



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

Public Safety Committee

Agenda

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

9:30 AM

Council Chamber, City Hall
600 4th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Robert Kettle, Chair
Rob Saka, Vice-Chair
Debora Juarez, Member
Eddie Lin, Member
Maritza Rivera, Member

Chair Info: 206-684-8807; Robert.Kettle@seattle.gov

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SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

Public Safety Committee

Agenda

March 24, 2026 - 9:30 AM

Meeting Location:

Council Chamber, City Hall, 600 4th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104

Committee Website:

<https://seattle.gov/council/public-safety>

This meeting also constitutes a meeting of the City Council, provided that the meeting shall be conducted as a committee meeting under the Council Rules and Procedures, and Council action shall be limited to committee business.

Members of the public may register for remote or in-person Public Comment to address the Council. Please register in advance in order to be recognized by the Chair. Details on how to register for Public Comment are listed below:

Remote Public Comment - Register online to speak during the Public Comment period at the meeting at <https://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/public-comment>. Online registration to speak will begin one hour before the meeting start time, and registration will end at the conclusion of the Public Comment period during the meeting.

In-Person Public Comment - Register to speak on the public comment sign-up sheet located inside Council Chambers at least 15 minutes prior to the meeting start time. Registration will end at the conclusion of the Public Comment period during the meeting.

Please submit written comments no later than four business hours prior to the start of the meeting to ensure that they are distributed to Councilmembers prior to the meeting. Comments may be submitted at Council@seattle.gov or at Seattle City Hall, Attn: Council Public Comment, 600 4th Ave., Floor 2, Seattle, WA 98104. Business hours are considered 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Comments received after that time will be distributed after the meeting to Councilmembers and included as part of the public record.

Please Note: Times listed are estimated

A. Call To Order

B. Chair's Report

C. Approval of the Agenda

D. Public Comment

Members of the public may address items on the agenda and matters within the purview of the committee. Please register in advance to be recognized by the Chair.

E. Items of Business

1. [CB 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.**

Supporting Documents: [Summary and Fiscal Note](#)
[Central Staff Memo](#)

Briefing, Discussion, and Possible Vote (45 minutes)

Presenter: Tamaso Johnson, Council Central Staff

2. [CB 121179](#) **AN ORDINANCE** relating to collection of surveillance data; specifying conditions for a mandatory 60-day pause in data collection for Seattle Police Department Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) and Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) systems; and amending Ordinances 127044 and 127297.

*Supporting
Documents:*

[Summary and Fiscal Note](#)

[Central Staff Memo \(3/24/26\)](#)

Briefing, Discussion, and Possible Vote (45 minutes)

Presenter: Greg Doss, Council Central Staff

E. Adjournment



Legislation Text

File #: CB 121180, **Version:** 1

CITY OF SEATTLE

ORDINANCE _____

COUNCIL BILL _____

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:

4.18.015 Inquiries into immigration status

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

B. ~~((Seattle Police officers are exempt from the limitations imposed by subsection 4.18.015.A with respect to a person whom the officer has reasonable suspicion to believe: (1) has previously been deported from the United States; (2) is again present in the United States; and (3) is committing or has committed a felony criminal law violation.))~~ Notwithstanding subsection 4.18.015.A, and due to the unique functions of the Seattle Police Department, personnel of the Seattle Police Department may inquire into or collect information about an individual's immigration or citizenship status, or place of birth, if there is a connection between such information and an investigation into a violation of state or local criminal law.

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

Passed by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2026, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this _____ day of _____, 2026.

President _____ of the City Council

Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Katie B. Wilson, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

(Seal)

SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE

Department:	Dept. Contact:	CBO Contact:
Legislative	Tamaso Johnson	N/A

1. BILL SUMMARY

Legislation Title: 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.

Summary and Background of the Legislation: Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Section 4.18.015 generally prohibits City employees from making inquiries into the immigration status of any person. SMC 4.18.015.B includes an exception allowing Seattle Police Department (SPD) officers to inquire into a person’s immigration status under certain specified circumstances. Current SPD policy ([SPD Pol. 6.020 - Interactions with Foreign Nationals](#)) completely forbids SPD personnel from making any inquiry about immigration or citizenship status. Current Washington State law, the Keep Washington Working Act codified, in relevant part, at Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 10.93.160(4)(a), specifies the circumstances under which local law enforcement agencies, including SPD, are allowed to inquire into immigration or citizenship status. RCW 10.93.160(4)(a) reads:

State and local law enforcement agencies may not [...] [i]nquire into or collect information about an individual's immigration or citizenship status or place of birth unless there is a connection between such information and an investigation into a violation of state or local criminal law[.]

