

PROGRAM OVERVIEWS

Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs

Director Hamdi Mohamed
June 2024



Seattle
Office of Immigrant
and Refugee Affairs

Overview

The mission of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs is to improve the lives of Seattle's immigrant and refugee communities through policies, programs, services, and community engagement.

We are an office of 12.5 FTEs with an annual budget of \$6.4 million dollars mostly backed by the General Fund, but also consisting of Payroll Expense Tax and State and local grant funding.



Office Programs

Legal Defense
Network (LDN)

New Citizen
Campaign (NCC)

New Citizen
Program (NCP)

Language Access
Program

Ready to Work
(RTW)

Immigrant Safety
and Access
Network (ISAN)



OIRA Program Philosophy: Beyond Contracting to Building Community Impact

Collaborative Engagement: Going beyond contract work, we invest in program development and building cohort models with the nonprofit organizations we fund. We ensure our contracts maximize community impact.

Community Alignment: Through hosting listening sessions and meeting with residents, we ensure our initiatives are in tune with community needs.

Data-Driven Strategy: We analyze collected data for our programs, including partner site visits, demographic reports, and income reports and collaborate with similar offices to develop best practices and models.

Obligation and Oversight: As stewards of public funds for the City, we work towards providing thorough monitoring, conduct on-site visit to ensure programs are well-executed, and meet regularly with contracted partners to assess program implementation.



Legal Defense Network (LDN)

Overview: Provides legal representation for low-income Seattle residents, students, and workers in immigration detention, facing deportation, or at risk due to immigration status. Services include removal defense (filing for one or multiple legal avenues that would allow a person to remain in the U.S. (cancellation of removal, adjustment of status, asylum, and more).

Goal: Increase access to legal services to protect immigrants and refugees from deportation, ensuring they can remain safely in their communities and with their families in the U.S.

Current Partners:

- Colectiva Legal del Pueblo
- Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP)
- Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
- Refugees Northwest



Legal Defense Network Budget

Total Program Budget	\$1.5 M
Direct Community Investments	\$1.35 M
Administrative (1.0 FTE) & Other Program Costs	\$150,000

Organization	Grants
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, subcontracted by Colectiva Legal del Pueblo	\$ 1,000,000
Kids in Need of Defense	\$ 250,000
Lutheran Community Defense Network	\$ 100,000



Representation in Court



Furthering Due Process and Court Efficiency

- **55%** of all people appearing in immigration court, including **81%** of detained persons, face proceedings without counsel.
- **54%** of children with cases at the Seattle immigration court have no legal representation.
- Immigrants with representation are up to **10 times** more likely to obtain relief from deportation.
- Representation increases immigration court efficiency and reduces severe backlog of immigration cases - currently **over 2 million**.
- **96%** of people represented by counsel appear in court, immigrants are also more prepared to proceed in their legal cases, avoiding reasons to request continuances or delays.



Legal Defense Network 2023 Accomplishments

- Over **160** people received full direct representation in legal immigration cases each quarter of the year. (Each case typically lasts one to four years and involves multiple court hearings and filings for a legal avenue to remain in the US.)
- **120** clients received limited legal services, such as in-depth legal consultation or assistance with immigration forms.
- **49** clients received assistance with pro se asylum applications.
- **49** people obtained work authorizations.
- **56** people obtained permanent or temporary immigration status.
- Filed for relief on behalf of LDN clients **164 times** and attended **44** court hearings and USCIS interviews.



Legal Defense Network Success Story



**Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Managing Director, Seattle Office
Jessica Castellanos**



New Citizen Campaign (NCC)

Overview: Provides naturalization assistance through group clinics and workshops, conducts broad-based outreach, promotes the benefits of citizenship, and engages with local and national partners.

Goal: Seeks to increase the number of immigrants and refugees who naturalize and engage in civic processes.

Current Partners: Asian Counseling & Referral Service, Afghan Health Initiative, Catholic Immigration Legal Services, Chinese Information Service Center, Entre Hermanos, Horn of Africa Services, International Rescue Committee, Korean Community Service Center, OneAmerica, Refugee Women's Alliance, and Somali Family Safety Task Force.



