



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

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June 29, 2022

The Honorable Claudia Balducci
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

This letter transmits the Tenant Protection Access Plan as required by Ordinance 19311, Section 19.B.1, and a proposed Motion that would, if enacted, acknowledge receipt of the plan.

This plan provides recommendations to increase tenants' knowledge of their rights and protections, including those in the King County Code, and to expand legal and policy support to help ensure that tenants can access and benefit from these laws. King County staff consulted with tenant, civil legal aid, and immigrant organizations to collect information and determine gaps within existing tenant outreach and legal aid work. King County staff utilized this input and examined best practices from within the region and across the country to develop the recommendations in this plan.

I plan to take the following actions to implement several of this plan's recommendations in the near term, using existing resources and staff capacity as follows:

- Create and maintain a landing page on the County website with basic information about the tenant protection ordinances adopted by King County Council and send the website information to community organizations and the King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission.
- Support state legislative efforts to reform the tenant enforcement legal process.
- Continue to connect tenants who call the King County information line with applicable resources such as a referral to a civil legal aid organization.

In addition to these actions, I plan to propose legislation to the Council to create a right to reside with family in unincorporated King County. This proposed legislation, which if adopted by the Council, will allow undocumented tenants to move a documented family member into their unit who could enforce tenant protections on behalf of the household. Design of this legislation will include engagement with impacted stakeholders. I expect to transmit the proposed Ordinance by the second quarter of 2023.

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Notably, several recommendations in this plan require additional funding that has not yet been identified. These include:

- additional tenant educational material such as a renter's handbook or similar material;
- additional civil legal aid funding for legal representation and non-attorney staff to connect with more tenants through existing hotlines; and
- funding to coordinate social services with legal aid services to perform outreach to tenants facing eviction and address the underlying reasons tenants face eviction, such as helping tenants apply for benefits, access mental health services, or move to a more affordable unit.

I intend to explore a potentially renewed Veterans, Seniors & Human Services Levy (VSHSL) as a revenue source for some of these recommendations. However, because we are in the preliminary stages of VSHSL renewal planning, we cannot make such additional funding commitments at this time.

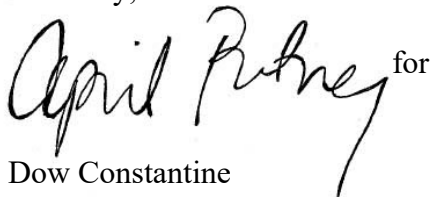
This plan furthers the King County Strategic Plan goal to increase access to quality housing that is affordable to all by increasing housing stability for low-income families through tenant protections. The plan aligns with the King County Equity and Social Justice Initiative and the County's pro-equity policy agenda for access to safe and stable housing for all.

Production of this plan required an estimated 310 hours in staff time, costing approximately \$23,750 in staff hours.

Thank you for your consideration of this plan and its recommendations

If your staff have any questions, please contact Leo Flor, Director, Department of Community and Human Services, at 206-477-4384.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers
ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council
Shannon Braddock, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
Karan Gill, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
Mina Hashemi, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive
Leo Flor, Director, Department of Community and Human Services