



Legislation Text

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AN ORDINANCE providing direction regarding the expenditure of proceeds from the regional human services levy for veterans and others in need, requiring a service improvement plan for the use of these proceeds, clarifying the roles of and process for appointing the members of the citizens' oversight boards, requiring a report with recommendations regarding the updating of policies, priorities and contracts for human services currently funded with county discretionary funds and requesting the regional policy committee to direct development of a regional human services plan to update previously agreed-upon regional human services definitions and priorities.

PREAMBLE:

While local government plays an important role in addressing the human service needs of residents, it does so as one partner among many. Federal and state programs, volunteers, civic organizations, nonprofit service providers, faith communities, businesses, schools and other organizations all lend financial and other forms of assistance to residents in need in order to help foster healthier and safer communities. Human services are not the responsibility of any one local government entity. Over the years, jurisdictions in King County have built a locally-funded system of human services in partnership with communities and other funding sources to strengthen individuals and families and to improve the viability and livability of communities. Over the past four years, city and county officials throughout King County have researched

human service needs, spending priorities and funding opportunities in extensive and cooperative study.

National research and local experience have shown that consumers of mental health, chemical abuse and dependency services benefit most from cost-effective programs intended to promote recovery. Concurrently, this research shows that society benefits most when human service consumers succeed in their recovery, since they require fewer costly services, such as police response, emergency aid, hospitalization or incarceration, and they begin to productively contribute to the community. Cities and the county, in partnership with other funders and service providers, are beginning to build a coordinated human service system that identifies and funds effective prevention and intervention programs and that promotes the recovery of consumers by means of employment, housing placement and long-term diversion away from costly emergency medical and public safety services.

King County gratefully acknowledges the substantial commitment to human services shared by the city of Seattle and the suburban cities. King County intends to further build on the effective partnerships with these local government partners, and other human services organizations in King County, and pledges further collaboration to define the responsibilities of each jurisdiction to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of human services programs as the network evolves through these changing policies and priorities. Notwithstanding the generous support for human services shown by approval of the regional human services levy for veterans and others in need by county voters, it is clear that the current approach to providing essential regional human services cannot be maintained in the face of growing demands for service and public demand for measurable outcomes.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Findings:

A. The King County regional human services levy for veterans and others in need was passed in the November 2005 general election. The levy will provide thirteen million three hundred thousand dollars per year for six years. Fifty percent of the proceeds from the levy is dedicated to improve health, human services and housing for veterans, military personnel and their families, and fifty percent is dedicated to improving health, human services and housing for a wider array of people in need.

B. There is a need to provide additional direction regarding the use of these proceeds to ensure they achieve the kind of results that will satisfy the taxpayers of the county that they have made a wise investment. If these proceeds are spread too broadly across the wide array of needs, there will be little or no impact. The proceeds need to be focused in one or two areas and invested strategically, not just to add new services but to improve the overall capacity and results of existing services and systems.

C. The proceeds should be used primarily to prevent and reduce homelessness and unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice and emergency medical systems for veterans, military personnel and their families and other individuals and families most at risk. This will maximize the positive impact on homelessness and safety and health emergencies for the well-being of the veteran and nonveteran individuals and families at risk, the quality of life of the community and the ability to control emergency medical and public safety cost growth that is limiting the ability to invest in more preventative and constructive areas.

D. A small portion of the levy proceeds not specifically designated for veterans, military personnel and their families should be targeted to continue to identify and promote the development of effective early intervention and prevention services. This is intended to recognize that, while we must do better for those who are already in serious trouble and can no longer manage on their own, we also need to keep working on how to help reduce those risk factors that lead to the worst-case outcomes.

E. A service improvement plan needs to be developed and approved, to provide an overall focus for investments and, within that focus, to strategically invest the proceeds to achieve specific results and to maximize those results by partnering with and leveraging existing resources.