New Citizen Campaign Budget Breakdown

Total Program Budget	\$376,000
Direct Community Investments	\$241,000
Administrative (1.0 FTE) & Other Program Costs	\$135,000

Organization	Grants
Afghan Health Initiative	\$ 3,300
Asian Counseling & Referral Services	\$ 17,100
Catholic Community Services of Western Washington	\$ 35,100
Chinese Information and Services Center	\$ 20,100
Entre Hermanos	\$ 27,300
Horn of Africa Services	\$ 23,700
International Rescue Committee	\$ 20,700
Korean Community Services Center	\$ 15,300
One America	\$ 21,500
Refugee Women's Alliance	\$ 21,300
Somali Family Safety Task Force	\$ 3,300



Diversity of New Citizen Campaign

- In 2023, NCC clients:
 - Came from **34** different home countries.
 - Spoke **14** different primary languages.

Top Primary Languages:

1. Korean
2. Amharic
3. Tigrigna
4. Somali
5. Spanish
6. Chinese
7. Vietnamese



New Citizen Campaign 2023 Accomplishments

- In 2023, NCC assisted approximately **240** community members on their path to US citizenship.
- The NCC offered:
 - **11** free naturalization legal clinics. NCC clinics have been held all over Seattle in partner agency offices, community centers and places of worship. One of the goals of the NCC clinics is to expand legal services geographical reach.
 - Year-round legal screening and referral work for NCC clinics.
 - **4** naturalization information sessions to promote citizenship benefits and education.
 - **10** trainings on legal aspects of naturalization and program management to increase capacity and expertise of NCC service providers.



New Citizen Program (NCP)

Overview: Provide free naturalization services to low-income immigrants and refugees through case management and full legal representation throughout the citizenship process.

Goal: Increase access to legal services and other supports to help low-income immigrants and refugees who have high barriers to naturalization become US citizens

Current Partners: Asian Counseling & Referral Services, Catholic Immigration Legal Services, Literacy Source, Multicultural Self-Sufficiency Movement, Neighborhood House, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Refugee Women's Alliance, Sea Mar Community Health Centers, St James Immigrant Assistance, and Ukrainian Community Center of Washington.



New Citizen Program Budget Breakdown

Total Program Budget	\$1.3M
Direct Community Investments	\$1.17 M
Administrative (1.0 FTE) & Other Program Costs	\$130,000

Funding Source	\$ Amount
General Fund	\$393,000
WA State DSHS	\$865,600
Seattle Housing Authority	\$52,650

Organization	Grants
Asian Counseling and Referral Service	\$ 290,353.73
Catholic Community Services of Western Washington	\$ 71,418.42
Literacy Source	\$ 63,130.10
Multicultural Self-Sufficiency Movement	\$ 73,455.10
Neighborhood House	\$ 147,755.47
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project	\$ 105,467.69
Refugee Women's Alliance	\$ 195,308.36
Sea Mar Community Health Centers	\$ 38,610.70
St. James Immigrant Assistance	\$ 71,513.69
Ukrainian Community Center of Washington	\$ 119,350.94



Diversity of New Citizen Program Participants

In 2023, the New Citizen Program clients were:

- **93%** BIPOC
- Spoke **47** different primary languages
- Came from **50** different home countries
- **63%** identified as female
- **22%** had a disability
- **38%** were over 55 years old
- **41%** came to the US as refugees
- **63%** had limited English skills
- **9%** not literate in any language



New Citizen Program Accomplishments

- In 2023, NCP assisted over **1,000** low-income community members on their path to US citizenship by providing free assistance with:
 - **485** citizenship applications
 - **491** fee waiver or reduced fee applications
 - **144** applications for exemptions from citizenship testing requirements for disabled community members
 - **5,295** hours of citizenship classes and tutoring
 - **406** practice sessions
 - Accompaniment and legal advocacy at **151** citizenship interviews
 - **98** applications for minor children to obtain certificates of their US citizenship
- Saved community members an estimated **\$1.33 million** in direct legal costs and application fees while also providing key support services to give them a better chance of naturalizing.



NCP Success Story



LITERACY SOURCE
EDUCATION • EQUITY • OPPORTUNITY

**Literacy Source, Shira Rosen,
Managing Director and Co-Executive
Director**



City of Seattle

Office of Immigrant
and Refugee Affairs

Language Access Program

- **Overview:** Collaborate with City departments, Mayor's Office, and City Council to ensure that residents speaking languages other than English can access the information and services they need, and that the City is able to effectively serve them.
- **Goal:** To ensure every City resident can access city services and information, regardless of the language they speak.



Language Access Budget Breakdown

Total Program Budget	\$300,000
Administrative (2.0 FTE) & Other Program Costs	\$240,000
OIRA Translation & Interpretation	\$35,000
Citywide Translation Software (Smartcat)	\$25,000

Supports citywide trainings and in-language services across all City departments and works with translators and interpreters, often Women Owned or Minority Owned Business Enterprises.