SMC 4.18.015.B predates the enactment of RCW 10.93.160(4)(a) and is inconsistent with this existing state law on the same topic of permissible local law enforcement immigration status inquiries. SMC 4.18.015.B articulates a different set of criteria for allowable immigration status inquiries than those allowed by state law. This bill would amend SMC 4.18.015.B by striking the current text of that subsection and substituting new statutory language that substantively mirrors RCW 10.93.160(4)(a), the relevant provision of the Keep Washington Working Act.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project? Yes No

3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City? Yes No

3.d. Other Impacts

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to The City of Seattle, including direct or indirect, one-time or ongoing costs, that are not included in Sections 3.a through 3.c? If so, please describe these financial impacts.

No.

If the legislation has costs, but they can be absorbed within existing operations, please describe how those costs can be absorbed. The description should clearly describe if the absorbed costs are achievable because the department had excess resources within their existing budget or if by absorbing these costs the department is deprioritizing other work that would have used these resources.

N/A

Please describe any financial costs or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation.

The current discontinuity between City code and state law on this topic has the potential to create confusion for members of the public. This legislation would clarify the circumstances under which the Seattle Police Department may make inquiries into citizenship or immigration status by aligning City code with state law.

Please describe how this legislation may affect any City departments other than the originating department.

This legislation would impact the Seattle Police Department by changing the allowable circumstances under City code where department personnel are allowed to make inquiries into a person's immigration or citizenship status. Current department policy already appears to be compliant with the proposed changes under this legislation, so no immediate impacts are expected.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

a. Is a public hearing required for this legislation?

No.

b. Is publication of notice with The Daily Journal of Commerce and/or The Seattle Times required for this legislation?

No.

c. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

No.

d. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative.

- i. How does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you arrive at this conclusion? In your response please consider impacts within City government (employees, internal programs) as well as in the broader community.**

State law on this topic was changed in 2019 and the Seattle Police Department's current policy on this subject already appears to be in compliance with relevant state law, so no immediate impacts are anticipated on these or other communities if this legislation is passed.

- ii. Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses in the development and/or assessment of the legislation.**

N/A.

- iii. What is the Language Access Plan for any communications to the public?**

N/A.

e. Climate Change Implications

- i. Emissions: How is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way? Please attach any studies or other materials that were used to inform this response.**

N/A.

- ii. Resiliency: Will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle's resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.**

N/A.

- f. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s)? What mechanisms will be used to measure progress towards meeting those goals?**

N/A.

- g. Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP project that involves a shared financial commitment with a non-City partner agency or organization?**

No.

5. ATTACHMENTS

Summary Attachments: None.

March 17, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: Public Safety Committee
From: Tamaso Johnson, Analyst
Subject: Council Bill 121180 -- Immigration Status Inquiries Ordinance

On March 24, 2026, the Public Safety Committee is scheduled to discuss [Council Bill \(CB\) 121180](#) addressing permissible inquiries into immigration status. This legislation would amend the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) by changing the statutory criteria under which Seattle Police Department (SPD) employees may make inquiries into a person’s immigration or citizenship status.

This memo provides background on existing law and policies related to immigration status inquiries, summarizes proposed changes under this bill, and discusses next steps for this legislation.

