to attend a campaign event. • A supervising employee, appointee or official may request his or her scheduling assistant (agency staff) to block out time on the supervising employee's, appointee's or official's individual calendar for campaign events. • A scheduling assistant may receive information and block out time on the supervising employee's, appointee's or official's individual calendar for campaign events, as directed by the supervising employee, appointee or official. • A scheduling assistant may respond to public inquiries, including from campaigns, about the supervising employee's, appointee's or official's availability on his/her schedule to attend a campaign event. • Agencies may inform staff and/or others of community meetings related to ballot measures if other such information is normally published in a community calendar, and if both those supporting or opposing a ballot measure have the opportunity to appear on the calendar. 	<p>details of the official's, appointee's or employee's appearance or participation in the campaign activity such as travel logistics, tickets, invitations to other participants, or agenda while at the event, are not permitted. Communicating about the individual's interest and/or potential for participating in planned or possible future campaign events or activities, including endorsement interviews, are not permitted. Those activities must use campaign resources and staff, not public agency resources and staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency officials, appointees and employees shall not place their individual campaign-related events on agency-wide distributed calendars such as monthly calendars of agency events, or regularly scheduled newsletters with agency events provided or distributed to staff or the public. 	<p>about the campaign event (name, date, time, location, duration and contact number) on the official's appointee's or employee's schedule; conducted solely for business and security purposes related to the agency's need to know the official's, appointee's or employee's availability and location; and, to avoid scheduling conflicts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the calendaring request to a scheduling assistant to block out time (generally or only for specific appointments), on the individual's calendar directed in the first instance by the official appointee or supervising employee to agency staff, and not by a campaign? • Is the campaign contact information the publicized means by the campaign of reaching the individual who is a candidate or assisting a campaign, for the purpose of scheduling his/her attendance at campaign events, or for participating in other campaign events? • Do agency staff refer campaign-related inquiries to the campaign when the person contacting the agency seeks information beyond an individual's availability on his/her agency schedule.

Note on Timing of Activities: A particular activity may be subject to the scrutiny of Public Disclosure Commission depending in part on whether it is a part of the "normal and ordinary" conduct of a local government agency. Generally, activities that occur after the elected legislative body has passed a resolution authorizing a measure to be placed on the ballot will be subject to greater scrutiny by the Public Disclosure Commission than those occurring before such a resolution has been passed.

Note on Agency Policies: The application of these guidelines is also subject to each jurisdiction's own adopted policies.

[1] Agencies may set the definition of work hours for their employees. For example, to the extent that an agency defines the lunch hour as a non-work hour, activities to support or oppose a candidate or a ballot measure that do not use public resources and that are held away from government facilities are permitted during the lunch hour.

[2] [RCW 42.17A.495\(2\)](#) provides that "[n]o employer or labor organization may discriminate against an officer or employee in the terms or conditions of employment for (a) the failure to contribute to, (b) the failure in any way to support or oppose, or (c) in any way supporting or opposing a candidate, ballot proposition, political party, or political committee."

[3] Throughout these guidelines, the clause "objective and fair presentation of the facts" means that in addition to presenting the facts, the materials should present accurately the costs and other anticipated impacts of a ballot measure.

[4] For the purposes of these guidelines, "information" refers to the documents prepared, printed, and mailed to persons within the governmental jurisdiction by that agency solely for the purposes of informing residents regarding an upcoming ballot measure. The agency may continue to distribute information consistent with the customary practices of the agency, including but not limited to newsletters, websites, and multi-lingual documents. These publications may continue, but if they discuss the ballot measure, the information needs to be an objective and fair presentation of the facts.

[5] For the purpose of these guidelines, the term "normal and regular" is defined in [WAC 390-05-273](#) and clarified further by [WAC 390-05-271](#).

*Agency means any county, city, town, port district, special district, or other state political subdivision.

[6] RCW 42.17A.555(1) provides that action may be "taken at an open public meeting by members of an elected legislative body or by an elected board, council, or commission of a special purpose district including, but not limited to, fire districts, public hospital districts, library districts, park districts, port districts, public utility districts, school districts, sewer districts, and water districts, to express a collective decision, or to actually vote upon a motion, proposal, resolution, order, or ordinance, or to support or oppose a ballot proposition so long as (a) any required notice of the meeting includes the title and number of the ballot proposition, and (b) members of the legislative body, members of the board, council, or commission of the special purpose district, or members of the public are afforded an approximately equal opportunity for the expression of an opposing view;".

* The term "elected" modifies the term "body," connoting that the body itself must be elected. "We therefore conclude that bodies composed in any of the three ways you suggest in your question are not elected bodies for purposes of RCW 42.17.130 [the former codification of **RCW 42.17A.555**]. Bodies containing a combination of elected or appointed members, bodies whose members serve ex officio by virtue of being elected to another office, or informal groups of elected officials from different jurisdictions are not "elected" for purposes of this analysis." (**AGO 2005 No. 4, Page 4**)

[7] Agencies may set the definition of work hours for their employees. For example, to the extent that a agency defines the lunch hour as a non-work hour, activities to support or oppose a candidate or a ballot measure that do not use public resources and that are held away from agency facilities are permitted during the lunch hour.

[8] For members of the judiciary subject to the Code of Judicial Conduct, see **PDC Interpretation 00-03**.

[9] An agency's reimbursement for or other means of providing for cleaning/maintenance of uniforms or related equipment does not convert the privately-purchased item to a public facility.

10 For example, in examining all the surrounding circumstances, the Commission may determine that an enforcement action will not proceed when public safety and the demands of the public employee's office with respect to an ongoing law enforcement matter unexpectedly required the official to remain in uniform at a campaign function, and if that uniform use is part of the agency's "normal and regular" activities under those circumstances. However, the Commission anticipates these situations will be rare and isolated. This exception does not apply when campaigns or employees may seek to use agency uniforms and related equipment under other circumstances, or for other campaign activities such as in political advertising.

[11] For the purposes of these guidelines, "information" refers to the documents prepared, printed, and mailed jurisdiction-wide by the agency solely for the purposes of informing residents regarding an upcoming ballot measure. The agency may continue to distribute information consistent with the customary practices of the agency, including but not limited to newsletters, websites, and multi-lingual documents. These publications may continue, but if they discuss the ballot measure, the information should be an objective and fair presentation of the facts.

Approved: September 28, 2004 | Amended September 28, 2006, August 23, 2012 and May 22, 2013

References: RCW 42.17.555

See also: WACs 390-05-271 and 390-05-273

MERCER ISLAND CITY COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE



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SECTION 1. GOVERNANCE AND AUTHORITY

1.1 Council-Manager Plan of Government

The City of Mercer Island is a Council-Manager plan of government. As described in the municipal code and chapter [35A.13](#) of the Revised Code of Washington (“RCW”), certain responsibilities are vested in the City Council and the City Manager. This plan of government prescribes that a City Council’s role is that of a legislative policy-making body which determines not only the local laws that regulate community life, but also determines what public policy is and gives direction to the City Manager to administer the affairs of the city government in a businesslike and prudent manner.

1.2 Rules of Procedure

The Mercer Island City Council hereby establishes the following Rules of Procedure (“Rules”) pursuant to the authority set forth in Mercer Island City Code (“MICC”) [2.06.050\(A\)](#), for the conduct of City Council meetings, proceedings and business. These Rules shall be in effect upon adoption by the City Council and until such time as they are amended, or new rules are adopted in the manner provided by these Rules.

1.3 Orientation of New Councilmembers

The City Manager will host an orientation program for newly-elected or appointed Councilmembers, including guidance on the [Open Government Trainings Act](#), which requires [training](#) in the fundamentals of the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA), [Public Records Act](#) (PRA), and records retention requirements. The orientation will also include a presentation on the Code of Ethics

1.4 Mentoring of New Councilmembers

Current Councilmembers shall seek out opportunities to mentor newly elected or appointed Councilmember(s) to help them gain an understanding of their role(s) as Councilmember.

1.5 Code of Ethics

All City Councilmembers shall sign a statement acknowledging they have received, read, and agree to be bound by the City’s Code of Ethics MICC Chapter 2.60 and RCW Chapter 42.23. The City shall provide new Councilmembers with a presentation on the Code of Ethics, to be repeated no less than once every 4 years.

SECTION 2. CITY COUNCIL ORGANIZATION

2.1 Swearing-In. Councilmembers shall be sworn in by the City Clerk.

2.2 Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The City Council shall elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor for a term of two years from among themselves at the first City Council meeting, or as soon as possible thereafter, of each even-numbered year or upon vacancy or resignation of the Councilmember filling the Mayor or Deputy Mayor position. The City Clerk shall conduct the elections for Mayor as follows:

- A.** Any Councilmember may nominate a candidate for Mayor; no second is needed.
- B.** Nominees may accept or decline the nomination.
- C.** If only one (1) nomination is made, it is appropriate to make a motion and obtain a second to instruct the City Clerk to cast a unanimous ballot for that nomination for Mayor. Approval is by majority vote of Councilmembers present.
- D.** If more than one (1) nomination is made, an open election is conducted by roll call vote.
- E.** To be elected, the nominee needs a majority vote of the City Council.
- F.** Elections will continue until a Mayor is elected by a majority vote of the City Council.
- G.** The City Clerk shall declare the nominee receiving the majority vote as the new Mayor. The City Clerk shall swear the individual into office.