Necessity of Language Access

22% of Seattle residents speak languages other than English.

8% of Seattle residents speak English “less than very well.”

150+ languages are spoken in Seattle schools.



Language Access Oversight at the City

The Language Access team is responsible for:

- Working with departments to create Language Access Plans.
- Managing a centralized translation service system that can be used by all city employees.
- Providing strategic guidance to departments, the City Council, and the Mayor's Office about communicating to residents speaking languages other than English.
- Conducting citywide monthly training covering topics such as translation, interpretation, plain language, and language justice.
- Convening a language access liaison network. Language access liaisons are representatives from City departments.
- Providing citywide technical assistance and guidance for language services



Language Access 2023 Accomplishments

- Trained and onboarded **over 50 translators**
- Supported **25 city departments**
- Translated over **2.3 million words** in the city's top-tier languages
- Conducted **12** department trainings on Smartcat
- Conducted citywide language access training and listening sessions for **271** attendees.
- Streamlined the city's translation system through Smartcat, a cloud-based translation management system, to manage translation projects, translated content databases, and invoicing processes.



Language Access Successes

- The Innovation and Performance team received **274** in language applications on CiviForm. The translations were completed by OIRA and translators and helped consolidate the City benefits and services application processes for Seattle residents with low or fixed income.
- Invited by the State of Hawaii Office of Language Access to present at the Hawaii Language Access Conference in August for **more than 200 people**, including local state employees and professional translators and interpreters.
- “My non-English speaking community members told me that they saw my translations on social media and other websites and were excited to see important and helpful information in Vietnamese.” -Translator



Ready to Work (RTW)

Overview: A nationally-recognized model for helping immigrants increase their English-language skills and get better jobs through a free, classroom-based program that offers English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes (Levels 1-4), culturally competent case management, digital literacy skills training, and other employment training.

Goal: Help low-income adult language learners of a variety of ages gain job readiness skills and take steps toward economic self-sufficiency.

Current Partners:

- Asian Counseling and Referral Services
- Homesight
- Literacy Source
- Neighborhood House
- Somali Family Services of Seattle



Ready to Work Budget Breakdown

Total Program Budget	\$800,000
Direct Community Investments	\$650,000
Administrative (1.0 FTE) & Other Program Costs	\$150,000

Funding Source	\$ Amount
Payroll Expense Tax	\$150,000
Federal Community Development Block Grant	\$650,000

Organization	Grants
HomeSight – Fiscal Sponsor of Ready to Work Program	\$ 650,000
Subcontracts	
• Literacy Source	\$ 266,000
• Asian Counseling & Referral Service	\$190,000
• Neighborhood House	\$75,000
• Somali Community Services of Seattle	\$40,000
Homesight Admin/ Indirect and Marketing	\$79,000



Ready to Work Services

The level of English proficiency is a determining factor in the type of jobs available to immigrant and refugee job seekers. RTW bridges this gap by:

Comprehensive Case Management: Addressing barriers, establishing employment and training goals, and troubleshooting issues that come in the way of participant success.

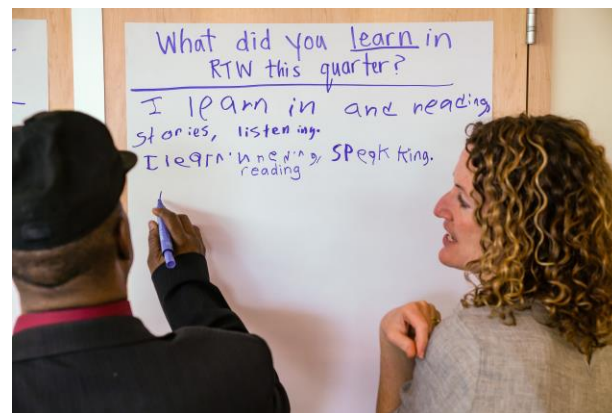
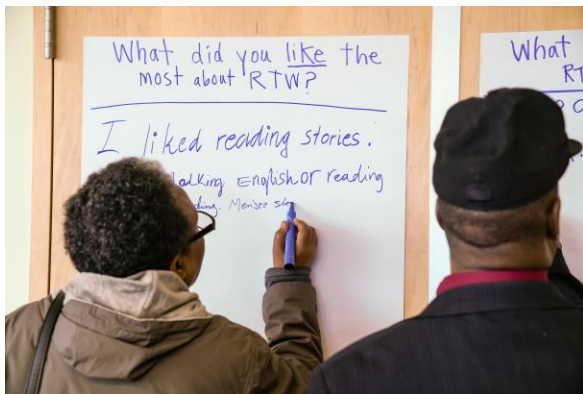
Access to Essential Resources: Referrals to digital literacy, financial capabilities, citizenship, career laddering training, and mental health programs.