Background

Federal immigration law

As a general matter, the administration and enforcement of US immigration law is exclusively a function of the federal government. Federal law prohibits state and local governments from enacting laws or policies that restrict state or local officials from *sharing* “information regarding the citizenship or immigration status” of individuals with the Department of Homeland Security, but places no such restrictions on policies that seek to limit inquiries into status.¹

Washington State law on immigration inquiries

In 2019 the Washington State Legislature enacted the Keep Washington Working Act (KWW).² As applied to Washington cities, KWW prohibits local law enforcement from: (1) collecting information about a person’s immigration status or place of birth, with limited exceptions; and, (2) providing non-publicly available personal information about any person to federal immigration authorities in a noncriminal matter.³

¹ See: 8 USC 1373

² See: E2SSB 5497 (2019)

³ See: RCW 10.93.160

This state law specifies the circumstances under which local law enforcement agencies, including SPD, are allowed to inquire into immigration or citizenship status. The relevant codified portion of KWW, RCW 10.93.160(4)(a) reads:

State and local law enforcement agencies may not [...] [i]nquire into or collect information about an individual's immigration or citizenship status or place of birth unless there is a connection between such information and an investigation into a violation of state or local criminal law[.]

The Washington State Office of the Attorney General has, pursuant to KWW, promulgated model policies and guidance for law enforcement agencies in the state, as well as a Frequently Asked Questions resource for local law enforcement.⁴ As a general matter, when Washington State has authority over an area of law and chooses to regulate in a specific and controlling way, state law is considered to supersede any conflicting local law and be the dispositive legal authority.

City of Seattle law and policies on immigration inquiries

Current City law addressing immigration status inquiries was created in 2003 by [Ordinance 121063](#), which established the requirement that City officers⁵ and employees not inquire or attempt to determine the immigration status of any person, and created an exemption from this general directive for SPD. The SPD exemption, found at SMC 4.18.015.B, allows officers to inquire or attempt to ascertain a person's immigration status if:

[An officer] has reasonable suspicion to believe: (1) [that a person] has previously been deported from the United States; (2) is again present in the United States; and (3) is committing or has committed a felony criminal-law violation.

These criteria describing allowable police immigration status inquiries under Municipal Code vary in important ways from those allowed under state law. Notably, while state law requires a "connection" between status and/or place of birth and "investigation into a violation of *state or local criminal law*" (emphasis added), current City code describes a multi-part "reasonable suspicion" test that requires police to believe that *any* felony has been committed and describes elements (removal and reentry) that are exclusively subjects of federal immigration law, not Washington State law or City Code.

From a practical perspective, elements of City code that impact SPD operations are implemented via the issuance of departmental policies or directives. Current SPD policy does not invoke the options contemplated under either KWW or City code that would allow officers to make status inquiries, simply stating that officers "will not enquire about any person's

⁴ See: Washington State Office of the Attorney General, Immigration and Keep Washington Working Guidance, available at: <https://www.atg.wa.gov/immigrationguidance>

⁵ In this context, "officer" is a term of art that does not mean police officers, but rather refers to elected or appointed members of a City of Seattle agency or department, whether paid or unpaid. See, e.g.: SMC 4.16.030

citizenship or immigration status” and further specifies that “[t]here are no exceptions to this policy, unless approved by the Chief[.]”⁶

CB 121180

This bill would amend SMC 4.18.015 to align City code with the relevant portion of state law specifying the only circumstances under which SPD personnel could make immigration status inquiries. The legislation would accomplish this by striking existing SMC 4.18.015.B and replacing that text with new language that substantively mirrors RCW 10.93.160(4)(a), the relevant provision of KWW.

Next steps

CB 121180 is scheduled for a hearing and possible vote at the March 24, 2026 meeting of the Public Safety Committee.

cc: Lish Whitson, Director
Calvin Chow, Deputy Director

⁶ See: SPD Policy 6.020 – Interactions with Foreign Nationals. As of February 2026, SPD has not issued any exceptions to this policy and has stated that a “policy manual update to 6.020 is currently still in the review process with our different stakeholders and is expected to be finalized in the coming months.” See: Seattle Police Department, Federal Immigration Enforcement Policies Report (Response to SLI SPD-111S-A), available at: <https://seattle.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=15291480&GUID=9428A563-FA61-4EA1-9486-D4D9C8EDA52F>



Legislation Text

File #: CB 121179, Version: 1

CITY OF SEATTLE

ORDINANCE _____

COUNCIL BILL _____

AN ORDINANCE relating to collection of surveillance data; specifying conditions for a mandatory 60-day pause in data collection for Seattle Police Department Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) and Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) systems; and amending Ordinances 127044 and 127297. WHEREAS, the City is proud to be a welcoming City, affirming its steadfast commitment to serve as a safe and

supportive home for refugees and immigrants; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes that every individual possesses a fundamental right of privacy regarding their personal reproductive decisions, bodily autonomy, and gender affirming care; and