F. King County contracts with local agencies, using county discretionary funds, to provide adult day health and senior services, child care referral, domestic violence and sexual assault victim's assistance, homeless and shelter services, housing assistance, youth and family services, youth shelters, youth prevention and juvenile justice services, adult justice diversion and transition services, health care for low-income, uninsured persons and other supportive services for the community. The county also manages several human service systems mandated by state and federal governments, including services for seriously mentally ill people, drug and alcohol services, veteran's services, services for people with developmental disabilities and public health.

G. In September 1999, the King County council adopted Ordinance 13629, which embodied the Framework Policies for Human Services for the use of discretionary county current expense and criminal justice funds. While the framework applies to all human services in which the county is involved, it provides specific direction on the use of county-generated tax resources for human services. The framework states that current expense and criminal justice funds should be prioritized to:

1. Help provide access to a basic array of human services for residents of unincorporated King County, according to need;
2. Help assure access to a basic array of human services for persons most in need, regardless of where they live; and
3. Reduce the impacts on the county's juvenile justice and adult criminal justice systems.

H. Some cities have voluntarily chosen to provide funding, from general tax dollars and federal community development block grants or from specific levy proceeds, for a variety of locally defined programs as well as to augment or leverage funding in regional, state and federal programs.

I. Services are provided primarily through contract with nonprofit, community agencies that also receive funding from cities, United Way and other community sources.

Historically, county and city human services funding has been added in response to individual agency requests

and via several legislative or executive-sponsored initiatives, including prevention services for children and families in 1988 and 1991, domestic violence victim advocacy in 1991 and services for at-risk youth in 1994.

J. Implementation of the King County framework policies began in 2000, but King County found itself with a worsening financial situation. The county budget was structurally challenged by a criminal justice system that was consuming more and more of the available tax dollars just to maintain itself. This budget crisis drove the reorganization of many county departments, the shedding of many employees and responsibilities for discretionary services. Because of this, the executive proposed to eliminate discretionary human service funding over a two-year period beginning in 2003.

K. The regional policy committee addressed the issues of health and human services in response to the executive's preliminary announcement in early 2002, recognizing that health and human service funding around the county was interdependent. Local funding was leveraging multiple local, state and federal resources, as well as private investment, and funding partners were concerned that the loss of King County investments could de-stabilize the entire system.

L. The regional policy committee defined a work program to address health and human services issues. An intergovernmental staff team, consisting of human service managers and intergovernmental staff from the county and cities, compiled information, performed analysis and developed recommendations for committee consideration to address the tasks identified. In 2002, the committee made recommendations to the council regarding preservation of funding for specific programs. In spring 2003, the committee endorsed a report that identified a "set of regional human services to be provided through a countywide partnership" that also identified the current level of investment in the recommended set of regional human services and addressed the value and benefit of these services to the community.

M. The regional policy committee was poised to begin work on the next task defined to develop:

1. A proposed administrative framework for the countywide partnership for the delivery of regional human services;

2. A financial plan for the regional human services system; and

3. Recommendations for funding mechanisms and sources of funding for the regional human services system when the executive announced the formation of a new task force to address many of the same issues.

N. The task force on regional human services was convened in 2004 to examine the current regional human services system and to give practical recommendations for maintaining funding for this system into the future. The regional human services examined by the task force were those identified as the Regional Services to be Provided Through a Countywide Partnership by the Regional Policy Committee of the Metropolitan King County Council in 2003.

O. The healthy families and communities task force was subsequently convened in 2005 was tasked with closing the existing funding gap for those limited regional human services identified by the regional policy committee by bringing forward financial options to address the unmet funding stream for these services.