This process is repeated for the election of the Deputy Mayor.

2.3 Duties of Officers.

- A. Mayor.** The Mayor serves as the Presiding Officer and acts as chair at all meetings of the City Council. The Mayor may participate in all deliberations of the City Council in the same manner as any other member and may vote in all proceedings unless a conflict of interest exists. The Mayor does not possess any power of veto. The Mayor is assigned as the ceremonial representative at public events and functions. The Mayor is vested with the authority to initiate and execute proclamations. With direction from the majority of the Council, the Mayor is assigned the responsibility to impose Councilmember sanctions for violation of these Rules consistent with Section 11 of these Rules. If the Mayor is the Councilmember who is the subject of sanctions, then sanctions shall be imposed by the Deputy Mayor.

In consultation with the Deputy Mayor, the Mayor shall appoint Councilmembers to serve as liaisons to advisory boards and commissions and to serve on standing City Council committees, ad hoc committees, local committees, and certain regional committees.

- B. Deputy Mayor.** The Deputy Mayor serves as the Presiding Officer in the absence of the Mayor and assumes ceremonial representative responsibilities when needed. If both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are absent, the Mayor will appoint another Councilmember to serve as acting Mayor. If the Mayor fails to appoint an acting Mayor, the Councilmembers present shall elect one of its members to serve as Presiding Officer until the return of the Mayor or Deputy Mayor.
- C. Presiding Officer.** The Presiding Officer shall:
1. Preserve order and decorum during City Council meetings;
 2. Observe and enforce these Rules;
 3. Call the meeting to order;
 4. Keep the meeting to its order of business; and,
 5. Recognize Councilmembers in the order in which they request the floor.
- The Presiding Officer, as a Councilmember, shall have only those rights, and shall be governed in all matters and issues by the same rules and restrictions as other Councilmembers.
- D. City Council Leadership.** Together, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor comprise the “City Council Leadership” team and provide support to the City Manager in the leadership of the City. In addition to the duties described previously, the “City Council Leadership” may also provide the following:
1. Meet with the City Manager and staff to prepare for the City Council meetings. A third City Councilmember is invited to participate in these meetings and the schedule rotates throughout the year.
 2. Meet with the City Manager at other times of the year to discuss issues and strategies and to serve as a sounding board.
 3. Serve as the City Council representatives during the State Legislative Session, providing testimony in alignment with the City’s adopted Legislative Priorities. Other City Councilmembers are also invited to participate in legislative matters on behalf of the City in coordination with City Council Leadership and the City Manager.

- 2.4 Filling a City Council Vacancy.** If a vacancy occurs in the office of Councilmember, the City Council will follow the procedures outlined in [RCW 42.12.070](#) and Appendix C to these Rules (The Process to Fill a Mercer Island City Council Vacancy). In order to fill the vacancy until an election is held, the City Council will widely distribute and publish a notice of the vacancy, the procedure by which the vacancy will be filled, and an application form.

SECTION 3. CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

3.1 General Meeting Guidelines.

- A. Open Public Meeting Act.** All City Council meetings shall comply with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act (chapter [42.30 RCW](#)). All regular meetings and special meetings of the City Council shall be open to the public.
- B. Meetings.** All meetings as described in Section 3.2 may be held in-person, remotely, or as a hybrid to the extent permitted by law.
- C. Meeting Cancellation.** Any City Council meeting may be canceled by a majority vote of the City Council. The Mayor or City Manager may cancel a City Council meeting for lack of agenda items, adverse weather conditions, or due to an emergency.
- D. Quorum.** Four members of the City Council shall constitute a quorum and are necessary for the transaction of City business. In the absence of a quorum, the members present may adjourn that meeting to a later date.
- E. Councilmember Seating.** At the dais, the Mayor shall sit in Chair #4, the center seat at the dais, the Deputy Mayor shall sit to the Mayor's right or left, in Chair #3 or #5. The Mayor will determine the seats of the remaining Councilmembers.
- F. City Clerk and Minutes.** The City Clerk (or authorized designee) shall attend all regular and special City Council meetings and keep an account of all proceedings of the City Council (minutes) in accordance with the statutory requirements RCW [42.30.035](#). The minutes from previous meetings will be posted on the City website in draft format prior to City Council meetings as part of the City Council packet. Councilmembers are encouraged to inform the City Clerk and City Manager of any errors or proposed changes in advance of the meeting. If a Councilmember wishes to make any corrections (except scrivener) to the minutes, they must request to have the set of minutes pulled from the Consent Agenda and make a motion to revise the minutes. Any corrections to the minutes will be noted and the draft minutes will be revised with the corrections. Once the City Council has approved the minutes (as presented or revised), the final version of the minutes will be posted to the City's website and archived as the City's official record.
- G. City Council Meetings Code of Conduct.** The City Council Meetings Code of Conduct is attached as Appendix B to these Rules, which outlines acceptable City Council Meeting behavior.

- H. Attendance.** Councilmembers may attend meetings in person or remotely using the City's preferred videoconferencing platform (not by telephone) subject to the following:
1. A Councilmember shall contact the Mayor, the City Manager, and the City Clerk at least one day prior to the meeting if attending remotely or as soon as possible due to an emergency.
 2. A Councilmember's camera should be turned on generally throughout the duration of the meeting.
 3. A Councilmember attending remotely must be able to hear public comment or testimony and staff's presentation in real time.
 4. A Councilmember may attend an executive session or closed session remotely if the conditions in this subsection are met.
- I. Roll Call Voting.** All City Council voting will be done by roll call. Once a motion has been made and seconded, the Mayor will ask the City Clerk to call the roll. The City Clerk calls the roll, and each Councilmember, as their name is called, answers "aye" or "nay," or "abstain," if they do not wish to vote, and the Clerk shall record each vote. Councilmembers shall refrain from additional comments about the motion or their vote when voting. If the vote count is not clear, the City Clerk reads the names of those who voted in the affirmative, and afterwards those who voted in the negative, and then those who voted "abstain," and the Mayor announces the result.

3.2 Types of Meetings.

- A. Regular Meetings.** The City Council's regular meetings will be held the first and third Tuesdays of each month in the Slater Room City Council Chambers (8236 SE 24th Street, Mercer Island) when permissible or other location for which required written notice has been published. Certain circumstances (weather, emergencies, etc.) may require that City Council meetings be held remotely using a videoconferencing platform. Regular meetings will begin at 5:00 p.m. or as set by [MICC 2.06.010](#). If any Tuesday on which a meeting is scheduled falls on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held at 5:00 p.m., or as set by MICC 2.06.010, on the first business day following the holiday, or on another day designated by a majority vote of the City Council.
- B. Special Meetings.** A special meeting is any City Council meeting other than a regular City Council meeting. Notice shall be given at least 24 hours in advance specifying the date, time, and place of the meeting and the business to be transacted. A special City Council meeting may be scheduled by the Mayor, City Manager or at the request of a majority of the City Council and pursuant to [RCW 42.30.080](#).

- C. Emergency Meetings.** An emergency meeting is a special City Council meeting called without 24-hour notice. An emergency meeting may only be called as a result of an emergency involving injury or damage to persons or property or the likelihood of such injury or damage or when time requirements of a 24-hour notice would make notice impracticable and increase the likelihood of such injury or damage. Emergency meetings may be called by the City Manager or the Mayor. The minutes will indicate the reason for the emergency.
- D. Executive Sessions.** An executive session is a portion of a City Council meeting that is closed except to the City Council, City Manager, City Attorney, and staff members and/or consultants authorized by the City Manager. The public is restricted from attendance. Executive sessions may be held during regular or special City Council meetings and will be announced by the Mayor or the Chair. Executive sessions may be held for limited purposes consistent with [RCW 42.30.110\(1\)](#) and [RCW 42.30.140\(4\)\(a\)](#). Permissible topics include considering real property acquisition and sale, public bid contract performance, complaints against public officers and employees, review of collective bargaining agreements, public employment applications and evaluations, and certain attorney-client discussions. Before convening an executive session, the Mayor or Chair shall announce the purpose of the meeting. Pursuant to [RCW 42.23.070\(4\)](#), Councilmembers must maintain the confidentiality of all written materials and verbal information provided during executive sessions to ensure that the City's position is not compromised. Confidentiality also includes information provided to Councilmembers outside of executive sessions when the information is considered exempt from production under the [Public Records Act](#), chapter 42.56 RCW. If a Councilmember unintentionally discloses executive session material to any person(s) not a party to the executive session, that Councilmember shall promptly inform the City Manager and/or the City Council of the disclosure.
- E. Planning Sessions.** Each year the City Council shall hold an annual planning session during the first quarter of the year, or as soon as practicable thereafter. Potential topics for the Planning Session include City Council Goals, Priorities, and the Work Plan for the next two years. The City Council may hold additional planning sessions during the year.