WHEREAS, state and local laws and policies prohibit City resources and personnel from being used to assist with or participate in activities that support or constitute civil immigration enforcement, unless otherwise required by law; and

WHEREAS, Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) and Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) systems collect time-stamped location data that can reveal sensitive patterns of movement, including an individual's attempt to acquire reproductive health services, gender affirming care, visits to workplaces, schools, religious institutions, medical facilities, and community organizations; and

WHEREAS, Washington lawmakers and Seattle City Councilmembers have expressed concern that ALPR and CCTV data is being used nationwide to support mass-deportation efforts and other civil immigration actions contrary to state and local policies and community-trust objectives; and

WHEREAS, since the 2022 *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision, there is an increased risk that ALPR location data will be used by out-of-state entities to investigate or prosecute individuals

for seeking or providing lawful reproductive health care; and

WHEREAS, ALPR data collected by some Washington law enforcement agencies has been shared with federal agencies including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), raising legal and civil rights concerns about the use of state-collected data for civil immigration enforcement; and

WHEREAS, Seattle City Councilmembers wish to ensure that ALPR and CCTV data collected in Seattle is used solely for legitimate local public safety purposes; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ordinances 125376 and 125679, the City Council passed Ordinance 127110 on October 8, 2024, authorizing CCTV systems to be erected in pilot deployment areas on Aurora Avenue North, Belltown, the International District, and the Downtown Commercial Core; and

WHEREAS, the City Council passed Ordinance 127297 on September 9, 2025, which expanded the City's CCTV pilot to the Capitol Hill Nightlife area, the Stadium District, and the Garfield High School neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 127297 requires a 60-day pause of CCTV data collection if the City or its vendor receives a warrant, subpoena, or court order for Seattle CCTV data in a federal civil immigration enforcement matter, or if Seattle CCTV data is released pursuant to law for use in a federal civil immigration enforcement matter; and

WHEREAS, the City Council passed Ordinance 127044 on June 18, 2024, which approved the Seattle Police Department's (SPD's) expansion of ALPR technology from its current limited use to a fleet-wide deployment on all SPD patrol vehicles; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 127044 does not require a 60-day pause of ALPR data collection if ALPR data is released for use in a civil immigration matter; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to extend the 60-day pause protection to ALPR data and to specify additional triggers that would pause surveillance data collection to protect the privacy, reproductive rights, gender affirming care, civil rights, and safety of all Seattle residents, including vulnerable immigrant

communities, and to maintain public trust in local law enforcement technologies; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Ordinance 127044 is amended by adding a new Section 4 as follows, renumbering subsequent sections accordingly:

Section 4. Temporary pause in data collection

A. SPD shall immediately pause for 60 days the collection of data from ALPR technology deployed in its patrol vehicle fleet if:

1. The City or its vendor receives a warrant, subpoena, court order, or is otherwise required by law to release Seattle ALPR data for use in a civil immigration enforcement, gender affirming care, or reproductive health care matter; or

2. The Mayor and Police Chief have determined that ALPR data is being used, or potentially will be used, to track individuals seeking reproductive health care, gender affirming care, or for civil immigration enforcement purposes, including, but not limited to, uses that may occur concurrently with an increased presence of civil immigration enforcement personnel in Seattle. Such use or potential use must be jointly determined by the Mayor and Police Chief and documented in a letter to the Council President.

B. Within two business days of the ALPR data collection pause, SPD or the Mayor's Office will report to the Council the circumstances that triggered the pause and the date that the ALPR camera systems will resume data collection. Upon receiving the report, the Council may by ordinance extend the pause or end the patrol fleet ALPR program to prevent third parties from accessing Seattle's protected surveillance data.

C. During a data collection pause pursuant to subsection 4.A of this ordinance, the Mayor by executive order shall have the authority to temporarily resume ALPR data collection when necessary to gather and transmit to prosecutors evidence of potentially unlawful acts that occur during civil

immigration enforcement operations or at reproductive health care or gender affirming care facilities. The Mayor may exercise this authority by issuing an executive order that states the reasons that data collection is necessary and the date on which data collection shall again be paused. Any temporary resumption of data collection pursuant to this subsection shall reset the 60-day pause required in subsection 4.A of this ordinance.