P. At the same time the regional policy committee and executive task forces were working on regional human services issues, The Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in King County was developed by a consortium of stakeholders and adopted by the King County council. The ten-year plan includes a series of key strategies for local leaders and their organizations to pursue over the next decade, including:

1. Preventing homelessness through techniques such as temporary assistance, supportive services and discharge planning;

2. Moving people who have become homeless rapidly into permanent housing with the supportive services they need to maintain this housing;

3. Making the existing systems more efficient;

4. Measuring and reporting outcomes; and

5. Building the public and political will to commit the resources necessary to accomplish the goal of ending homelessness.

Q. Development of the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in King County, changes in the strategic

plan for United Way of King County, adoption of the juvenile and adult justice operational master plans and the recent passage of King County Proposition 1 have led to interest in updating county framework policies for human services and revisiting the work of the regional policy committee in 2002 through 2005, specifically regarding defining regional human service priorities.

SECTION 2. Direction for the investment of levy proceeds. Within the parameters of eligible expenditures as described in Ordinance 15279, Section 5, regional human services levy for veterans and others in need proceeds shall be used primarily to improve access to and the results of regional health, housing and human services for veterans, military personnel and their families and other individuals and families who are at -risk for or involved in homelessness and expensive, after-the-fact emergency medical and law and justice services. A limited portion of levy proceeds shall be used to promote community investment in effective, early intervention and prevention services for children and their families.

SECTION 3. Service improvement plan required. By August 15, 2006, the executive shall develop and submit to the council, including the regional policy committee, for the council's review and approval by ordinance a service improvement plan and a related appropriation ordinance for the investment of levy proceeds for the purposes described in section 2 of this ordinance. However, a supplemental appropriation ordinance for expansion of existing county veterans' program services up to the limit in section 7.E of this ordinance and for development of the service improvement plan may be submitted by the executive to the council before development and submittal of the plan. The plan shall be developed as a six-year strategic services improvement plan that provides a basis for evaluating the results of levy expenditures in time to develop a levy renewal proposal for the ballot in 2011.

SECTION 4. Goals, strategies and purposes of the service improvement plan.

A. The executive shall address in the service improvement plan the goals of reducing homelessness and emergency medical and criminal justice involvement and increasing self-sufficiency both for veterans and military personnel in need and their families and for other individuals and families in need.

B. The investments identified in the plan shall help to achieve these goals by:

1. Improving access to and coordination and effectiveness of health, human services and housing programs for those individuals and families in immediate need; and

2. Helping the community identify and expand the most effective means of promoting healthy development for children most at-risk for dependency and criminal justice involvement in the long run.

C. Overall purposes in addressing these goals are to:

1. Provide a measure of safety, dignity and opportunity to those most in need and, thereby, to improve the overall quality of community life; and

2. Reduce the unsustainable growth of public safety, criminal justice and emergency medical costs affecting county, city and state budgets.

SECTION 5. Service improvement plan content and requirements. The executive shall include in the service improvement plan:

A. A review of current services and resources, system improvement plans and best practices related to the goals for the investment of levy proceeds described in section 4 of this ordinance. The review shall identify and analyze opportunities for both service and capital improvements or other one-time investments that offer the most promise in terms of reduction in demand and cost of emergency health, housing and public safety services as well as increased stability and self-sufficiency for people in need. Particular priority shall be given to identifying opportunities to leverage and combine existing resources to improve results and maximize impact;

B. A description of the proposed priority investment areas including the kinds of system improvement strategies and ongoing or one-time investments proposed for each priority investment area. The description for each investment area shall identify the target group or groups and define and discuss goals, service improvement strategies and desired results, including how the investment or improvements will build upon and further develop existing resources;

C. An allocation plan for levy proceeds for each year of the six-year levy period. The allocation plan shall separate the fifty percent of levy proceeds earmarked for regional human services for veterans and military personnel in need and their families from the remaining funds not specifically targeted to individuals and families with a military background. Within these two overall categories for the use of levy proceeds, the allocation plan shall show the projected use of levy funds for each of the priority investment areas broken down further by ongoing service versus one-time investments;

D. Implementation plans for each priority investment area. The executive shall include implementation plans for each priority investment area. These plans shall describe:

1. How and when each specific improvement will be implemented using what kinds of funding and service partnerships;
2. What kinds of performance contracting and performance measures will be used;
3. How cultural competence will be assured in the delivery of services to diverse populations; and
4. How services will be located and designed to maximize access by the populations in need;

E. A plan for overseeing and evaluating both the initial implementation and the longer-term results of the service improvement plan, including a description of the roles, responsibilities and staffing of the veterans citizen oversight and regional human services citizen boards called for in Ordinance 15279, Section 7; and

F. A brief description of the process used to develop the service improvement plan and involve stakeholders as required in section 8 of this ordinance.

SECTION 6. Priority areas for improvement investments. In developing the service improvement plan, the executive shall give particular consideration to areas of investment that:

A. Help veterans and their families who are in need to benefit from increased access to services that more effectively meet their needs in both the veterans' service systems and other human services systems and that encourage development of new partnerships between veterans' service systems and other human services systems;

B. Improve access to and success in housing and services by creating seamless, user-friendly pathways from local institutions, the courts, emergency medical and public safety services and the street into coordinated and integrated services;

C. Reduce repeated involvement in the emergency medical and criminal justice systems and increase stability and self-sufficiency by developing and expanding the capacity of supportive housing networks that use housing first strategies and provide integrated support, treatment and employment services;

D. Allow for the timely and appropriate sharing of client information necessary to achieving maximum results with all of the access and service and housing improvement investments;

E. Increase access to and quality of post traumatic stress syndrome treatment for veterans and others in

need;

F. Increase the impact of programs that have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing recidivism in the criminal justice system by adding housing and employment components or increasing capacity, or both;

G. Increase self sufficiency by adding employment goals and services to existing programs; and

H. Reduce the risk of future criminal behavior or dependency problems, or both, by promoting healthy child development for children most at risk.

SECTION 7. Allocation plan parameters. The allocation plan of the service improvement plan shall adhere to the following parameters:

A. One half of the levy proceeds shall be expended in ways that demonstrably benefit veterans, military personnel in need and their families;

B. The majority of the first year's levy proceeds shall be allocated for capital and other one-time expenditures for such purposes as expanding housing availability in conjunction with new service investments, developing and implementing information sharing protocols and information systems, training and equipment;

C. It shall be the goal to limit county administrative expenses for services provided using the levy proceeds to no more than five percent with the exception of expenses for development of the service improvement plan and implementation of the evaluation plan;

D. For the second year of the levy and each year thereafter, an amount up to one million dollars per year may be set aside for housing acquisition or other capital or one-time purposes;

E. At least two million dollars per year from the portion of the levy proceeds used for services for veterans, military personnel in need and their families shall be expended on expansion and improvement of current county veterans program services. The remainder of the portion of the levy proceeds dedicated to services for veterans, military personnel in need and their families shall be expended to improve other housing and health and human service options for veterans, military personnel in need and their families and may be used in partnership with other funds for projects that jointly benefit veterans, military personnel and their families and people who are not veterans, military personnel in need and their families;

F. One million five hundred thousand dollars per year from the portion of the levy proceeds not specifically designated for services for veterans, military personnel in need and their families shall be invested

in early intervention and prevention programs that have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing dependency and criminal justice problems in the long run; and

G. Regional human services levy proceeds for veterans and others in need shall not be used to supplant county general fund or children and family services set-aside funding for existing health, housing and human services programs.

SECTION 8. Service improvement plan development process. The executive shall ensure that the service improvement plan is developed as a collaborative effort between the departments of community and human services and public health with specific involvement of the county veterans' program advisory board, health care for the homeless, jail health, housing and community development, mental health, chemical abuse and dependency, work training, community corrections, parent child health and the children and family commission. In the process of plan development, the executive shall also consult with the Committee to End Homelessness in King County, the appropriate juvenile and adult justice operational master plan oversight and working groups, SOAR and regional and subregional human services planning groups.

