



# KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

## Signature Report

### Motion 16183

**Proposed No.** 2022-0197.2

**Sponsors** Zahilay

1           A MOTION requesting that the executive develop a  
2           regional operational plan for extreme weather centers and  
3           disaster sheltering, with a special focus on the most-  
4           vulnerable King County residents.

5           WHEREAS, as reported in the most-recent National Climate Assessment, climate  
6           change is expected to result in more frequent and intense extreme weather events, and

7           WHEREAS, people who are already vulnerable, including lower-income and  
8           homeless residents have lower capacity to prepare for and cope with extreme weather and  
9           climate-related events and are expected to experience greater impacts in coming years,  
10          and

11          WHEREAS, in 2018, the department of public health published the Blueprint for  
12          Addressing Climate Change and Health, which describes the core functions and strategies  
13          for public health to address climate change and health, and

14          WHEREAS, according to the department of public health, heat-related health  
15          risks in King County are exacerbated by existing inequities in housing, access to  
16          healthcare and health outcomes, and

17          WHEREAS, in 2021 King County completed a heat-mapping project that  
18          quantifies the harmful, inequitable impact that hotter summers are having on the region.  
19          The data show that surface-level temperatures in areas with paved landscapes, less tree

Motion 16183

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20 canopy and more industrial activity are substantially higher during summer heat events  
21 compared to less-urbanized areas, and

22 WHEREAS, heat-related health risks in King County are exacerbated by existing  
23 inequities in housing, access to healthcare and health outcomes. Those most at risk are  
24 older adults, the very young, pregnant women, people who work outdoors, people who  
25 are unhoused and people who have chronic medical conditions. Many of the areas  
26 affected by higher temperatures have a higher proportion of BIPOC residents and have  
27 been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and other health inequities.

28 WHEREAS, according to the department of public health, hotter temperatures  
29 increase the risk of illness and death from heatstroke and cardiovascular disease, and

30 WHEREAS, researchers at the University of Washington found an increase in  
31 emergency medical service calls, hospitalizations and mortality in King County during  
32 hotter temperatures, and

33 WHEREAS, record heat waves can be extremely dangerous in areas such as the  
34 Pacific Northwest with historically cooler climates because people are less likely to have  
35 access to air conditioning, and

36 WHEREAS, according to 2019 data from the United States Census Bureau's  
37 American Housing Survey, Seattle is the least air-conditioned metropolitan area included  
38 in the survey. As of 2019, only forty-four and one-quarter percent of households in  
39 Seattle metropolitan area were cooled by central air or a room unit. Only thirty-four and  
40 seven-tenths percent of those households with incomes less than thirty thousand dollars  
41 have air conditioning, and

Motion 16183

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42 WHEREAS, according to the department of public health, the record-setting heat  
43 dome event in June 2021 caused thirty-three deaths from hyperthermia in King County,  
44 and

45 WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, access  
46 to a cool environment during an extreme heat event can help residents avoid heat illness,  
47 and

48 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports exposure to  
49 air pollutants in wildfire smoke can irritate the lungs, cause inflammation, alter immune  
50 function and increase susceptibility to respiratory infections, likely including COVID-19,  
51 and

52 WHEREAS, the nationally accredited King County emergency management  
53 program fosters collaborative and cooperative planning at all levels to enable a uniform  
54 and rational approach to the coordination of multiagency and multijurisdictional actions  
55 for all regional mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery efforts. On behalf of the  
56 executive, the King County office of emergency management has broad responsibility to  
57 perform coordination activities for county government agencies, cities and other  
58 appropriate agencies, and to provide liaison with other governments and the private,  
59 nongovernmental sector, for emergencies and disasters, and

60 WHEREAS, the King County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan  
61 contains elements that address mitigation activities, preparedness, responses to disasters  
62 and emergencies and recovery operations, including mass care disaster sheltering and  
63 other related assistance, and

Motion 16183

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64 WHEREAS, the King County office of emergency management coordinates with  
65 and has initiated a planning process with county agencies, the cities and other interested  
66 parties to develop a regional extreme weather center and disaster sheltering plan, to  
67 include the use of cooling, warming and clean air centers, and

68 WHEREAS, the department of local services has started the process to identify  
69 community partners and volunteers to operate and staff extreme weather centers and  
70 disaster shelters in unincorporated King County, and

71 WHEREAS, the 2020 version of the King County Regional Hazard Mitigation  
72 Plan ("the RHMP"), adopted by the county council with Motion 19160, and by nearly  
73 fifty of the cities and special purpose districts as well as the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe,  
74 and which integrates with the Strategic Climate Action Plan ("the SCAP"), contains  
75 extreme weather as one of the fourteen highest risk hazards confronting the region. The  
76 RHMP details the risk for, vulnerabilities to and consequences of extreme weather events  
77 and sets forth strategies, projects and programs through which vulnerability to and  
78 impacts from extreme cold, extreme heat and wildfire smoke are reduced and abated, and

79 WHEREAS, planning for extreme weather events and other events requires  
80 significant coordination with the King County Regional Homelessness Authority, which  
81 has responsibility for unhoused people throughout the county, the cities for their residents  
82 and visitors, the tribes for their residents and visitors, the county for unincorporated  
83 residents and visitors the state for residents of long-term care facilities and family care  
84 homes, and

Motion 16183

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85 WHEREAS, extreme cold can have a disproportionate impact on those who are  
86 experiencing homelessness or who are financially unstable and unable to pay utility bills,  
87 and can cause power outages, which can lead to the inability to safely heat homes, and