Section 2. Section 3 of Ordinance 127297 is amended as follows:

~~Section 3. ((If the City or its vendor receives a warrant, subpoena, or court order for Seattle CCTV data in a federal civil immigration enforcement matter, or when required by law releases Seattle CCTV data for use in a federal civil immigration enforcement matter, SPD shall immediately pause use of the CCTV camera systems for 60 calendar days. Within two business days of the CCTV camera systems pause, SPD will report to the Council the circumstances that triggered the pause and the date that the CCTV camera systems use will resume. Upon receiving the report, the Council may by ordinance extend the pause or end the CCTV program to prevent third parties from accessing Seattle's protected surveillance data.))~~ Temporary pause in data collection

A. SPD shall immediately pause for 60 days the collection of data from CCTV cameras deployed as part of its Technology-Assisted Crime Prevention Pilot if:

1. The City or its vendor receives a warrant, subpoena, court order, or is otherwise required by law to release Seattle CCTV data for use in a civil immigration enforcement, gender affirming care, or reproductive health care matter; or

2. The Mayor and Police Chief have determined that CCTV data is being used, or potentially will be used, to track individuals seeking reproductive health care, gender affirming care, or for civil immigration enforcement purposes, including, but not limited to, uses that may occur concurrently with an increased presence of civil immigration enforcement personnel in Seattle. Such use or potential use must be jointly determined by the Mayor and Police Chief and documented in a letter to

the Council President.

B. Within two business days of the CCTV data collection pause, SPD or the Mayor’s Office will report to the Council the circumstances that triggered the pause and the date that the CCTV camera systems will resume data collection. Upon receiving the report, the Council may by ordinance extend the pause or CCTV program to prevent third parties from accessing Seattle’s protected surveillance data.

C. During a data collection pause pursuant to subsection 4.A of this ordinance, the Mayor by executive order may temporarily resume CCTV data collection when necessary to gather and transmit to prosecutors evidence of potentially unlawful acts that occur during civil immigration enforcement operations or at reproductive health care or gender affirming care facilities. The executive order shall state the reasons that data collection is necessary and the date on which data collection shall again be paused. Any temporary resumption of data collection pursuant to the executive order shall reset the 60-day pause required in subsection 4.A of this ordinance.

Section 3. The provisions of this ordinance are declared to be separate and severable. The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or portion of this ordinance, or the invalidity of its application to any person or circumstance, does not affect the validity of the remainder of this ordinance or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances.

Section 4. This ordinance shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Sections 1.04.020 and 1.04.070.

Passed by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2026, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this _____ day of _____, 2026.

President _____ of the City Council

Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this ____ day of _____, 2026.

Katie B. Wilson, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

(Seal)

SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE

Department:	Dept. Contact:	CBO Contact:
Council	Greg Doss	

1. BILL SUMMARY

Legislation Title: AN ORDINANCE relating to collection of surveillance data; specifying conditions for a mandatory 60-day pause in data collection for Seattle Police Department Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) and Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) systems; and amending Ordinances 127044 and 127297.

Summary and Background of the Legislation:

Background: Pursuant to Ordinances 125376 and 125679, the City Council passed Ordinance 127110 on October 8, 2024, authorizing CCTV systems to be erected in pilot deployment areas on Aurora Avenue North, Belltown, the International District and the Downtown Commercial Core.

The City Council passed Ordinance 127297 on September 9, 2025, which expanded the City’s CCTV pilot to the Capital Hill Nightlife area, the Stadium District and the Garfield High School neighborhood. This ordinance requires a 60-day pause of CCTV data collection if the City or its vendor receives a warrant, subpoena, or court order for Seattle CCTV data in a civil immigration enforcement matter, or if Seattle CCTV data is released pursuant to law for use in a federal civil immigration enforcement matter.

The City Council passed Ordinance 127044 on June 18, 2024, which approved the Seattle Police Department’s (SPD’s) expansion of ALPR technology from its current limited use to a fleet-wide deployment on all SPD patrol vehicles. Ordinance 127044 does not require a 60-day pause of ALPR data collection if ALPR data is released for use in a civil immigration matter.