3.3 Order of Regular City Council Meeting Agenda

- A. Call Meeting to Order & Roll Call.** The Mayor calls the meeting to order. The City Clerk will take roll call and record names of those present (noting if attending in-person or remote) and those absent in the minutes. If a Councilmember joins after roll call, the City Clerk shall note the time the Councilmember joined and, if before adjournment, when the Councilmember left in the minutes.

- B. Pledge of Allegiance.** The Mayor or a designated Councilmember will lead the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of the meeting.
- C. Agenda Approval/Amendment.** Agenda items may be added to a regular City Council meeting agenda after the meeting notice is published if a Councilmember or City Manager explains the necessity and receives a majority vote of the City Council. The Mayor may, with the concurrence of the majority of the Council, take agenda items out of order.
- D. Executive Sessions.** Executive sessions may be held before, during or after the open session portion of either a regular or special meeting. See Section 3.2(D).
- E. Study Sessions.** Study sessions may be held, when needed, before a regular meeting. They may be called by the Mayor, City Manager or by a majority of Councilmembers. Study sessions are informal meetings for the purpose of reviewing forthcoming programs and projects, receiving progress reports on current programs or projects, or receiving other similar information. No final decisions shall be made at a study session. Decisions on those issues may be scheduled for a regular or special City Council meeting.
- F. Special Business.** Special Business items may include the presentation of a proclamation, the key to the City, community member of the year, or other presentation to elected officials, staff, or the public by the City or presentations to the City or any official made by someone else.
 - 1. **Proclamations.** Proclamations are generally broad statements expressing local government support for particular issues. Requests to proclaim certain events or causes will be considered when such proclamations:
 - a. Pertain to a Mercer Island event, person, organization, or cause with local implications,
 - b. Are timely,
 - c. Have potential relevance to the City Council's Goals, Legislative Priorities, or Mercer Island's community values, and
 - d. Either forward positive messages or call upon the support of the community.

The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, City Manager, and/or a staff designee shall determine approval of proclamation requests. Proclamations are placed on the Consent Agenda and may be publicly read at a City Council meeting and presented to a representative of the event during the City Council meeting.
 - 2. **Key to the City.** The Key to the City is the City's most prestigious award and will only be used to recognize distinguished persons and honored

guests of the City of Mercer Island. The “Key to the City” is intended to honor:

- a. A Mercer Island resident with significant accomplishments in military service, or public service;
- b. A Mercer Island resident reaching the age of 100 years;
- c. A person who performed an act of heroism while in the City limits; or
- d. A dignitary or celebrity visiting the City.

The City Council shall determine approval of Key to the City requests. Keys shall be presented by the Mayor or designee to the recipient at a City Council meeting or at an event sponsored by or affiliated with the recipient.

3. **Community Member of the Year.** The Community Member of the Year is an annual tradition of recognizing an individual or group (“honoree”) who is otherwise unrecognized for his/her/their contributions to making the Mercer Island community a great place to live and work. The honoree shall be selected based on the following criteria:
 - a. Significant service accomplishments within the past year;
 - b. The quality, scale, and duration of the benefits to the community resulting from the accomplishments;
 - c. The amount of time and energy devoted to the community beyond the scope of normal responsibilities;
 - d. The nature of the challenges faced and overcome by the honoree; and
 - e. The extent of previous recognition received by the honoree (e.g., the nominee is an “unsung hero”).

Councilmembers may make nominations and select an honoree at the annual City Council Planning Session or a Regular Meeting.

Councilmembers or candidates for councilmember, are not eligible for this honor. The honoree(s) will be recognized at a City Council Meeting and a photo of the honoree will be posted on the website to commemorate this distinction.

4. **Other Presentations.** From time to time, the City Manager may add to the agenda presentations to Council from other officials or agencies on matters of importance to the City. In order to be added to the agenda, presentation materials must be submitted to the City Clerk by 2:00 p.m. on the Wednesday prior to the City Council meeting for inclusion in the agenda packet.

- F. City Manager Report.** To keep the City Council and the public informed of City business, the City Manager may provide an oral report, make comments, extend compliments, express concerns, or make announcements concerning any topic during this time.
- G. Appearances (Public Comment).** During the Appearances section of the regular meeting agenda, members of the audience are invited to address the City Council regarding any matter, except items before the City Council requiring a public hearing, any quasi-judicial matters, or campaign-related matters. Each person wishing to address the City Council should register with the City Clerk by 4 p.m. on the day of the City Council meeting. When the speaker's name is called, the speaker will give their name and city of residence for the record and shall limit their comments to three (3) minutes. No speaker may convey or donate time for speaking to another speaker. The Mayor may grant additional time for comments. The Mayor may allow speakers to comment on individual agenda items at times during any regularly scheduled City Council meeting other than the regularly scheduled Appearances period.

All remarks shall be addressed to the City Council as a whole, and not to individual Councilmembers or staff members. Any person making personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks, or who becomes boisterous, threatening, or personally abusive while addressing the City Council, may be requested by the Mayor to leave the meeting. The City Council cannot accept comments on any campaign-related matters (elections for individual offices or ballot propositions) except under specific circumstances where consideration of a ballot measure is on the City Council agenda pursuant to [RCW 42.17A.555](#).

The City Clerk will summarize all public comments in the minutes. Traditionally, the City Council does not respond to comments made at a meeting; however, the City Manager may direct staff to follow up with the speaker as appropriate.

Written testimony is also accepted and should be sent to the City Council at council@mercerisland.gov or cityclerk@mercerisland.gov. Written testimony received after 2:00 p.m. on the day of the City Council meeting will not be sent to the City Council until the next business day.

- C. Consent Agenda.** Consent agenda items have either been previously considered by the City Council or are routine and non-controversial and are approved by one motion. Items on the consent agenda may include, without limitation, payables, payroll, minutes, proclamations, resolutions, ordinances discussed at a previous City Council meeting, bid awards, and previously authorized agreements.

A Councilmember may remove an item from the consent agenda for separate discussion and action. If removed, that item will become the first item of regular business of the same meeting.

- D. Public Hearings.** There are two types of public hearings: legislative and quasi-judicial. The Mayor will state the public hearing procedures before each public hearing. Comments are limited to the subject of the public hearing.
- 1. Legislative Public Hearings.** The purpose of a legislative public hearing is to obtain public input on legislative or policy decisions, including without limitation, review by the City Council of its comprehensive plan or biennial budget.
 - 2. Quasi-Judicial Public Hearings.** The purpose of a quasi-judicial public hearing is to decide issues involving the rights of specific parties including, without limitation, certain land use matters such as site-specific rezones.

The City Council's decision on a quasi-judicial matter must be based upon and supported by the "record" in the matter. The "record" consists of all testimony or comment presented at the hearing and all documents and exhibits that have been submitted.

In quasi-judicial hearings, Councilmembers shall comply with all applicable laws including without limitation the appearance of fairness doctrine (chapter [42.36 RCW](#)). The appearance of fairness doctrine prohibits, without limitation, ex parte (outside the hearing) communications with limited exceptions requiring disclosure on the record; prohibits a Councilmember from deciding on the matter in advance of the hearing; requires the hearing to be fair and impartial; and prohibits the participation of any Councilmember who has a conflict of interest or financial interest in the outcome of the hearing.

A Councilmember shall consult with the City Attorney to determine whether the Councilmember should recuse themselves from the quasi-judicial hearing discussion and decision.

- J. Regular Business.** Regular Business items are all other regular City Council business, including without limitation, resolutions, ordinances, staff presentations, board and/or commission appointments, and regional board and committee reports requiring City Council action.

- K. Other Business.** The City Council will note upcoming Councilmember absences and make a motion to excuse or not excuse a Councilmember's absence. They will also discuss the Planning Schedule. During Councilmember reports, Councilmembers may report on significant activities since the last meeting; provided, however, that Councilmembers may not enter into debate or discussion on any item raised during a City Council report.
- L. Adjournment.** With no further business to come before the City Council, the Mayor adjourns the meeting.

SECTION 4. AGENDA PREPARATION

- 4.1** The City Manager, in consultation with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, will prepare an agenda for each City Council meeting. The City Clerk will prepare an agenda packet for each City Council meeting specifying the date, time, and place of the meeting. Each item shall be titled to describe the item to be considered by the City Council and supporting materials for each agenda item shall be included in the packet.
- 4.2** An item may be placed on a City Council meeting agenda by any of the following methods:
- A.** Majority vote of the City Council.
 - B.** By the City Manager.
 - C.** By the Mayor or Deputy Mayor (when acting in the absence of the Mayor).
 - D.** By any two Councilmembers, in writing or with phone confirmation, no later than 12:00 p.m. seven (7) days prior to the meeting. The proposed item will be added to the agenda (without an agenda bill) for the whole City Council to determine if the item should be brought back for discussion and/or action. If the City Council agrees to add the item to a future agenda, staff will prepare an agenda bill based on the City Council's direction.
- 4.3** Staff reports (agenda bills) shall be in a standard format approved by the City Manager.
- 4.4** Agenda materials will be posted to the City's website and a link to the online packet will be emailed to an established mailing list (including City Council and staff) by 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday before the meeting. If the deadline cannot be met, the City Council and the established mailing list will be notified of when it will be posted. Hard copies of agenda materials will be available for pick up at the Mercer Island Community & Event Center Front Desk upon Councilmember request.
- 4.5** The City Manager will prepare and keep current the Planning Schedule, which is the long-term calendar of agenda items for all City Council regular and special meetings.

