



## SEATTLE VOTES FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

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**What is Seattle Votes?** Seattle Votes is the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs' (OIRA) community outreach and engagement campaign to identify the barriers to civic engagement for Seattle's immigrant and refugee residents. By partnering with hundreds of organizations, we hope to survey thousands of immigrant and refugee residents in Seattle-King County about why they don't become citizens, register to vote, or vote.

**Why are we doing a survey?** Better information will result in better policies. In 2015, the Immigrant Voting Rights Task Force released a report with recommendations for city and regional governments. Both must now consider policies to improve the naturalization, registration, and voting rates of immigrant and refugee residents. One of the recommendations was the need for better data about immigrant and refugee voters. The Task Force was comprised of immigrant and refugee civic leaders appointed by Mayor Ed Murray and Mayor Mike McGinn. Their report is available at [seattle.gov/seattlevotes](http://seattle.gov/seattlevotes).

**What is the Seattle Votes survey?** The Seattle Votes survey is a research tool to help us understand barriers to civic engagement (naturalization, voter registration, and voting) for immigrant and refugee residents. The survey responses are anonymous, meaning that the surveys cannot be traced back to an individual. This ensures the survey taker's privacy. It takes less than 10 minutes to complete the survey.

**What languages is the survey available in?** The survey is available in English, Spanish, Chinese (Traditional), Vietnamese, Korean, Somali, Amharic, Oromo, Tigrinya, and Arabic. You can find the survey at [seattle.gov/seattlevotes](http://seattle.gov/seattlevotes) or call the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs at 206.727.8515 for a print copy.

**Who should fill out the survey?** *Only voting-age immigrant and refugee residents of Seattle-King County should fill out the survey. This means you must be born outside of the United States AND be at least 18 years of age.* If you were born in the United States OR you are younger than 18 years of age, you **should not** fill out the survey.

**What data is helpful to improve immigrant and refugee civic engagement rates?** We lack quality data on this issue. For example, it would be helpful to know the following:

- Language needs of eligible voters.
- Literacy levels of eligible limited English-proficient voters.
- Number of eligible limited English-proficient voters.
- Turnout of limited English-proficient voters.
- The use of ballot drop boxes in past and current locations.

## **Why is it important for me or my organization to support Seattle Votes?**

Immigrant and refugee residents are a growing and increasingly influential population, but our civic engagement rates lag behind other groups. When this happens, our voices are not as strong as they can be in elections and other activities. As a result, we are not part of decisions that affect our livelihood and our families. With so much at stake in the 2016 elections – jobs, education, immigration reform, and more – it's important for immigrant and refugee residents to become citizens, register to vote, and vote.

Also, the lack of immigrant and refugee voter data makes it difficult for city leaders and elections policymakers to understand what is needed to serve all Seattle residents. As members and supporters of immigrant and refugee communities, we have an opportunity to collect this data ourselves. A wise person once said: "Data is knowledge, and knowledge is power." Possessing accurate data about our communities is powerful.

**What can I do to help Seattle Votes?** If you are an immigrant or refugee and are at least 18 years old, you can help Seattle Votes by filling out a survey! After you fill it out, get your friends, family members, and colleagues who are also immigrants/refugees and are at least 18 years old to fill out the survey. You can also share the electronic version of the survey on social media, email, and text messages. You can find the survey at [www.seattle.gov/seattlevotes](http://www.seattle.gov/seattlevotes) or call the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs at 206.727.8515 for a print copy.

**What can my organization or I do to help Seattle Votes?** If you are a community or organizational leader, become a [Seattle Votes Partner](#). We would like to work with you and your organization to distribute the surveys to your members or constituents. ***Organizations that collect a minimum of 200 surveys have an option to receive a special report on the surveys collected by them. You will also be listed as a partner in the Seattle Votes report and on OIRA's web page. Ask us for more details.***

**Is funding available for my organization to do outreach?** We have a very limited budget for Seattle Votes and cannot sponsor or compensate organizations to participate in the campaign. This project is built on a mission: to improve the lives of Seattle's immigrant and refugee residents. Please join us in this mission. Together, we can make a difference.

**Where can I get more information?** For more information, contact Elsa Batres-Boni at [elsa.batres-boni@seattle.gov](mailto:elsa.batres-boni@seattle.gov) or 206.727.8515 or go to [seattle.gov/seattlevotes](http://seattle.gov/seattlevotes).