Summary of Legislation: This proposed legislation would:

1. Extend to the Seattle Police Department’s (SPD’s) patrol vehicle ALPR system the same 60-day pause provision that applies to SPD’s CCTV network;
2. Add a new requirement that the 60-day pause will also apply when CCTV or ALPR footage is used in a reproductive health care matter;
3. Require a 60-day pause of CCTV or patrol vehicle ALPR data collection if the Mayor and Police Chief have determined that CCTV or ALPR data is being used, or potentially will be used, for civil immigration or reproductive health care enforcement purposes, including uses that may occur concurrently with an increased presence of civil immigration enforcement personnel in Seattle; and
4. Authorize the Mayor to issue an executive order that temporarily resumes CCTV and ALPR data collection when necessary to gather and transmit to prosecutors evidence of potentially unlawful acts that occur during civil immigration or reproductive health care enforcement operations.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project? Yes No

3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City? Yes No

The 60-day pause requirement was included in the bill that authorized CCTV expansion, and SPD has indicated that its vendor Axon can temporarily pause data collection.

SPD staff have confirmed with Axon that it can implement a system-wide temporary pause on the ALPR functionality for all patrol officers without interrupting or affecting the functionality of the In-Car Video system for all officers. Axon could make the change very quickly (likely within a day of SPD's request) and at no additional cost to SPD.

At least in the short term, SPD would need to continue paying Axon for the ALPR service even if Axon is not providing ALPR service pursuant to a potential request from SPD.

3.d. Other Impacts

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to The City of Seattle, including direct or indirect, one-time or ongoing costs, that are not included in Sections 3.a through 3.c? If so, please describe these financial impacts.

There are no additional costs to the City.

If the legislation has costs, but they can be absorbed within existing operations, please describe how those costs can be absorbed. The description should clearly describe if the absorbed costs are achievable because the department had excess resources within their existing budget or if by absorbing these costs the department is deprioritizing other work that would have used these resources.

Please describe any financial costs or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation.

Not implementing this legislation could contribute to an environment that limits access and safety to public spaces, especially among Seattle's undocumented immigrants.

Please describe how this legislation may affect any City departments other than the originating department.

The Seattle Police Department will be the primary department involved in this legislation.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

a. Is a public hearing required for this legislation?

No.

b. Is publication of notice with The Daily Journal of Commerce and/or The Seattle Times required for this legislation?

No.

c. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

No.

d. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative.

- i. How does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you arrive at this conclusion? In your response please consider impacts within City government (employees, internal programs) as well as in the broader community.**

This legislation seeks to prevent an environment that limits access and safety to public spaces, especially among Seattle's undocumented immigrants.

- ii. Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses in the development and/or assessment of the legislation.**

Not completed.

- iii. What is the Language Access Plan for any communications to the public?**

e. Climate Change Implications

- i. Emissions: How is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way? Please attach any studies or other materials that were used to inform this response.**

- ii. Resiliency: Will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle's resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.**

f. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s)? What mechanisms will be used to measure progress towards meeting those goals?

This legislation establishes a new regulation but does not qualify as a new initiative or major programmatic expansion.

g. Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP project that involves a shared financial commitment with a non-City partner agency or organization?

No.

March 18, 2026 (updated from March 6, 2026)

MEMORANDUM

To: Public Safety Committee
From: Greg Doss, Analyst
Subject: CB 121179 – Protecting Surveillance Data

On March 24, 2026, the Public Safety Committee will discuss and may vote on Council Bill (CB) 121179, which would specify conditions for a mandatory 60-day pause in data collection for Seattle Police Department (SPD) Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) and Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) systems.

This memo provides background on existing law and policies related to CCTV and ALPR, summarizes proposed changes under this bill, and discusses next steps for this legislation.

Background

Some Seattle City Councilmembers have expressed concern about the potential for SPD’s ALPR or CCTV data to be used by federal officers or out-of-state law enforcement to attempt to locate and prosecute individuals for civil immigration enforcement or interference in reproductive health matters.^{1,2} SPD has indicated that it has not disclosed its ALPR or CCTV for either of these purposes to-date. More discussion of SPD policy on its data systems and the potential for compelled disclosure can be found below.