SECTION 9. Roles of the veterans' program advisory board, the veterans' citizen oversight board and the regional human services citizen board.

A. The King County veterans' program advisory board shall be involved in the development of the service improvement plan for the portion of the levy proceeds for services for veterans, military personnel in need and their families. All proposals for investment of the portion of the levy proceeds for services for veterans, military personnel in need and their families shall be reviewed by the board, and the board's recommendations provided as part of the plan.

B. The veterans' citizen oversight board and the regional human services citizen board established in Ordinance 15279, Section 7, shall monitor and review the expenditure of levy proceeds in accordance with the adopted service improvement plan and report annually to the King County executive and council on or before June 1 of each year beginning in 2007. The veterans' citizen oversight board and the regional human services citizen board shall make recommendations to the executive and council regarding any changes that may be needed to best meet the overall goals for the use of levy proceeds and shall provide advice to the executive and council on the issue of a levy renewal or replacement proposition.

SECTION 10. Appointment of the veterans' and human services citizen oversight boards. Each council member shall provide a nominee for the veterans' citizen oversight board and for the regional human services citizen oversight board to the executive no later than June 1, 2006. The executive shall appoint all of the members of the citizen oversight boards, including those nominated by council members, no later than August 1, 2006. The boards shall be appointed, confirmed and convened immediately following the adoption of the service improvement plan.

SECTION 11. Human services recommendation report.

A. Submission of the next human services recommendations report, a periodic review of human services programs paid for with county discretionary funds required by Ordinance 13629 adopting the Framework Policies for Human Services shall be delayed until April 2, 2007, to allow for a comprehensive review of human services paid for with county discretionary funds.

B. This review shall include those services paid for by the regional human services levy for veterans and others in need as well as human services paid for from the general fund and all services paid for from the children and family services set-aside fund. The review shall be undertaken in light of:

1. The county roles, responsibilities and priorities described in the adopted framework policies for human services;
2. Further policy directions inherent in the subsequent adoption and implementation of major service system improvement plans affecting human services, including the juvenile and adult justice operational master plans, the Ten-year Plan to End Homelessness in King County, the recovery plan for mental health, the public health policy framework and the service improvement plan; and
3. The work of the regional policy committee in defining and prioritizing regional human services needing continued regional funding support, both the work done during the county financial crisis in 2002 and work to be completed as described in section 14 of this ordinance.

C. The report shall include recommendations to update the 1999 framework policies to reflect the further policy directions noted above and to revise programming as may be appropriate to implement such things as changes and refinements in priority, new or improved strategies, better outcome definitions and measures and improved monitoring and evaluation processes. The report shall be accompanied by proposed

legislation to adopt the policy and program change recommendations. Thirteen copies of the report shall be submitted to the clerk of the council, for distribution to all councilmembers.

SECTION 12. Implementation of audit recommendations regarding human services contracts.

The recommendations for improving contracting for human services funded with county discretionary funds agreed to by the executive and included in the King County auditor's performance audit, titled "Review of King County's Human Services Contracting Practices" shall be implemented for contracts for services supported by the regional human services levy for veterans and others in need. The audit recommendations shall also be implemented for other human service contracts supported by the general fund and services contracts supported by the children and family subfund subsequent to adoption of policy and program changes during 2007 as called for in Section 11 in this ordinance.

SECTION 13. Preparation of a regional human services plan. The regional policy committee is requested to prepare a regional human services plan, including an update of health and human services definitions and priorities based on the prior work of the committee completed in 2002 through 2005. The regional services plan for human services should be prepared in collaboration with service providers and stakeholders to the greatest extent possible and should address priorities for human services to be funded with local government, state and federal funds in coordination with private and foundation funds.

The regional human services plan should result from completion of a work

program to be described in a motion submitted to the council by the regional policy committee for introduction on or before June 30, 2006.