



King County

King County Board of Health

Staff Report

Agenda item No: 8
Proposed Rule No: BOH 25-01

Date: June 18, 2025
Prepared by: Michael Perez

Subject

Proposed repeal of Board of Health Code 2.06.020, the \$25 dishonored check fee.

Summary

A King County Auditor's Office Report, published in February 2025, identified a discrepancy in dishonored check fees between King County Code and the Board of Health Code. As a result, Public Health—Seattle & King County's Environmental Health Services Division (Environmental Health) is proposing to repeal the BOH fee to resolve the discrepancy and authorize the division to charge a \$35 fee in line with other County agencies in accordance with King County Code 4A.600.100.

Background

Board of Health Code (BOH) 2.06.020 sets a \$25 dishonored check fee and was last revised in 2005. King County Code (K.C.C.) 4A.600.100 authorizes King County agencies to assess a \$35 fee for dishonored checks. King County Council raised the handling fee to \$35 in 2010, after a staff report showed that the fee rate was too low to cover staff costs.

The King County Auditor's Office performed an audit on returned checks, with the final report published in February of 2025.¹ One of the items identified in the report was a discrepancy between the \$35 fee for returned checks in K.C.C. 4A.600.100 and the \$25 fee in BOH 2.06.020.

The report noted that Environmental Health had been charging customers the \$35 fee per K.C.C. and has collected about \$1,500 per year in returned check fees between 2020 and 2024. A

¹ Opportunities for Improvement in Returned Check Fees, Collections, King County Auditor Report, February 11, 2025. <https://kingcounty.gov/en/independents/governance-and-leadership/government-oversight/auditors-office/reports-papers/reports/2025/returned-checks>

returned check fee is incurred when a customer's payment for an Environmental Health permit or service cannot be processed due to insufficient funds.

Analysis

Environmental Health is proposing to repeal BOH 2.06.020 to address the inconsistency with K.C.C. 4A.600.100 as identified by the King County Auditor in 2025. By repealing the fee in the BOH Code, the \$35 fee for dishonored checks, authorized in K.C.C., would apply. This fee is what Environmental Health has been charging customers since 2020.

Attachments

1. King County Auditor's Report on Returned Checks, February 11, 2025