Background on SPD CCTV and ALPR Systems:

The City Council passed [Ordinance 127044](#) in June 2024, which approved SPD’s expansion of ALPR technology from its current limited use to a fleet-wide deployment on all SPD patrol vehicles. The ordinance contained a number of restrictions on how the ALPR data could be used and placed requirements on data disclosure to the public and other governments.

The City Council passed [Ordinance 127110](#) in October 2024, authorizing CCTV systems to be erected in pilot deployment areas on Aurora Avenue North, Belltown, the International District, and the Downtown Commercial Core. In September of the following year, the City Council passed [Ordinance 127297](#), which expanded the City’s CCTV pilot to the Capital Hill Nightlife area, the Stadium District, and the Garfield High School neighborhood.

Ordinance 127297 requires a 60-day pause of CCTV data collection if the City or its vendor receives a warrant, subpoena, or court order for Seattle CCTV data in a federal civil immigration

¹ A Texas Cop Searched License Plate Cameras Nationwide for a Woman Who Got an Abortion, [404 media](#), May 2025

² [Leaving the Door Wide Open](#): Flock Surveillance Systems Expose Washington Data to Immigration Enforcement, University of Washington, Oct 2025

enforcement matter, or if Seattle CCTV data is released pursuant to law for use in a federal civil immigration enforcement matter. The 60-Day pause requirement does not extend to the City's use of ALPR data, as governed by Ord 127044.

Federal immigration law

As a general matter, the administration and enforcement of US immigration law is exclusively a function of the federal government. Federal immigration law is, with few exceptions, a system of civil laws. Certain violations of immigration law, such as illegal entry after removal or entry at an improper time or place, are federal crimes, but the majority of immigration law violations are considered civil offenses rather than criminal.³

Federal law prohibits state and local governments from enacting laws or policies that prohibit or in any way restrict state or local officials from sharing "information regarding the citizenship or immigration status" of individuals with the US Citizen and Immigration Services.⁴ Obstructing or interfering with federal officers performing their duties can lead to criminal penalties, including felony charges.⁵

State and City Immigration Law

In recent years, the Washington State Legislature and the City of Seattle have enacted legislation and adopted Directives to (1) restrict the collection of information about a person's immigration status or place of birth, with limited exceptions; and (2) prohibit the disclosure of non-publicly available personal information about any person to federal immigration authorities in a non-criminal matter. More information on local and state restrictions can be found in the Central Staff memo on [Ordinance 127398](#), which prohibits City disclosure of certain information for the purposes of civil immigration enforcement.

CB 121179 – Protecting Surveillance Data

CB 121179 would specify conditions for a mandatory 60-day pause in data collection for Seattle Police Department (SPD) Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) and Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) systems. Specific provisions would:

1. Extend to the SPD's patrol vehicle ALPR system the same 60-day pause provision that applies to SPD's CCTV network, implemented when the system's data has been requested under a warrant, court order, or pursuant to law;
2. Require that the 60-day pause will also apply when CCTV or ALPR footage is used in a reproductive health care or gender affirming care matter;
3. Require a 60-day pause of CCTV or patrol vehicle ALPR data collection if the Mayor and Police Chief have determined that CCTV or ALPR data is being used, or potentially will be

³ 8 U.S. Code § 1325 - Improper entry by alien | U.S. Code | US Law | LII / Legal Information Institute

⁴ See: 8 USC 1373

⁵ See: 18 USC 111

used, for civil immigration or reproductive health or gender affirming care enforcement purposes, including uses that may occur concurrently with an increased presence of civil immigration enforcement personnel in Seattle; and

4. Authorize the Mayor to issue an executive order that temporarily resumes CCTV and ALPR data collection when necessary to gather and transmit to prosecutors evidence of potentially unlawful acts that occur during civil immigration or reproductive health care or gender affirming care enforcement operations.

Potential for disclosure of surveillance data

The Department currently fields approximately 500 patrol vehicles and all are equipped with ALPR software. The software runs through the vehicle's in-car video system and is always "on," scanning license plates as the patrol vehicle travels through the City. More detail on the operation of the ALPR software can be found in the Central Staff memo on [Ordinance 127398](#). SPD's parking enforcement fleet also uses ALPR to enforce right-of-way violations. The bill applies only to the department's "patrol vehicle fleet," not to the cameras and software used by Parking Enforcement Officers.