SECTION 5. CITY COUNCIL PROTOCOLS

- 5.1 Roberts Rules/City Council Rules.** All City Council discussion shall be governed by *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised* or by these Rules. Examples of parliamentary rules and motions are as shown in Appendix A to these Rules. In the event of a conflict, these Rules shall control. The City Clerk or City Attorney shall answer questions of a parliamentary nature that may arise during a City Council meeting. The City Attorney shall decide all questions of interpretations of these Rules.
- 5.2 Appearances (Public Comment).** The City Council agrees to adhere to the following protocols during Appearances:
- A. The City Council shall listen attentively to the speaker's comments.
 - B. The City Council shall avoid discourteous behavior such as lengthy or inappropriate sidebar discussions or nonverbal, disparaging actions.
 - C. The City Council shall not engage in debate or discussion with any individual but may be recognized by the Mayor to ask the speaker clarifying questions.
- 5.3 Discussion Protocols.** The City Council agrees to adhere to the following protocols for City Council discussion and debate:
- A. Be courteous and professional at all times;
 - B. Avoid discourteous behavior such as lengthy or inappropriate sidebar discussions or nonverbal disparaging actions when colleagues or staff are speaking;
 - C. Be recognized by the Mayor before speaking;
 - D. Be respectful of the City Manager, staff, and other Councilmembers;
 - E. Speak in turn after being recognized;
 - F. Do not personally criticize other members who vote against or disagree with you;
 - G. Do not be repetitive in your arguments or discussion; and
 - H. Respect each other's differences, honor disagreements, vote and move on.
- 5.4 City Council Decisions.** Councilmembers recognize that they are part of a legislative or corporate body. As such, when the City Council has voted to approve or pass an agenda item, the members agree not to contact staff to encourage actions inconsistent with such City Council action or take other action(s) adversely impacting staff resources. Councilmembers, who voted on the prevailing side, may bring any approved action up for reconsideration, on the same day that the vote was taken, following City Council review and approval of such agenda item. The City Council's goal is to make final decisions and not to revisit or reconsider such decisions. (See [Appendix A](#) for more details).
- 5.5 No Surprise Rule.** Councilmembers should use best efforts to contact the City Manager to advise of emerging issues. Generally, Councilmembers agree not to propose substantial amendments and/or revisions to any agenda item unless they provide each

other and City staff at least 36 hours advance notice to review any written proposal. To provide staff with the necessary preparation time, Councilmembers will use best efforts to provide staff advance notice of any questions or concerns they may have regarding an agenda item prior to a public meeting.

- 5.6 Possible Quorum.** Any member of the City Council can attend any City board, commission, ad hoc, or standing committee meeting; however, if a quorum of the City Council (4 or more Councilmembers) is present at any of these meetings, Councilmembers shall “self-police” by not sitting together and not discussing City business. For community or regional meetings where there may be four (4) or more Councilmembers in attendance, the City Clerk may notice the meetings for possible quorum.
- 5.7 Councilmember In-Person Representation.** If a Councilmember appears on behalf of the City before another governmental agency or a community organization for the purpose of commenting on an issue, the Councilmember must state the majority position of the City Council, if known, on such issue. Personal opinions and comments which differ from the City Council majority may be expressed if the Councilmember clarifies that these statements do not represent the City Council's position but rather those of the individual Councilmember. Councilmembers must obtain another Councilmember's concurrence before representing another Councilmember's views or positions with another governmental agency or community organization.
- 5.8 Issuance of Statements.** From time to time, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor may wish to issue a statement on recent events or issues. For timely issuance, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor may sign a statement on behalf of the City Council Leadership when there is not sufficient time to bring the statement to the next Regular City Council meeting. The statement will be brought to the City Council for ratification at the next Regular City Council meeting.
- 5.9 Use of City Letterhead.** Use of City letterhead by the City Council shall be confined to conduct of official City business or communicating messages of the City. City letterhead of any kind shall only be used by the City Council at the direction of the Mayor or his or her designee. Individual Councilmembers shall not use City letterhead to communicate individual or personal messages or opinions.
- 5.10 Mail.** Mail addressed to Councilmembers will be placed in their respective mailboxes at the Mercer Island Community & Event Center (located in the City Council lunchroom outside of the Slater Room Council Chambers and is available for pickup during regular business hours. Accumulated mail will be included with hard copy agenda packets, placed on the dais before City Council meetings, or mailed to a Councilmember's residence.

- 5.11 Social Media.** Social media accounts operated by Councilmembers should not be used as mechanisms for conducting official City business, other than to informally communicate with the public. When Councilmembers use social media accounts to discuss City business, Councilmembers should clarify that the views expressed are solely their own. In addition, direct communication between a majority of the City Council on social media may constitute a "meeting" under the OPMA and should be avoided. In addition, any content or post related to City business may be subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act, regardless of whether it occurs on a personal account or page. Councilmembers are responsible for capturing and retaining any City business-related posts on social media or private email accounts for public records preservation purposes.

The NextDoor.com ("NextDoor") social media platform does not function in the same manner as the City's other social media outlets (i.e., Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram). NextDoor does NOT allow access by automated archiving services. Instead, the City must execute a complicated manual export process that can be refined only by date range (not topic, or subject line, etc.). This lack of archiving access to NextDoor also makes it difficult and potentially risky for Councilmembers to post about City business and/or to reply to other posts, as they are unable to be captured in a manner that is suitable for responding to public records requests or in a manner that it can be deleted after meeting the required retention period. See [Appendix E](#) for further details.

SECTION 6. CITY DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 Review.** All ordinances, resolutions, contracts, motions, amendments, and other City documents shall be reviewed by the City Attorney. An individual Councilmember may contact the City Attorney to request the preparation of motions for a City Council meeting. No ordinance, resolution or contract shall be prepared for presentation to the City Council, unless requested by a majority of the City Council or by the City Manager.
- 6.2 Signing.** The Mayor and City Clerk sign all ordinances and/or resolutions approved by the City Council, immediately following the meeting. In addition, the City Attorney signs all ordinances as to form. If the Mayor is unavailable, the Deputy Mayor signs the ordinances and/or resolutions.
- 6.3 Ordinances.** The following shall apply to the introduction, adoption and/or amendment of all ordinances:
- A. First Reading of Ordinances.** An ordinance shall be scheduled for first reading at any regular or special City Council meeting. A majority of the City Council may direct the City Manager to prepare any amendments to the ordinance for consideration during second reading and adoption.
 - B. Second Reading/Adoption of Ordinances.** An ordinance that has previously been introduced for first reading may be scheduled for second reading and adoption at any regular or special City Council meeting as either regular business or as a part of the consent agenda.
- Any amendments that a majority of the City Council has directed the City Manager to prepare will be included as proposed amendments in the City Council packet for the City Council's consideration. If further amendments (other than clerical, punctuation, or other non-substantive amendments) are requested at second reading, the ordinance may be continued to the next regular City Council meeting for adoption.
- C. Exceptions.** Sections A and B above shall not apply to:
 1. Any housekeeping ordinances that the City Manager recommends be adopted at first reading;
 2. Any budget ordinances; or
 3. Any ordinances that the City Council determines require an effective date precluding a second reading.

This Rule shall not apply to public emergency ordinances, necessary for the protection of public health, public safety, public property, or public peace consistent with [RCW 35A.11.090](#).

SECTION 7. CITY COUNCIL & STAFF COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Governance of a City relies on the cooperative efforts of elected officials, who provide oversight and set goals, policy, and priorities, and City staff, which analyzes problems and issues, makes recommendations, and implements and administers the City Council's policies and priorities consistent with the City Council goals.

The following are general guidelines to help facilitate effective communications between the City Council and City staff:

- A.** Communicate through the appropriate department director with a copy to the City Manager.
- B.** All Councilmembers should have the same information with which to make decisions.
- C.** Depend upon the staff to respond to community concerns and complaints as fully and as expeditiously as practical.
- D.** The City Council sets the direction and policy – City staff is responsible for administrative functions and City operations.
- E.** To provide the City Council with timely information, whenever possible, Councilmembers should submit questions on agenda items to the City Manager and Director in advance of the City Council meeting.
- F.** Respect the will of the “full” City Council.
- G.** Depend upon the staff to make independent and objective recommendations.
- H.** The City Manager and staff are supporters and advocates of the adopted City Council policy.
- I.** Refrain from publicly criticizing an individual employee. Criticism is differentiated from questioning facts or the opinion of staff.
- J.** Seeking political support from staff is not permitted.
- K.** Support life-family-work balance.

