



RESOLUTION NO. 39892

1 A RESOLUTION establishing a Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, to
2 be composed of eleven members and an alternate, for the purpose of better
3 engaging Tacoma's immigrant and refugee communities; and to work with
4 community partners, City departments, and within the City's Equity and
5 Empowerment framework to identify and advance positive outcomes for
6 members of refugee and immigrant communities related to access to and
7 participation in Tacoma's economic, cultural and civic life and to
8 employment, economic development, public health, student achievement,
9 citizenship, public safety, criminal justice, civic engagement, language
10 access, and protection of civil rights.

11 WHEREAS the City wishes to be recognized as a livable and progressive
12 international city, regarded for the richness of its diverse population and natural
13 setting, and

14 WHEREAS Tacoma is home to many immigrant and refugee communities,
15 and the City recognizes the value of cultural diversity and its contribution to the
16 City's civic and economic identity, and

17 WHEREAS the City is committed to improving the lives of all its residents,
18 regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or
19 language, and

20 WHEREAS the City passed the Welcoming Cities and Counties Initiative,
21 which encourages communities to create more welcoming, immigrant-friendly
22 environments that maximize opportunities for economic growth and vitality, and
23 supports all efforts to make the City more vibrant, inclusive, and welcoming for all,
24 and

25 WHEREAS the City adopted an Equity and Empowerment Framework
26 consisting of five elements: (1) City of Tacoma Workforce Reflects the Community
it Serves; (2) Purposeful Community Outreach and Engagement; (3) Equitable



1 Service Delivery to all Residents and Visitors; (4) Support Human Rights and
2 Opportunities for Everyone to Achieve their Full Potential; and (5) Commitment to
3 Equity in Policy Decision-making, and

4 WHEREAS language and cultural barriers may compromise equal access to
5 government services and programs, and

6 WHEREAS the City Council is working to enhance and improve both the
7 relationship of City government with refugee and immigrant residents, and access
8 to City services and resources for these communities, and

9 WHEREAS the City Council desires to take proactive steps to strengthen
10 ongoing efforts to address existing and emerging needs of immigrant and refugee
11 communities by the creation of the Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs;

12 Now, Therefore,

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14 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

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16 Section 1. That the Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs
17 (“Commission”) is hereby established for the purpose of better engaging immigrant
18 and refugee communities, with the goal of reducing barriers to immigrant and
19 refugee access to and participation in Tacoma’s economic, cultural, and civic life.

20 The Commission will work with community partners, City Commissions, Boards
21 and Committees, City departments, and within the City’s Equity and Empowerment
22 framework to identify and advance positive outcomes for members of refugee and
23 immigrant communities related to employment, economic development, public
24 health, student achievement, citizenship, public safety, criminal justice, civic
25 engagement, language access, and protection of civil rights.
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A. Commission Composition.

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1. The Commission shall be composed of eleven members, to include one youth or young adult member under the age of 25 at the time of appointment. An alternate member will also be appointed.

2. In making appointments to the Commission, all efforts shall be made to maintain geographical, gender and sexual orientation balance and to reflect the diversity and national origin of the immigrant and refugee community in Tacoma. To the extent possible, membership should be from African communities, European/Middle East communities, Latino communities, and Asian/Pacific Islander communities. A majority of the members should be immigrants or refugees. All members shall demonstrate experience or expertise with immigrant issues, as well as a commitment to all immigrant and refugee communities. The City Council will coordinate appointments to ensure the representation goals in this subsection are met.

3. The Commission should meet on a regular basis with the Tacoma Human Rights Commission and the Tacoma Area Commission on Disabilities through a designated representative or joint meetings.

4. Each Commissioner shall serve for a term of three years. No member shall serve more than three consecutive terms. If a member is appointed to fill the duration of an unexpired term, then that term shall qualify as one of the three consecutive terms if the portion of the unexpired term actually served is one year or more. To start, all appointments shall be staggered rotations and terms. Terms begin March 1 and end the last day in February.



B. Commission Duties.

1 1. The Commission shall have the duty and power to study problems
2 and issues specifically impacting the immigrant and refugee communities in the
3 City of Tacoma and provide written recommendations, context, and input to
4 Tacoma's policy makers, including to the Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and
5 City Department heads, toward the development and implementation of programs,
6 services, and practices specific to the purpose of furthering immigrant and refugee
7 access to and participation in Tacoma's economic, cultural, and civic life.
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9 2. The Commission may hold community meetings, consult with
10 other City Commissions, Boards and Committees, public agencies, civil rights
11 organizations, representatives of employers, labor unions, faith based institutions,
12 professional associations, community organizations concerned with and
13 advocating for immigrants and refugees, social welfare organizations, and any
14 other associations, organizations, and institutions as directed by the City Council or
15 as the Commission shall deem advisable to engage in a constructive, integrative,
16 and meaningful way with immigrant and refugee communities, to connect
17 immigrant and refugee communities with allies and stakeholders, to provide
18 education by raising awareness about available resources and opportunities, to
19 identify mutual community challenges and opportunities and develop potential
20 partnerships between Tacoma's immigrant and refugee communities and the City,
21 and to promote recognition of the contributions of foreign-born residents to the
22 economic and cultural vitality of Tacoma.
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3. If requested, the Commission will collaborate with, assist, and make recommendations to any public officials, jurisdictions, departments, public or private organizations, community groups or other individuals or entities regarding the development and implementation of programs, services and practices specific to the purpose of furthering immigrant and refugee access to and participation in Tacoma's economic, cultural, and civic life.

4. Annual Workplan. The Commission shall develop an Annual Workplan and an Annual Report of each previous year's work. The Annual Report shall include a summary of Commission accomplishments and challenges, as well as recommendations on how the City can continue to develop and implement programs, services, and practices specific to the purpose of furthering immigrant and refugee access to and participation in Tacoma's economic, cultural, and civic life. The Commission shall brief the assigned City Council Committee on its Annual Workplan and Annual Report.

5. Rules of procedure. The Commission may establish protocols and rules of procedure as are necessary to carry out the duties and functions of the Commission.



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Section 2. That, in order to advance its mission, the Commission will be provided staff support on behalf of the City of Tacoma.

Adopted _____

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Deputy City Attorney