Even with state and local data sharing restrictions, SPD may be forced to disclose its CCTV or ALPR data if: (1) required by a warrant, subpoena, or court order; or (2) the data is requested under the state's Public Records Act (PRA).**

In November 2025, The Skagit County Superior Court ruled that ALPR data is covered under the state's Public Disclosure Laws, even if the data is held by a vender that is located out-of-state. In response to this ruling, some cities have discontinued ALPR data collection, and the state legislature has passed [ESSB 6002](#), which would exempt ALPR data from public disclosure, create retention schedules and set other restrictions on collection of data through ALPR systems.

**The bill is awaiting signature from the Governor before becoming law.

Ordinance 127044 prohibits SPD from publicly disclosing ALPR data in a manner that links a license plate to a time, date, or location, unless required to do so by court order or applicable law. It is unclear how the Skagit County Court ruling would affect SPD's ability to withhold personally identifying information that is requested under the PRA.

SPD does not have a policy that specifically prohibits sharing of ALPR, CCTV or other Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) data when requested by another law enforcement agency for a criminal matter. Data may be shared with outside entities in connection with criminal investigations and prosecutions. These entities include:

- Seattle City Attorney's Office
- King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- King County Department of Public Defense
- Private Defense Attorneys
- Seattle Municipal Court
- King County Superior Court
- Similar entities where prosecution is in Federal or other State jurisdictions

When sharing with outside law enforcement agencies, SPD must abide by the policies in the [ALPR Surveillance Impact Report](#) that is attached to Ordinance 127044 (See applicable policies in Appendix 1). The Department has also adopted additional safeguards for handling disclosure requests from other law enforcement agencies:

- The draft RTCC unit manual requires an SPD case number and also specifies that a request for information for investigative purposes cannot be used for immigration, customs, or any type of health care related incidents.
- When disclosing any ALPR data, Investigative Support staff must abide with [SPD ALPR policy 16.170](#).

Fiscal Impacts

SPD staff have confirmed with Axon that it can implement a system-wide temporary pause on the ALPR functionality for all patrol vehicles without interrupting or affecting the functionality of the In-Car Video system or other systems. SPD staff have indicated that Axon could make the change within one day of a request and without additional cost to SPD. The Department would need to continue paying Axon for the ALPR service until a change could be made to applicable service agreements.

Attachments:

1. Attachment 1: Surveillance Impact Report ALPR Data Sharing Policy - Ordinance 127044

CC. Ben Noble, Central Staff Director

Attachment 1: Surveillance Impact Report ALPR Data Sharing Policy

No person, outside of SPD, has direct access to the ALPR system or the data while it resides in the system. Data obtained from the system may be shared outside SPD as required by law. Data may be shared with outside entities in connection with criminal investigations and prosecutions:

- Seattle City Attorney's Office
- King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- King County Department of Public Defense
- Private Defense Attorneys
- Seattle Municipal Court
- King County Superior Court
- Similar entities where prosecution is in Federal or other State jurisdictions

Data may be made available to requesters pursuant to the Washington Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW ("PRA"). SPD will apply applicable exemptions to the data before disclosing to a requester. Individuals have the right to inspect criminal history record information maintained by the department (RCW 10.97.030, SPD Policy 12.050). Individuals can access their own information by submitting a public disclosure request.

Per SPD Policy 12.080, the Crime Records Unit is responsible for receiving, recording, and responding to requests "for General Offense Reports from other City departments and from other law enforcement agencies, as well as from insurance companies."

Discrete pieces of data collected by the ALPR may be shared with other law enforcement agencies in wanted bulletins, and in connection with law enforcement investigations jointly conducted with those agencies, or in response to requests from law enforcement agencies investigating criminal activity as governed by [SPD Policy 12.050](#) and [12.110](#). All requests for data from Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) authorities are referred to the Mayor's Office Legal Counsel in accordance with the Mayoral Directive, dated February 6, 2018.

SPD shares data with authorized researchers pursuant to properly executed research and confidentiality agreements as provided by SPD Policy 12.055. This sharing may include discrete pieces of data related to specific investigative files collected by the ALPR system.