



King County | Office of the Executive

Executive Girmay Zahilay

Chinook Building, CNK-EX-0800
401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-2391

April 6, 2026

The Honorable Sarah Perry
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
COURTHOUSE

Dear Councilmember Perry:

This letter transmits a proposed Motion that would, if enacted, confirm my appointment of Susan McLaughlin as director of the King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) consistent with King County Code 2.16.110(E)(1)(b). A full set of confirmation documents will be submitted under separate cover.

I appointed Dr. McLaughlin to serve as DCHS Director starting March 30, 2026. Dr. McLaughlin has been serving successfully as acting DCHS director since December 15, 2025. Prior to her acting appointment, she served as the director of the Behavioral Health and Recovery Division within DCHS where she oversaw a range of services, including the Crisis Care Center Levy and the Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Behavioral Health Sales Tax Fund. Prior to her time as division director, Dr. McLaughlin served as the DCHS health and human services administrator.

In addition to roles at King County, Dr. McLaughlin has served as the director of the UW Medicine Behavioral Health Institute and the executive director of HealthierHere, a local nonprofit dedicated to advancing health equity in King County. Dr. McLaughlin is a licensed clinical psychologist and her extensive leadership experience in health, behavioral health, and social services makes her the ideal candidate to lead DCHS.

It is my pleasure to request your confirmation of Dr. Susan McLaughlin as DCHS Director. If your staff have questions regarding this matter, please contact Hyeok Kim, Chief Operating Officer, Office of the Executive, at 206-296-1463.

The Honorable Sarah Perry

April 6, 2026

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Zahilay', written in a cursive style.

Girmay Zahilay

King County Executive

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Deputy Executive, Office of the Executive

Jasmin Weaver, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Hyeok Kim, Chief Operating Officer, Office of the Executive

Sierra Howlett Browne, Director of Government Relations, Office of the Executive

Garrett Holbrook, Council Relations Manager, Office of the Executive

Megan Pedersen, Chief People Officer, Office of the Executive

Susan McLaughlin, Director Designee, Community and Human Services