Appendix D to these Rules contains the standalone City Council-Staff Communications Guidelines document and provides greater detail about each guideline listed above.

SECTION 8. CITY ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- 8.1** Mercer Island's advisory boards and commissions provide an invaluable service to the City. Their advice on a wide variety of subjects aids the City Council in the decision-making process. Effective resident participation is an invaluable tool for representative government.
- 8.2** These advisory bodies originate from different sources. Some are established by [Title 3](#) of the Mercer Island City Code while others are established by motion or ordinance of the City Council. It is at the discretion of the City Council as to whether any advisory body should be established by ordinance. The following advisory boards and commissions are established:
- A.** Design Commission
 - B.** Planning Commission
 - C.** Utility Board
 - D.** Mercer Island Arts Council
 - E.** Open Space Conservancy Trust Board
 - F.** Parks & Recreation Commission
- 8.3** Each board and commission shall adopt rules of procedure (or bylaws) to guide governance of its board or commission, including the number of meetings unless set forth in a resolution or ordinance or unless the number of meetings adversely impacts City staff resources, as determined by the City Manager.
- 8.4** The City Council may dissolve any advisory body that, in its opinion, has completed its working function or for any other reason.
- 8.5** Lengths of terms vary from one advisory body to another, but in all cases overlapping terms are intended.
- 8.6** All meetings of advisory bodies are open to the public in accordance with Chapter 42.30 RCW, [Open Public Meetings Act](#), and require a minimum 24-hour advance written notice.
- 8.7** Members may be removed from any advisory board or commission prior to the expiration of their terms of office, in accordance with the provisions of the ordinance or resolution establishing such advisory board or commission.
- 8.8** All members of advisory boards and commissions shall sign a statement acknowledging they have received, read, and agree to be bound by the City's Code of Ethics, MICC Chapter 2.60 and RCW Chapter 42.23. The City shall provide new members with a presentation on the Code of Ethics. If the required Code of Ethics presentation has not

been completed within **45** days of appointment, the member will be referred to City Council Leadership for potential removal.

- 8.9** The City Council transmits referrals for information or action through the City Manager and the City Council liaison to the advisory boards and commissions. Staff liaisons, on behalf of advisory boards and commissions, transmit findings, recommendations, reports, etc., to the full City Council as part of the City Council Agenda Packet.
- 8.10** The City Manager shall appoint City staff to assist advisory boards and commissions. City staff are not employees of such bodies and take direction only from the Department Director or the City Manager. Boards and commissions shall not direct City staff to perform research, gather information, or otherwise engage in activities involving projects or matters that are not listed on the work plan unless approved by the City Council or City Manager.
- 8.11** As part of the biennial budget process, the City Council shall adopt a citywide work plan. Staff liaisons shall present the work plan to the boards and commissions and set the appropriate meeting schedule to achieve the deliverables in the work plan.
- 8.12 Appointment Process.** Annually, the City Clerk will advertise for applicants to fill expiring positions on the boards and commissions as follows, unless otherwise provided by law:
- A.** Available positions are advertised.
 - B.** Once the application deadline has passed, all applications received by the deadline will be forwarded to the City Council for review.
 - C.** The City Clerk will include the appointment process on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.
 - D.** The City Clerk will prepare a ballot for each board or commission, listing applicants alphabetically by last name.
 - E.** The voting process for appointment to each board and commission shall be as follows:
 - 1. Each City Councilmember completes a written ballot, casting a vote for the identified open seat on the board or commission. If there is more than one open seat on a board or commission, then each position will be voted on separately. If there are multiple positions open for a given board or commission, the position(s) with the longest term shall be voted on first.
 - 2. The City Clerk will collect the ballots, tally the votes, and read aloud the votes and outcome of the voting process.
 - 3. The applicant that receives the most votes, provided they have received a minimum of four votes, will be appointed to the open seat on the board or commission. In the event of a tie or if no applicant receives four votes, the procedures in Section 8.12(E)(4) and (5) shall be followed.

4. If no applicant receives a minimum of four votes, a second round of voting will take place utilizing the following process:
 - a. Applicants receiving one or no votes in the first round will be dropped from the ballot and Councilmembers will re-vote on the remaining applicants. If more than one candidate has only one vote, the Mayor will recommend an appropriate procedure for breaking the tie, subject to approval by the Council.
 - b. Voting will continue until an applicant receives the four-vote minimum.
5. If a tie exists after the first vote or in a subsequent round of voting, and a tiebreaker is necessary to make an appointment, a tiebreaker vote will be conducted utilizing the following process:
 - a. Councilmembers will vote on the applicants that are tied and all other applicants will be eliminated from the voting process.
 - b. If after three successive votes a tie still exists, the names of all the applicants that are tied will be put into a hat and the City Clerk will draw out one of the names. The name that is drawn will be appointed to the open seat.
6. The Mayor may call for a recess at any time during the voting process to allow Councilmembers to caucus. Caution should be exercised during a caucus to avoid “serial meetings” as these types of discussions are not allowed under the Open Public Meetings Act.
7. The names of the applicant(s) selected will be added to a Resolution, with final approval required by a vote of the City Council.
- F. Letters will be sent to all applicants informing them of their appointment or thanking them for applying. Staff liaisons will contact new appointees in advance of the first board or commission meeting.

8.13 Vacancies.

- A. When vacancies occur, they are filled for the unexpired terms in the same manner as described in Section 8.12. If there is more than one vacancy to fill on a board or commission, the position with the longest term will be voted on first. The City Council will be notified of vacancies so they may encourage residents to apply.
- B. In the event a vacancy occurs mid-term, the City Council shall appoint a person to fill the unexpired term within 60 days, or as soon as reasonably practicable.
- C. If the mid-term vacancy occurs for a position with six months or less remaining in the term, the City Council may elect to fill the unexpired term and the next four-year term concurrently.

8.14 Open Government Training Requirement. Within 45 days of the appointment to a board or commission, all new members must complete the Open Government Trainings Act requirements, which includes training on the Open Public Meetings Act, the Public Records Act, and public records retention. Members will provide proof of completion of

these trainings to the City Clerk. If the required Open Government Trainings have not been completed within 45 days of appointment, the member will be referred to City Council Leadership for potential removal.

8.15 City Council Liaison Roles & Duties. The Mayor (in consultation with the Deputy Mayor) may appoint a City Council liaison for certain boards or commissions. The City Council liaison shall report objectively on the activities of both the City Council and the advisory group. The specific duties of a City Council liaison are as follows:

- A.** Attend meetings of the board or commission and report back to the City Council on the business that is being discussed.
- B.** May participate in the discussion of the board or commission to represent the position of the majority of the City Council (if known) and will be cognizant not to unduly influence the discussion of the board or commission. Liaisons will not vote on any matter (except for the Open Space Conservancy Trust as the City Council Liaison is a voting member).
- C.** Represent the majority City Council position, if known.
- D.** Participate in a manner that will not intimidate, unduly influence, or inhibit the members, meetings or the operations of the board or commission. Make comments in a positive manner to promote positive interaction between the City Council and the board or commission.
- E.** Provide regular and timely reports to the City Council at regular City Council meetings. Take the lead on discussion items before the City Council which pertain to the assigned board or commission.
- F.** Provide input to the City Council regarding potential candidates for appointment to the board or commission.

SECTION 9. CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- 9.1** City Council committees, which are created by the City Council, operate as policy review and discussion arms of the City Council. The committees enable City staff to obtain early feedback from representative members of the City Council on issues affecting public policy prior to their presentation to the full City Council. City Council Committees are expected to anticipate the full range of considerations and concerns related to various policy questions.
- 9.2** Committees do not replace the City Council as final decision makers on behalf of the full City Council. City Council Committees give no staff direction on administrative matters, specific assignments, or work tasks. Any discussion or feedback expressed or received at a Committee meeting should not be construed or understood to be a decision by or for the full City Council.
- 9.3** There are two forms of City Council Committees:
- A.** Standing Committees: these are permanent and meet regularly on policy matters pertaining to the designated subject.
 - B.** Ad Hoc Committees: these are short-term in nature and advise on a specific policy matter or concern. Ad hoc committees will be dissolved upon completion of the intended purpose and objectives.
- 9.4** Committees will be established by a charter containing the purpose, objectives, responsibilities, duration, membership, and meeting schedule.
- 9.5** Committee appointments (chairs and members) shall be made by the Mayor (in consultation with the Deputy Mayor). The Mayor will consider the interests, experience, and requests of individual Councilmembers in making committee assignments. No more than three (3) Councilmembers shall serve on any committee.
- 9.6** Committees will have staff support assigned by the City Manager. Staff will work with the committee chairs to set agendas, provide support materials, and prepare reports.
- 9.7** In January of even years, the Mayor, in consultation with the Deputy Mayor, will review committees for relevancy and make appointments or reassignments, as necessary. The City Clerk will maintain the list of appointments (City Council Liaison Appointments) to established committees.

