

CITY OF SEATTLE
ORDINANCE 127413
COUNCIL BILL 121180

AN ORDINANCE relating to inquiries into immigration status; changing the requirements for circumstances where Seattle Police Department personnel may inquire into a person’s citizenship or immigration status to align the Seattle Municipal Code with state law; and amending Section 4.18.015 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

WHEREAS, Ordinance 121063, adopted in 2003, generally bars City of Seattle employees from making inquiries into immigration status and provides an exception for Seattle Police Department officers under specific circumstances; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Washington State Legislature passed the Keep Washington Working Act (E2SSB 5497, codified in chapters 10.93, 43.10, 43.17, and 43.330 of the Revised Code of Washington) which restricts data collection and information sharing regarding civil immigration enforcement, including as relates to state agencies and state and local law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, state law (Section 10.93.160 of the Revised Code of Washington) describes the criteria under which local law enforcement may inquire into immigration status, and these state law criteria differ from those in the Seattle Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, amending the Seattle Municipal Code to align with state law concerning allowable law enforcement immigration status inquiries will benefit residents and employees of the City by increasing clarity regarding interactions with the Seattle Police Department;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Section 4.18.015 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 127398, is amended as follows:

1 **4.18.015 Inquiries into immigration status**

2 A. No Seattle City officer or employee shall, unless otherwise required by law or by court
3 order, inquire into the immigration status of any person, or engage in activities designed to
4 ascertain the immigration status of any person.

5 B. ~~((Seattle Police officers are exempt from the limitations imposed by subsection~~
6 ~~4.18.015.A with respect to a person whom the officer has reasonable suspicion to believe: (1) has~~
7 ~~previously been deported from the United States; (2) is again present in the United States; and~~
8 ~~(3) is committing or has committed a felony criminal law violation.)) Notwithstanding~~

9 subsection 4.18.015.A, and due to the unique functions of the Seattle Police Department,
10 personnel of the Seattle Police Department may inquire into or collect information about an
11 individual's immigration or citizenship status, or place of birth, if there is a connection between
12 such information and an investigation into a violation of state or local criminal law.

1 Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code
2 Sections 1.04.020 and 1.04.070.

3 Passed by the City Council the 31st day of March, 2026,
4 and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this 31st day of
5 March, 2026.

6 _____
7 President _____ of the City Council

8 Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this 6th day of April, 2026.

9 _____
10 Katie B. Wilson, Mayor

11 Filed by me this 6th day of April, 2026.

12 _____
13 Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

14 (Seal)