Ongoing Support: Participants received classroom assistance, regular follow-ups, career coaching, and psychosocial support.



Ready to Work 2023 Accomplishments

- **Served 239** participants through problem solving skills, phone calls, job applications and interviews, customer service, personal budgeting, and career pathways planning.
- **Placed over a third** of participants in jobs.



Regional Workforce Report

Created to deepen understanding of immigration in our region and offer ways that the City of Seattle can collaborate with regional partners to improve the workforce conditions and economic stability of all our residents

Explored the understanding of immigration in our region and ways that the City, King County, workforce agencies, education stakeholders, labor unions, and community organizations can work together to improve the workforce conditions.



Ready to Work Success Story



LITERACY SOURCE
EDUCATION • EQUITY • OPPORTUNITY

**Literacy Source, Shira Rosen, Managing
Director and Co-Executive Director**



City of Seattle

Office of Immigrant
and Refugee Affairs

Immigrant Safety and Access Network Pilot Program 2023-2024

Overview: Partnership with King County to fund existing programs, such as cash-assistance, Know Your Rights trainings, victim navigation services, healing circles, and legal services that are not sufficiently funded.

Goal: To learn more from partner organizations regarding the current needs and refine the program scope for the ISAN 2024-2025 cycle.

Former Partners: Entre Hermanos, Somali Health Board, East African Community Services, The Peacemaking Institute, Chinese Information and Service Center, Ethiopian Community Services, Muslimahs Against Abuse Center, Council on American-Islamic Relations-WA, and Somali Family Safety Task Force.



ISAN 2023-2024 Pilot Program Budget Breakdown

Total Program Budget	\$350,000
Direct Community Investments	\$225,000
Administrative (1.0 FTE) & Other Program Costs	\$125,000

*Contracts with organizations supported a variety of existing programs that addressed community violence, whether through education/prevention, direct victim support, resource navigation, youth peer support and development programs. Program budget allocations thus varied significantly.

Organization	Grants
Council on Islamic Relations	\$ 25,000
Chinese Information & Service Center	\$ 25,000
East African Community Services	\$ 25,000
Entre Hermanos	\$ 25,000
Ethiopian Community in Seattle	\$ 25,000
Muslimahs Against Abuse Center	\$ 25,000
Somali Family Safety Task Force	\$ 25,000
Somali Health Board	\$ 25,000
The Peacemaking Insititute	\$ 25,000



Immigrant Safety and Access Network 2023 Accomplishments

- The ISAN partner organizations reached and supported **roughly 685** individuals through workshops, training, classes, case management, direct financial assistance, and outreach efforts.
- The ISAN program provided **roughly \$20,000** in direct financial assistance in amounts varying from \$500-\$2,000 per incident to victims and their families.
- OIRA along with partner organizations visited **7** families whose loved ones passed away due to gun violence and provided navigation support.



Immigrant Safety and Access Network (ISAN) 2024-2025 Program Overview

Overview: Using findings from organizations and current events, for the 2024-2025 program year, OIRA will administer direct cash assistance through partner organizations to victims and their families who have been impacted by violent crime or unexpected death.

Goal: Help decrease the burden of the impacts of gun violence and sudden death on our immigrant and refugee communities.

Current Partners:

- Somali Health Board
- Muslimahs Against Abuse Center
- Colectiva Legal del Pueblo



ISAN 2024-2025 Budget Breakdown

Total Program Budget	\$350,000
Direct Community Investments	\$220,000
Administrative (1.0 FTE) & Other Program Costs	\$135,000



Organization	Grants
Somali Health Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct cash support to victims and their families (\$3000 max per incident) Administration 	\$ 66,000 \$58,000 \$8,000
Muslimahs Against Abuse Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct cash support to victims and their families (\$3000 max per incident) Administration 	\$ 66,000 \$58,000 \$8,000
Colectiva Legal del Pueblo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct cash support to victims and their families (\$3000 max per incident) Administration 	\$ 66,000 \$58,000 \$8,000



ISAN 2024-2025 Reporting and Administration of Funds

Qualification Criteria: Low income (80%AMI) victim or their families who live, work, or go to school in Seattle, for violent incidents within 3 years.

