

1 WHEREAS, Resolution 31847 established Policy 12, which became effective on January 1,
2 2019, and requires the Director of Finance, the Director of Risk Management, and the
3 City Attorney to provide an annual briefing on individual settlements over \$200,000 to
4 Council in Executive Session; and

5 WHEREAS, Resolution 31847 maintains Council’s ability to receive aggregated data on the
6 City’s claims and track trends that inform future policy decisions; and

7 WHEREAS, just as Council sees benefit from aggregated claims briefings in Executive Session,
8 this ordinance will amend SMC 5.24.020 to require twice-annual Executive Sessions to
9 discuss litigation impacting the laws and regulations of Seattle to bring awareness to
10 larger trends; NOW, THEREFORE,

11 **BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:**

12 Section 1. Section 5.24.020 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance
13 125492, is amended as follows:

14 **5.24.020 Payment of judgments**

15 A. Twice annually, in March and September, the City Attorney shall provide a summary
16 briefing to the City Council in Executive Session on significant litigation that challenges or
17 materially impacts provisions of the Seattle Municipal Code or its implementing rules and
18 regulations.

19 B. The City Attorney may authorize payment of any settlement arising out of litigation
20 against the City or any judgment against the City. Prior to authorizing settlement of any litigation
21 for an amount over (~~(\$500,000)~~) \$1,000,000, the City Attorney shall brief the City Council
22 regarding the proposed settlement during executive session called pursuant to RCW 42.30.110.
23 Prior to authorizing a settlement involving significant financial or policy issues, the City

1 Attorney shall consult with the City Budget Director, the Director of Finance and Administrative
2 Services, and the head of the relevant department. Upon a presentation by the City Attorney to
3 the Director of Finance and Administrative Services of either a copy of a Release and Order of
4 Dismissal or a copy of a judgment against the City, entered in an appropriate court, and having
5 attached thereto a statement in writing, signed by the City Attorney, to the effect that the right of
6 appeal from such judgment has been expressly waived, or that the time for an appeal has expired,
7 the Director of Finance and Administrative Services shall issue a check upon the
8 Judgment/Claims Fund for the amount of such judgment, and costs if awarded to the claimant by
9 the court. The City Council may periodically review the briefing threshold amount against
10 inflation to determine whether the threshold is appropriate for the purposes of this section.


11 Section 2. Section 5.24.030 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance
12 123361, is amended as follows:

13 **5.24.030 Payment of claims**


14 The Director of Finance and Administrative Services may authorize payment of any claim
15 against the City, including claims brought in the small claims department of the district court
16 pursuant to chapter 12.40 RCW. Prior to authorizing settlement of any claim for an amount over
17 ~~(((\$100,000))~~ \$200,000, the Director of Finance and Administrative Services and the City
18 Attorney shall brief the City Council regarding the proposed settlement during executive session
19 called pursuant to RCW 42.30.110. Prior to authorizing a settlement involving significant legal
20 or policy issues, the Director of Finance and Administrative Services shall consult with the City
21 Budget Director, the City Attorney and the head of the relevant department.

1 Section 3. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force 30 days after its approval by
2 the Mayor, but if not approved and returned by the Mayor within ten days after presentation, it
3 shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Section 1.04.020.


4 Passed by the City Council the 26th day of September, 2023,
5 and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this 26th day of
6 September, 2023.

7 
8 President _____ of the City Council

9 Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this 2nd day of October, 2023.

10 
11 Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

12 Filed by me this 2nd day of October, 2023.

13 
14 _____
Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

15 (Seal)

16 Attachments (if any):