SECTION 10. SUSPENSION AND AMENDMENT OF RULES

- 10.1** Any provision of these Rules not governed by state law or ordinance may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the City Council.
- 10.2** These Rules may be amended, or new rules adopted, by a majority vote of the City Council.
- 10.3** These Rules will be reviewed for amending at the City Council's Planning Session every odd year (except 2025) unless warranted by a necessary change.

SECTION 11. SANCTIONS FOR RULE VIOLATIONS

11.1 Councilmembers may be sanctioned for violation of these Rules in any of the following ways:

- A. Executive Session.** Two (2) or more Councilmembers may call an executive session under RCW 42.30.110(f) to discuss complaints brought against a public officer.
- B. Public Censure.** If a majority of the City Council supports public censure, the Mayor shall, during a regular City Council meeting, state in detail the Rule(s) violated and the Councilmember's conduct resulting in violation of the Rule. The Councilmember who is the subject of the sanction shall have the opportunity to rebut. If the Mayor is the Councilmember who is subject of the sanction, then the Deputy Mayor shall preside over the public censure.
- C. Other.** Any other appropriate action decided by a majority of the City Council.

APPENDIX A - PARLIAMENTARY RULES AND MOTIONS

- (1) Following the presentation of the item and questions of staff, a motion should be made before Council begins discussion to frame and guide the discussion.
- (2) If a motion does not receive a second, it dies and will not be included in the minutes. Motions that do not need a second include nominations, withdrawal of motion, agenda order, request for a roll call vote, and point of order.
- (3) When making motions, be clear and concise and do not include arguments for the motion within the motion.
- (4) No comments may be made or heard until there is a second on the motion.
- (5) After a motion and second, the Mayor will indicate the names of the Councilmembers making the motion and second.
- (6) When the City Council concurs or agrees to an item that does not require a formal motion, the Mayor will summarize the agreement at the conclusion of the discussion. Councilmembers may object to such summary if any feel the summary does not reflect the City Council consensus.
- (7) If the maker of a motion wishes to withdraw their motion, the Mayor shall ask the City Council if there is any objection to the maker withdrawing their motion. If none, the motion is withdrawn. If there is objection, the City Council will vote on whether the motion may be withdrawn. The text of the withdrawn motion and the fact of its withdrawal will not be included in the minutes.
- (8) A **motion to table** is undebatable and shall preclude all amendments or debates of the issue under consideration. If the motion to table prevails, the matter may be "taken from the table" only by adding it to the agenda of a future regular or special meeting at which time discussion will continue; and if an item is tabled, it cannot be reconsidered at the same meeting.
- (9) A **motion to postpone to a certain time** is debatable as to the reason for the postponement but not to the subject matter of the motion, is amendable, and may be reconsidered at the same meeting. The question being postponed must be considered at a later time at the same meeting, or to a time certain at a future regular or special City Council meeting.
- (10) A **motion to postpone indefinitely** is debatable as to the reason for the postponement as well as to the subject matter of the motion; is not amendable and may be reconsidered at the same meeting only if it receives an affirmative vote.

- (11) A **motion to call for the question** shall close debate on the main motion and is undebatable. This motion must receive a second and fails without a two-thirds' (2/3) vote; debate is reopened if the motion fails.
- (12) A **motion to amend** is defined as amending a motion that is on the floor and has been seconded, by inserting or adding, striking out, striking out and inserting, or substituting.
- (13) Motions that cannot be amended include motion to adjourn, agenda order, point of order, reconsideration and take from the table. A motion to amend an amendment is not in order.
- (14) Amendments are voted on first, then the main motion as amended (if the amendment received an affirmative vote).
- (15) The motion maker, Mayor, or City Clerk should repeat the motion prior to voting.
- (16) All votes of the City Council will be conducted by roll call voting.
- (17) When voting Councilmembers will reply with "aye," "nay," or "abstain" and shall refrain from additional comments about the motion or their vote.
- (18) At the conclusion of any vote, the Mayor will announce the results of the vote.
- (19) A motion that receives a tie vote is deemed to have failed.
- (20) When a question has been decided, any Councilmember who voted in the majority may move for reconsideration.
- (21) A **motion for reconsideration** can only be made by someone who voted on the prevailing side, and it must be made on the same day that the vote to be reconsidered was taken. All action that might come out of the original motion is stopped at the time that reconsider is made and seconded.

APPENDIX B - CITY COUNCIL MEETING CODE OF CONDUCT

The Mercer Island City Council welcomes the public to the City Council meetings and dedicates time at its meetings to hear from the public on agenda items and other issues of concern.

It is important for all community members to feel welcome and safe during City Council meetings. Audience members will be expected to treat all attendees with respect and civility.

1. **Appearances Ground Rules:**

Appearances is the time set aside for individuals to speak to the City Council about any issue during a City Council meeting. The ground rules are:

- A. Each person wishing to address the City Council should register with the City Clerk by 4:00 p.m. on the day of the City Council meeting;
- B. Please (1) speak audibly, (2) state your name and city of residence for the record, and (3) limit your comments to three minutes;
- C. Traditionally, the City Council does not respond to comments made at the meeting, but will follow up, or have staff follow up, with the speaker if needed;
- D. Comments should be addressed to the entire City Council, not to individual Councilmembers, staff members, or the audience;
- E. Audience members should refrain from applause, video comments, or disapproval of individuals' comments;
- F. Any person who makes personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks, or who becomes boisterous, threatening, or personally abusive while addressing the City Council, may be requested to leave the meeting; and
- G. The City Council cannot accept comments on any campaign-related matters (elections for individual offices or ballot propositions) except under specific circumstances where consideration of a ballot measure is on the City Council agenda. [RCW 42.17A.555](#).

2. **General Rules:**

- A. All cell phones, computers, tablets, and cameras shall be silenced while in the City Council meetings, unless the device is necessary for participation in the meeting.
- B. Please limit conversations in the audience seating area. You may be asked to step into the lobby to continue a conversation.

APPENDIX C - PROCESS TO FILL A MERCER ISLAND CITY COUNCIL VACANCY

PURPOSE

To provide guidance to the City Council when a Mercer Island Councilmember position becomes vacant before the expiration of the official's elected term of office.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS

A City Council position shall be officially declared vacant upon the occurrence of any of the causes of vacancy set forth in RCW 42.12.010. Under authority of RCW 42.12.070, the remaining members of the City Council are vested with the responsibility for appointing a qualified person to fill the vacant position. Accordingly, the process should include all the remaining Councilmembers in the City Council interviews, deliberations, and votes to appoint someone to fill the vacant position.

The City Council should direct the City Manager to begin the Councilmember appointment process and establish an interview and appointment schedule, so that the position is filled at the earliest opportunity. After the schedule is established, staff will notify applicants of the location, date, and time of the interviews.

Applications received by the deadline date and time will be copied and circulated to Councilmembers.

NOTIFICATIONS AND SCHEDULING

The notice of vacancy shall be posted on the City's website and published at least two times in the Mercer Island Reporter.

The City Council shall determine a regular meeting or set a special meeting for interviewing candidates and possibly appointing someone to the vacant position.

Interviews and the appointment process may be continued to another day if any Councilmember is not able to attend or if the selection process is not concluded.

INTERVIEWS

Applicants shall each be given five minutes to introduce themselves and present their credentials and reasons for seeking appointment to the City Council. They shall also address the answers to these questions during their allotted time:

1. Why do you want to serve on the City Council?
2. What experiences, talents or skills do you bring to the City Council and community that you would like to highlight?

3. Are there any regional issues or forums in which you have a particular interest or expertise? (e.g., transportation, water supply, human services, water quality, fiscal management, solid waste, parks & open space, etc.)
4. Do you want to serve on the City Council because of a particular local issue on which you want to work or are your interests more broadly distributed?

The City Council reserves the right to ask additional questions of candidates during the interview.

At the close of City Council questions, applicants will be afforded an opportunity to comment on any additional issues relevant to their candidacy.

The applicants' order of appearance will be determined by a random lot drawing.

DELIBERATIONS AND VOTING

Upon completion of the interviews, and as provided in the Open Public Meetings Act at RCW 42.30.110(1)(h), Councilmembers may convene in executive session to evaluate the qualifications of the applicants. However, all interviews and final action appointing a person to fill the vacancy shall be in a meeting open to the public.

In open session, the Mayor shall ask for nominations from the Councilmembers. No second to the motion is needed. Nominations are closed by a motion, a second and a majority vote of the City Council.

The Mayor may poll the City Council to ascertain that Councilmembers are prepared to vote. If so, the City Clerk shall proceed with a roll-call vote.

Nominations and voting will continue until a nominee receives a majority vote of the remaining Councilmembers.

