



Signature Report

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

June 27, 2016

Ordinance

Proposed No. 2016-0307.1

Sponsors Gossett and Balducci

1 AN ORDINANCE establishing the procedures for judicial
2 need approved for superior court, adding a new chapter to
3 K.C.C. Title 2A and repealing Ordinance 8936, Section 1,
4 and Ordinance 8936, Section 2.

5 STATEMENT OF FACTS:

6 1. As authorized by Ordinance 8936 in 1989, the King County council,
7 the executive and the superior court judges entered into an agreement ("the
8 protocol agreement") establishing a process for recommending specific
9 judicial need in superior court. The protocol agreement mandated
10 development of a methodology for determining future judicial officer
11 need, including phasing in additional judicial positions as allowed by state
12 law.

13 2. Since 1989, the methodology used to evaluate judicial need has
14 evolved, reflecting the improved depth of data available to superior court.
15 The methodology, focusing on trends in pending caseload, age of pending
16 cases and the use of pro tem judicial resources, has been modified twice,
17 in 1998 and 2007, to further improve its effectiveness and accuracy.

18 3. The parties to the protocol agreement agree that public transparency
19 would be improved by replacing the protocol agreement and establishing a

20 framework, codified in King County Code, under which recommendations
21 for future judicial officer needs in the superior court would be made to the
22 legislative and executive branches.

23 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

24 SECTION 1. Section 2 of this ordinance shall constitute a new chapter in K.C.C.

25 Title 2A.

26 NEW SECTION. SECTION 2. A. A protocol committee is hereby established.

27 The committee shall be composed of the following members:

28 1. One superior court judge, selected by that court, who shall be the chair of the
29 committee;

30 2. One member of the council, selected by the council chair;

31 3. The executive or the executive's designee; and

32 4. One representative of the King County Bar Association, selected by that
33 association.

34 B. The responsibilities of the protocol committee shall be to review and, as
35 necessary, to revise the methodology for evaluating the judicial staffing needs of the
36 superior court and to make recommendations to the council and the executive on any
37 changes to the number of judicial officers allocated to superior court as a result of the
38 outcomes learned from this methodology.

39 C.1. A technical committee is hereby established. The committee shall be
40 composed of the following members:

41 a. one employee from the legislative branch, selected by the chair or the chair's
42 designee;

- 43 b. one employee from the superior court, selected by that court; and
44 c. one employee from the executive branch, selected by the executive or the
45 executive's designee.

46 2. Technical committee members shall have experience in statistical methods
47 and knowledge of court administration.

48 D. The technical committee shall be convened by the chief administrative officer
49 of the superior court. The responsibilities of the technical committee shall be to assist the
50 protocol committee in applying the methodology to determine judicial need. The
51 committee shall: collect data; analyze and advise the protocol committee on the
52 statistical outcomes produced from applying the methodology; and recommend changes
53 to the number of superior court judicial officers and changes to the methodology used to
54 determine judicial need, as may be appropriate.

55 E. The chair of the protocol committee shall convene the protocol committee to
56 review any proposed change in the number of judicial officers in superior court based on
57 the applied methodology.

58 F. The protocol committee shall transmit a report to the executive making
59 recommendations on the number of judicial officers needed in the superior court. The
60 report shall describe in detail the methodology applied, the rationale for the methodology,
61 including any changes to the methodology, and any conclusion reached with regard to the
62 judicial need allocated to superior court. The executive shall transmit to the council a
63 report reflecting the protocol committee's recommendations. The executive's report shall
64 be transmitted in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy to the clerk of the

65 council, who shall retain the original and provide an electronic copy to all
66 councilmembers.

67 SECTION 3. The following are each hereby repealed:

68 A. Ordinance 8936, Section 1; and

69 B. Ordinance 8936, Section 2.

70

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

J. Joseph McDermott, Chair

ATTEST:

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, _____.

Dow Constantine, County Executive

Attachments: A. Protocol Committee Report to the King County Council - May 5, 2016