Maximum Amount: \$3,000 in cash assistance per incident.

Intake and Administration of Funds: Partner organizations manage the intake process and administer the funds to victims and their families.

Reporting: Partner organizations submit monthly reports with the date of fund disbursement and demographic information to OIRA.

Collaboration: OIRA hosts a joint meeting with all funded partners quarterly to discuss funding patterns and program learnings.



Need for Immigrant Safety and Access Network

The need for the ISAN program continues to grow as gun violence and unexpected death rise in the region due to:

Primary demographics: The main groups impacted by gun violence are BIPOC, and low-income immigrant and refugee communities are disproportionately impacted due to difficulty navigating the legal system and language barriers.

Cost: Families are under significant financial strain from medical expenses, loss of wages, funeral fees, and more. Burial services are estimated at **\$11,000**.

In-language Support: Partner organizations specialize in in-language victim support and referral services, ensuring that individuals and their families impacted by gun violence receive necessary financial assistance and navigation resources tailored to their needs.



Data from Seattle Police Department (SPD)

- The populations served by the ISAN program are consistent with the communities most disproportionately impacted by gun violence in the region.
- Currently, desegregated data is unavailable, but the ISAN program has made it clear that this must be a priority for SPD.

Shooting & Shots Fired Victim Demographics:

Shooting Victim Demographics: Of the 202 shooting incidents, 259 victims have been identified. Fatal victim demographics will also be found in the homicide report. Demographics for Shots Fired events are not collected.

Fatal Victim Race	Female	Male	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0 (0%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	2	4	6 (13%)
Black or African American	3	24	27 (57%)
Unknown	0	0	0 (0%)
White	0	14	14 (30%)
Grand Total	5	42	47 (100%)

Non-Fatal Victim Race	Female	Male	Gender Diverse	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	1	0	3 (1%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	14	0	15 (7%)
Black or African American	16	93	1	110 (52%)
Unknown	4	22	0	26 (12%)
White	10	48	0	58 (27%)
Grand Total	33	178	1	212 (100%)

Fatal Victim Age Group	Total
Under 12	0 (0%)
12-15	0 (0%)
16-19	2 (4%)
20-24	4 (9%)
25-34	16 (34%)
35-49	17 (36%)
50-64	8 (17%)
65+	0 (0%)
Unknown	0 (0%)
Grand Total	47 (100%)

Non-Fatal Victim Age Group	Total
Under 12	1 (1%)
12-15	2 (1%)
16-19	14 (7%)
20-24	36 (17%)
25-34	69 (33%)
35-49	61 (29%)
50-64	16 (8%)
65+	5 (2%)
Unknown	8 (4%)
Grand Total	212 (100%)



Immigrant Safety and Access Network Organization Story



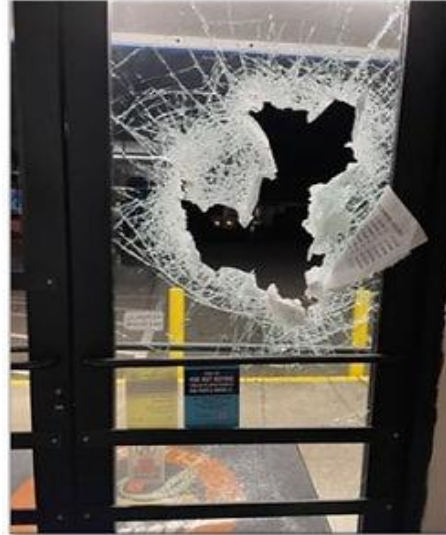
Victim Compensation Fund

Overview: One-time cash assistance fund developed in response to the rise in hate crimes and targeted violence in immigrant communities, specifically Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities; incidents such as physical assault, home-invasions, robberies, and muggings.

Goal: Lessen the burden on victims through financial assistance.

Current Partner: Korean Community Services Center

Funding Amount: \$150,000, \$120,000 cash-assistance, \$30,000 administrative costs.



OIRA role in assisting recent migrant arrivals

Building infrastructure and cross-jurisdictional coordination:

- Intergovernmental task force
- Advocacy for State funding and partnering in building infrastructure of services

Funding legal services to speed up self sufficiency: One-time allocation of \$200,000 of General Funds, OIRA decided to prioritize this money for funding legal services so migrants can obtain work permits.

Emergency response: Working with HSD and OEM to offer interpretation services and emergency housing to priority groups.



Questions?