At any time during the election process, the City Council may postpone elections until another open meeting if a majority vote has not been received, or if one of the remaining Councilmembers is not able to participate in a particular meeting.

The Mayor shall declare the nominee receiving the majority vote of all the remaining Councilmembers as the new Councilmember who shall be sworn into office at the earliest opportunity, or no later than the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

Under RCW 42.12.070(4), if the City Council fails to appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy within 90 days of the occurrence of the vacancy, the authority of the City Council to fill the vacancy ends and the King County Council is given the authority to fill the vacancy.

APPENDIX D - CITY COUNCIL-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

Governance of a City relies on the cooperative efforts of elected officials, who provide oversight and set goals, policy, and priorities, and City staff, which analyzes problems and issues, makes recommendations, and implements and administers the City Council's policies and priorities consistent with the City Council goals. The following are general guidelines to help facilitate effective communications between the City Council and City staff.

A. Communicate through the appropriate department director with a copy to the City Manager.

While any staff member is available to answer Councilmember questions and requests for information, the City Manager is the primary information liaison between the City Council and City staff as outlined in [RCW 35A.13](#). Questions of City staff should be directed to the City Manager and Department Directors. When a Councilmember makes a request to a particular staff member, the City Manager shall be simultaneously informed/copied on the request. In addition, staff will inform/copy the City Manager so that the City Manager is aware of the Councilmember's requests and needs.

B. All Councilmembers should have the same information with which to make decisions.

When one Councilmember has an information request, the response will be shared with all members of the City Council so that each member may be equally informed.

C. Depend upon the staff to respond to concerns and complaints as fully and as expeditiously as practical.

A key value in the City's organizational culture is providing quality customer service. Rely on staff to solve customer problems and concerns.

D. Operational/Maintenance Complaints.

The Public Works Team handles a variety of complaints including, water leaks, missing manhole covers, potholes, tree or street/stop sign down, etc. During business hours call (206) 275-7608 or file an online report with MI-Connect (<https://www.mercerisland.gov/publicworks/page/submit-service-request>). In the evening or on weekends, a member of the City's 24-hour Customer Response Team (CRT) can be dispatched by calling (425) 577-5656 (NORCOM Dispatch). Staff will follow-up with the Councilmember as to the outcome of the problem or concern.

E. Code Compliance Complaints.

The Community Planning & Development Code Compliance team answers questions and investigates complaints on a wide variety of issues, including zoning, building, and nuisance violations. To file a complaint, complete a [Code Compliance Request Form](#) or email codecompliance@mercergov.org. If you have questions about a potential Code Compliance issue or need assistance filing a complaint, contact the Customer Service Team at customerservice@mercerisland.gov or 206-275-7600.

F. Complaints/Concerns Directed to City Council.

Often City Council will receive customer letters or emails directly. Due to limited staff resources to handle the amount of correspondence, these are disseminated to the appropriate department to prepare a formal response on behalf of the City Council. On occasion, a letter or email is directed specifically to a Councilmember. The Councilmember may choose to work directly with the City Manager or designee to provide a response. All responsive staff correspondence is copied to all members of the City Council, regardless of to whom it was addressed.

G. The City Council sets the direction and policy – City staff is responsible for administrative functions and City operations.

The role of the City Council is as the legislative body. The City Council is responsible for approving the budget, setting the vision and goals, and adopting policy and strategic plans. The primary functions of staff are to execute the City Council policy and actions taken by the City Council and to keep the City Council informed. Staff is obligated to take guidance and direction only from the City Manager or Department Director.

Individual Councilmembers should not knowingly or willfully interfere with the administration of City business including, but not limited to, coercing, or influencing staff in the selection of personnel or consultants, the awarding of contracts, the processing of development applications, licenses, permits, or public records requests, and the interpretation and implementation of the City Council policy.

H. To provide the City Council with timely information, Councilmembers should submit questions on agenda items to the City Manager and Director in advance of the City Council meeting.

Councilmembers are encouraged to submit their questions on agenda items to the City Manager as far in advance of the meeting as possible so that staff can be prepared to respond before or at the City Council meeting. Having a practice of “no surprises” between the City Council and City staff and vice versa fosters a productive working relationship.

I. Respect the will of the “full” City Council.

City staff will make every effort to respond in a timely and professional manner to all requests for information or assistance made by individual Councilmembers. However, if a request reaches a certain degree either in terms of workload or policy, it will need to come before the “full” City Council. The City Manager takes direction from the full City Council and not from individual Councilmembers. If this should occur, the City Manager will prepare a memorandum or email to the City Council informing them of the request. The City Manager will consult with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councilmember with the request to determine when it is appropriate to bring it before the full City Council for discussion and direction.

J. Depend upon the staff to make independent and objective recommendations.

Staff is expected to provide its best professional recommendations on issues, providing

information about alternatives to staff recommendations, as appropriate, as well as pros and cons for recommendations and alternatives. Sometimes staff may make recommendations that may be unpopular with the public and Councilmembers. When this occurs, please refrain from attacking the messenger. Staff respects the role of the City Council as policy makers for the City and understands that the City Council must consider a variety of opinions and community values in their decision-making in addition to staff recommendations.

K. The City Manager and staff are supporters and advocates for adopted City Council policy.

Regardless of whether it was staff's preferred recommendation or not, staff will strongly support the adopted City Council policy and direction, even if this may cause concern by the City Council minority on controversial issues.

L. Refrain from publicly criticizing an individual employee. Criticism is differentiated from questioning facts or the opinion of staff.

All critical comments about staff performance should be made only to the City Manager through private correspondence or conversation.

M. Seeking political support from staff is not appropriate.

The City is a non-partisan local government. Neither the City Manager nor any other person in the employ of the City shall take part in securing or contributing any money toward the nomination or election of any candidate for a municipal office. In addition, some professionals (e.g., City Manager, the Chief of Administration, Chief of Operations, and the City Clerk) have professional codes of ethics, which preclude politically partisan activities or activities that give the appearance of political partisanship.

N. Support life-family-work balance.

In a 24-hour, mobile accessible world, expectations for staff to always be available can emerge. However, this expectation is unsustainable. Staff will respond to nonemergency emails or phone messages during business hours only.

APPENDIX E - HOW DOES THE CITY USE NEXTDOOR.COM?

NextDoor is a nationwide platform designed to encourage civil neighbor-to-neighbor interaction and discourse online, focused on highly local topics. The City joined NextDoor in October 2014 and uses its account to make general announcements, advertise meetings, solicit public engagement, provide crime and storm updates, highlight achievements, and more. The platform does not function in the same manner as the City's other social media outlets (i.e., Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram). NextDoor is not a City-controlled page, but rather a private membership network that functions more like an online community bulletin board. The City merely has an official presence on the platform via its "Agency Account," but by design, NextDoor tightly limits Agency Accounts in important ways.

Most notably, the City can only see its own posts and replies to them, while ALL other neighbor-to-neighbor content is hidden. This is intended to prevent eavesdropping by the City on local discussions. The last name of anyone replying to a City post is just replaced with an initial and is not spelled out.

In addition, because the City is required to maintain public records of social media to comply with the Public Records Act, the City uses ArchiveSocial to backup Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, and other accounts to retrieve records if requested. Unfortunately, NextDoor does NOT allow access by automated archiving services. Instead, the City must execute a complicated manual export process that can be refined only by date range (not topic, or subject line, etc.). This lack of archiving access to NextDoor makes it extremely difficult and potentially risky for Councilmembers and staff to post about City business or to reply to other posts, as they are unable to be captured in a manner that is suitable for responding to public records requests or in a manner that it can be deleted after meeting the required retention period.

If Councilmembers post on NextDoor about official City business, they must capture the text of the original post and all comments. If they comment on a post, they must capture the original post, all comments before AND after their comment. The City Clerk can provide additional guidance regarding public records retention requirements for NextDoor posts/comments.

