



City of Seattle

Mayor Katie B. Wilson

Office of the Mayor

City of Seattle

Katie B. Wilson, Mayor

Executive Order 2026-02: An Executive Order that accelerates efforts to rapidly bring unhoused people inside and expedite the expansion of shelter and affordable housing.

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle and King County declared a civil emergency on November 2, 2015 regarding the homelessness public health crisis; and

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle is in a housing crisis with the need to build 112,000 new permanent homes between 2019 and 2044, and over 43,600 units for households earning at or below 0-30% of the area median income; and

WHEREAS, according to the King County Regional Homelessness Authority's 2024 Point-in-Time Count, there are 16,868 individuals experiencing homelessness countywide, a 260% increase since 2014, 58% (9,810) of whom are unsheltered; and

WHEREAS, according to the Point-in-Time Count, there has been a 26% increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness from 2022 to 2024; and

WHEREAS, according to the King County Medical Examiner's Office, there has been an almost threefold increase in deaths annually of people presumed to be homeless since the City declared a civil emergency on homelessness, with 312 decedents in 2024, compared to 124 decedents in 2015; and

WHEREAS, according to data from the Office of Civil Legal Aid, eviction filings involved in low-income tenants in King County totaled 6,375 between July 2024 and March 2025, placing Washington State on track to see a record number of evictions in 2025; and

WHEREAS, there were 1,042 overdose deaths countywide in 2024, with fentanyl the leading cause of reported deaths among the homeless population in 2023;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Katie B. Wilson, Mayor of Seattle, hereby order the following actions:

- A. The Mayor's Office will launch a Housing & Shelter Accelerator inter-departmental team (IDT) with support from the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, Department of Finance and Administrative Services, Human Services Department, Office of Housing, Seattle Public Utilities, Seattle City Light, Seattle Department of Transportation, and Seattle Fire Department. The IDT will begin work in January 2026 to complete its recommendations by March 2026. The IDT will identify all possible financial incentives, permitting changes, and policy changes to rapidly expand and expedite new emergency shelters, transitional encampments, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and affordable housing projects that support low-income households, to the maximum extent allowable.
- B. The IDT will identify City-owned property that could be used temporarily or permanently to support shelter and housing opportunities. The IDT will include a representative from every identified department to attend meetings and implement changes recommended by the IDT.
- C. To encourage public partners to identify public lands for siting shelter programs, the Office of Intergovernmental Relations is directed to coordinate with regional public agencies, governments, and surrounding municipalities to identify underutilized or surplus public land for siting shelter or transitional encampments.
- D. To rapidly increase shelter unit capacity, the Human Services Department, working in partnership with regional partners, will identify shelter programs that have the capacity to add units to existing programs in the next 12 months.
- E. To provide adequate behavioral health support in City-funded shelter locations, the Human Services Department will identify opportunities to partner and coordinate with regional partners and organizations that have a track record of helping individuals transition to stability, including behavioral health providers who can provide mental health counseling and medically assisted treatment for opioid addiction.

Inquiries by City departments and offices regarding this Executive Order should be directed to Mark Ellerbrook.

Dated this 15th day of January 2026.

Katie B. Wilson
Mayor, City of Seattle