88 WHEREAS, in 2012, King County adopted its first SCAP, becoming one of the  
89 first local jurisdictions in the nation to comprehensively plan to address the threats of  
90 climate change. The emphases in the SCAP have included: requiring county agencies to  
91 limit greenhouse gas emissions associated with agency operations; encouraging and  
92 supporting efforts to limit emissions by the regional community; and preparing to  
93 mitigate the impacts of climate change, particularly as they affect vulnerable populations.  
94 The county council adopted the 2020 SCAP in 2021 with Motion 15866, and

95 WHEREAS, as part of the SCAP, King County is beginning work on a strategic  
96 plan to mitigate the impacts of higher temperatures on communities in King County, with  
97 an emphasis on low-income neighborhoods, communities of color and other vulnerable  
98 communities in King County that experience a confluence of multiple inequities;

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

100 The council requests the executive to:

101 A. Coordinate across King County agencies, cities, the King County Regional  
102 Homelessness Authority, the state and other partners to develop a regional operational  
103 plan for extreme weather centers and disaster sheltering, with a special focus on the most-  
104 vulnerable residents. For the purposes of this section A., "the most-vulnerable residents"  
105 shall include, but are not limited to, unhoused people, low-income people who live in  
106 housing without adequate protection from extreme weather and senior citizens or those

Motion 16183

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107 with disabilities without adequate protection from extreme weather. In developing the  
108 operational plan, the executive shall:

109           1. Conduct community outreach in low-income communities in unincorporated  
110 King County to gather information on the location and features that would result in the  
111 highest utilization of extreme weather centers and disaster shelters during extreme  
112 weather and other disasters;

113           2. Encourage the cities to conduct outreach in low-income communities within  
114 their jurisdictions, to gather information on locations and features that would result in the  
115 highest utilization of extreme weather centers and disaster shelters during extreme  
116 weather and other disasters;

117           3. Encourage the Regional Homelessness Authority to conduct outreach in  
118 unhoused communities throughout the county, to gather information on locations and  
119 features that would result in the highest utilization of extreme weather centers and  
120 disaster shelters during extreme weather and other disasters. Any locations identified to  
121 serve unhoused individuals shall strive to allow unhoused people to bring their personal  
122 belongings;

123           4. Consolidate the information gathered by the cities and the Regional  
124 Homelessness Authority with the information gathered through the county's outreach  
125 efforts in unincorporated King County. Based on that information, the executive shall  
126 also coordinate with the Regional Homelessness Authority and appropriate county, city,  
127 state, federal and tribal agencies as well as community partners and private sector  
128 businesses to identify facilities that could serve as extreme weather centers or disaster  
129 shelters;

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Motion 16183

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130           5. Based on the facilities identified in subsection 4 of this section A, provide a  
131 list and a map of King County facilities currently used for extreme weather centers or  
132 disaster sheltering or that could be rapidly repurposed to serve as extreme weather centers  
133 and disaster shelters with an emphasis on those facilities that can be available to residents  
134 of unincorporated King County or residents of cities that do not have access to similar  
135 facilities in their own cities. That information should also include staffing costs based  
136 upon the staffing model developed in subsection 8 of this section A;

137           6. Based on the facilities identified in subsection 4 of this section A, provide a  
138 list and a map of King County facilities not currently used for extreme weather centers  
139 and disaster shelters, but that could be used for such purposes with upgrades. For a range  
140 of scenarios, the executive shall also identify the costs of such upgrades and staffing  
141 costs;

142           7. Based on the facilities identified in subsection 4 of this section A, provide a  
143 list and a map of non-county owned facilities that could be used for extreme weather  
144 centers and disaster shelters. The executive shall also provide an engagement plan for  
145 those entities and the costs for any necessary upgrades;

146           8. Develop a staffing model based on best practices to operate extreme weather  
147 centers and disaster shelters. The staffing model should be inclusive of training  
148 requirements for county staff when operating emergency weather centers and disaster  
149 shelters. The staffing model should also include the cost to provide staffing for a range  
150 of scenarios;

Motion 16183

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151           9. Include information, if available from the state department of social and  
152 health services on long-term care assistance facilities or family care homes in King  
153 County that do not have air conditioning;

154           10. Consider with King County Regional Homelessness Authority and city  
155 partners the use of vouchers for accommodations or day use activities for the most  
156 vulnerable residents; and

157           11. Maintain a website with updated real-time information during extreme  
158 weather events and disasters, which includes a listing of all known available extreme  
159 weather centers, disaster shelters and emergency shelters, where to go to get help and  
160 public health tips for staying safe during extreme weather events and disasters, and how  
161 to volunteer or donate resources to organizations providing support during extreme  
162 weather events and disasters; and

163           B. File the operational plan by June 30, 2024, with the clerk of the council, who  
164 shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the



Motion 16183

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- 165 council chief of staff and the lead staff for the transportation, economy and environment  
166 committee, or its successor.


Motion 16183 was introduced on 5/24/2022 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 8/16/2022, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Balducci, Dembowski, Dunn, Kohl-Welles, Perry, McDermott, Upthegrove, von Reichbauer and Zahilay

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Claudia Balducci, Chair

ATTEST:

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Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

**Attachments:** None

**Certificate Of Completion**

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**Signer Events**

Claudia Balducci  
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 Council Chair  
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Agent Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
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Witness Events	Signature	Timestamp
Notary Events	Signature	Timestamp
Envelope Summary Events	Status	Timestamps

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Signing Complete	Security Checked	8/18/2022 1:59:55 PM
Completed	Security Checked	8/18/2022 1:59:55 PM

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