Perspective City Council Candidate Workshop

April 24, 2025

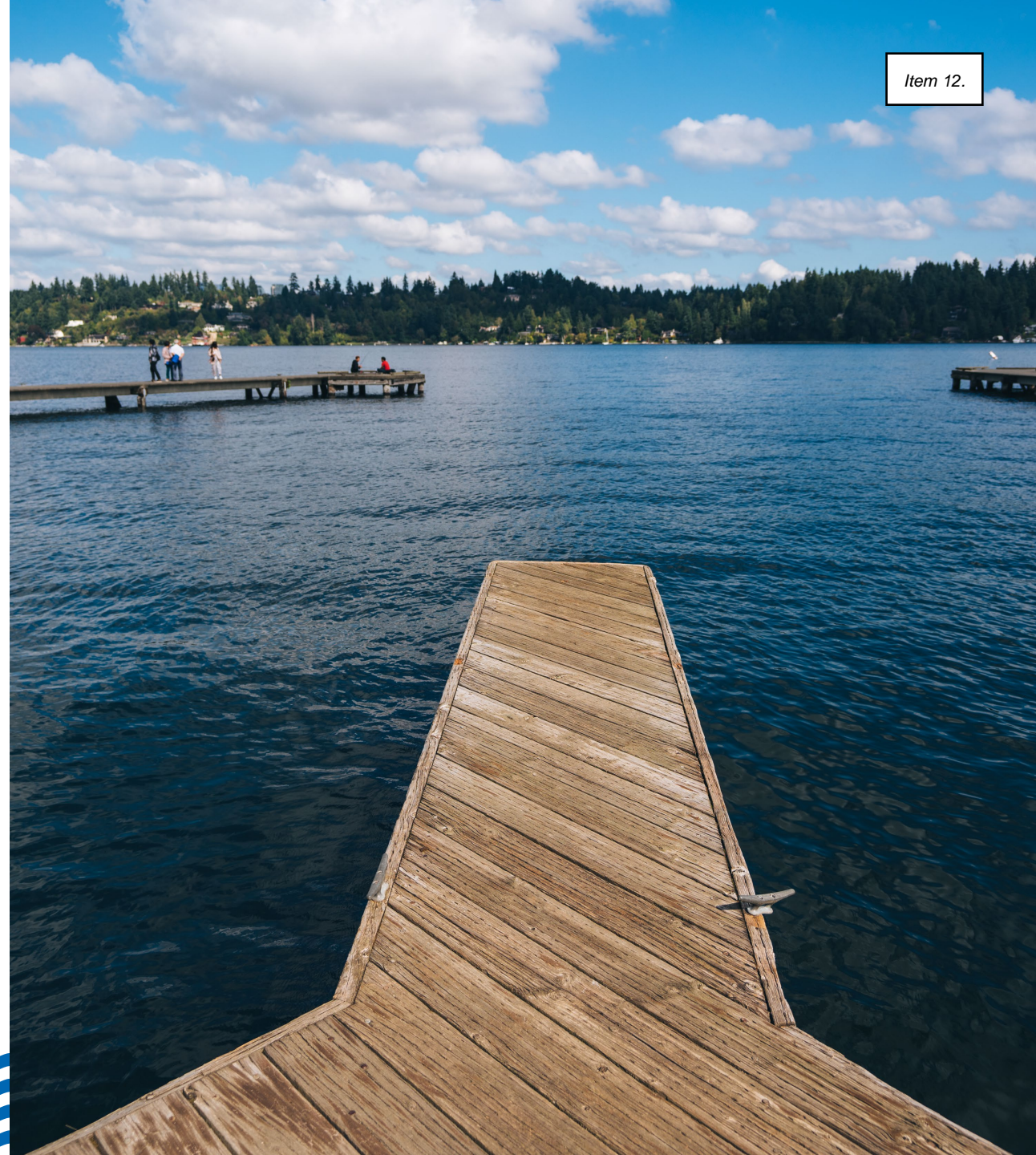
Mercer Island Community & Event Center
and Zoom



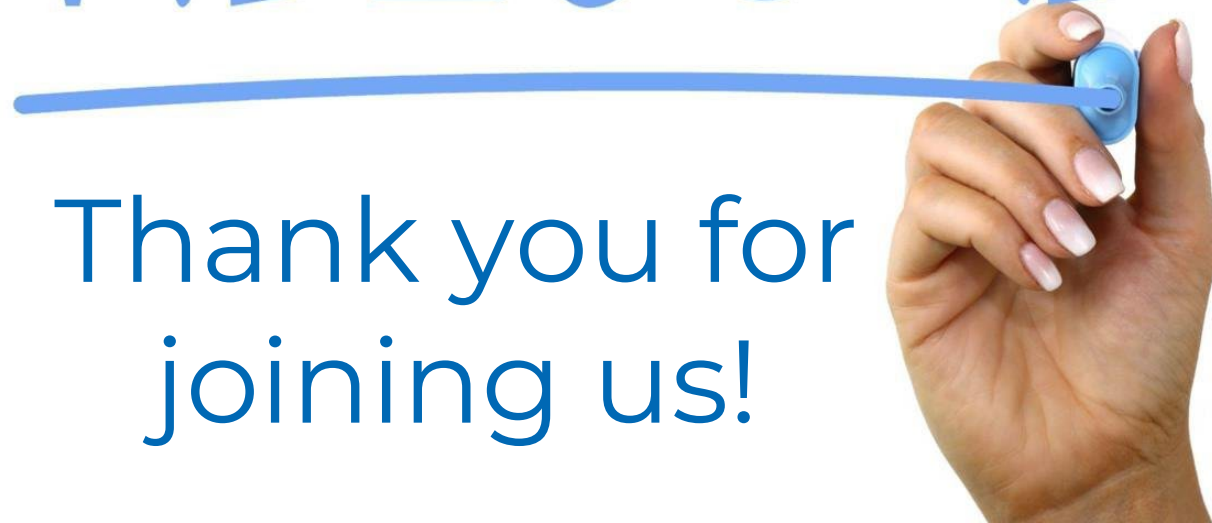
Item 12.

AGENDA

- Welcome & Introductions
- Candidate Resources
- Council-Manager Form of Government
- Councilmember Commitment
- Councilmember Role & Responsibilities
- Wrap-up



WELCOME



Candidate Resources

- Council-Manager Form of Government
 - [Chapter 3.02 MICC - City Manager](#)
 - [Chapter 35A.13 RCW - Council-Manager Plan of Government](#)
- Councilmember Commitment
 - [Compensation](#)
 - [King County 2025 Candidate Manual – Filing for Office](#)
 - [PDC Personal Financial Affidavit Statement – Public Disclosure Commission](#)



Candidate Resources

- Information & Additional Resources
 - [City Council Rules of Procedure](#)
 - [Running for Office](#) - King County Elections
 - [Serving on the City Council 2025](#)
 - [Chapter 2.02 MICC Noncharter Code City](#)
 - [So you want to be an elected official](#) - Association of Washington Cities (AWC)
 - [Getting Into Office](#) - Municipal Research & Services Center (MRSC)



Candidate Resources



Important Dates

Prospective Council Candidate Workshop	Thursday, April 24, 2025 5:00 pm
City Council Regular Meeting	May 6, 2025 5:00 pm
Candidate Filing	May 5-9, 2025
Deadline to Withdraw	Monday, May 12, 2025 5:00 pm
Council Candidate Orientation	June 2025, Date TBD 5:00 pm
Primary Election	Tuesday, August 5, 2025
General Election	Tuesday, November 4, 2025
Councilmember-Elect Orientation	December 2025
First City Council Meeting	Tuesday, January 6, 2026 5:00 pm

Candidate Resources

Information and resources about serving
on City Council are available at
www.mercerisland.gov/councilcandidate

Council-Manager Form of Government



City Manager
is only
Appointed
Official

International
City/County
Management
Association
(ICMA) Code of
Ethics

RCW 42.23
Code of Ethics
for Municipal
Officers

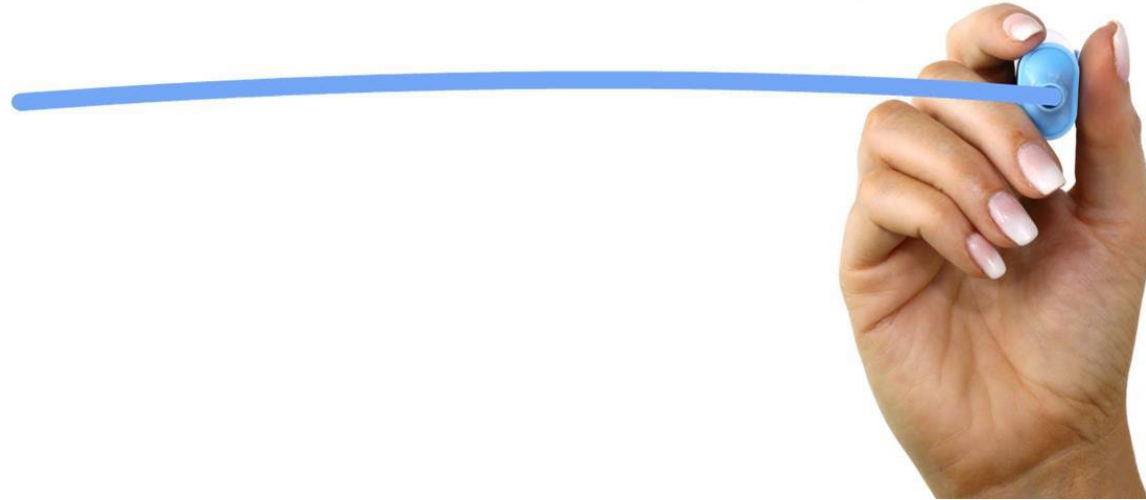
Councilmember Role & Responsibilities



- Meeting Commitment
- Councilmember Workload
- City Organization
 - Council
 - Mayor
 - City Manger

Wrap-up

QUESTIONS



Contact Information

Item 12.

City Manager Jessi Bon

citymanager@mercerisland.gov

(206) 275-7660

City Clerk Andrea Larson

cityclerk@mercerisland.gov

(206) 275-7793

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