



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Council Member Sandesh Sadalge and Senior Council Policy Analyst Lynda Foster
COPY: City Clerk and City Council
SUBJECT: **Resolution - Adopting a policy to ensure the rights and dignity of all residents are maintained and protected - February 25, 2025**
DATE: February 19, 2025

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution directing the City Manager to use no City funds, facilities, property, equipment, or personnel to investigate, enforce, cooperate with, or assist in the investigation or enforcement of any federal registration or surveillance programs or any other laws, rules, or policies that target individuals in Tacoma solely on the basis of race, religion, immigration, or citizenship status, or national or ethnic origin. This does not prohibit the collection, use, or disclosure of information that is required to comply with state or federal law, or in response to a lawfully issued court order.

[Council Member Sadalge]

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Mayor Woodards and Council Members Bushnell, Diaz and Sadalge

BACKGROUND:

The Sponsors' Recommendation is Based On:

This resolution directs the City of Tacoma to mimic Washington State Law (RCW 43.17.425) which says no state agency, including law enforcement, may use agency funds, facilities, property, equipment, or personnel to investigate, enforce, cooperate with, or assist in the investigation or enforcement of any federal registration or surveillance programs or any other laws, rules, or policies that target Washington residents solely on the basis of race, religion, immigration, or citizenship status, or national or ethnic origin. Like in the state law, this does not prohibit the collection, use, or disclosure of information that is required to comply with state or federal law, or in response to a lawfully issued court order.

According to the Washington State Budget & Policy Center, immigrants make up fifteen percent of Washington's population and nineteen percent of Washington's labor force, and are responsible for twenty one percent of the state's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The state Legislature found in 2019 that fifteen percent of all business owners in the state of Washington were born outside the country and that these business owners have a large impact on the economy through innovation and the creation of jobs, and make a significant contribution to the economic vitality, prosperity and strength of the state.

The City of Tacoma has a proud history of inclusivity, tolerance, and compassion for all residents. The diversity of our people and cultures is a critical part of who we are as a City. Everyone has the right to live peacefully and without fear, and we condemn the persecution of many others around the world who face extreme barriers and inequitable treatment on account of their race, ethnicity, education level, economic status, gender, immigration status, sexual orientation, skin color, religion, political opinion, and other identities.

Tacoma is a welcoming City that affirms the fundamental dignity of immigrants and refugees, commits to building welcoming communities, and brings together community members in a spirit of solidarity. As of 2022 over 12 percent of Tacoma's population was born outside the United States, and nearly 20 percent speak a language other than English at home. The inclusivity of our immigrant and refugee community members aligns with the City's Equity and Empowerment framework, which strives to give everyone equitable access to the opportunities necessary to assert their human rights, satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being, and achieve their full potential.



Currently, Washington state law (RCW 10.93.160) states local law enforcement may not: inquire 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; or provide information pursuant to notification requests from federal immigration authorities for the purposes of civil immigration enforcement, except as required by law.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

Sponsors met with a broad range of stakeholders to discuss and request feedback on this policy, including the Commission for Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, the Tacoma Healing Awareness Committee, the Tacoma Refugee Choir, One America, Advocates for Immigrants in Detention Northwest (AIDNW), Golden Bamboo Walking Group, the Eastside Neighborhood Advisory Council of Tacoma, the South End Neighborhood Council, and other local elected leaders.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility: *(Mandatory)*

Approximately 7% of the US population, or 22.8 million people, are non-citizens. In 2017, nearly 260,000 people sought asylum, or protection from persecution, within the United States. As of 2022, over 12 percent of Tacoma's population was born outside the United States, and nearly 20 percent speak a language other than English at home. Today, immigrant communities are under threat of mass deportations. Anyone without secure immigration status may be subject to enforcement efforts. People who were ordered deported in the past and people who have had contact with the criminal legal system are at particular risk. These immigrant populations experience unique risks to health, including pre-migratory trauma, unsafe and stressful migration experiences, and post-migration discrimination. Human rights abuses can occur across this spectrum of the immigrant experience. In addition, these health behaviors and outcomes ripple throughout the communities to which immigrants belong.

Economy/Workforce: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Increase positive public perception related to the Tacoma economy.

Education: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

All students will graduate from high school and be prepared to enter the workforce or pursue post-secondary education.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Increase the number of residents who participate civically through volunteering and voting.

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Representation at public meetings will reflect the diversity of the Tacoma community

Livability: *Equity Index Score: Moderate Opportunity*

Improve access and proximity by residents to diverse income levels and race/ethnicity to community facilities, services, infrastructure, and employment.

Improve health outcomes and reduce disparities, in alignment with the community health needs assessment and CHIP, for all Tacoma residents

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s)?

Every person has fundamental human rights. Targeting people solely on the basis of race, religion, immigration, or citizenship status, or national or ethnic origin is discriminatory action that harms our community. Efforts to strip civil rights from a portion of our community are designed to create fear and push communities into hiding and outside the social structure that holds our community together. By making clear the City will not participate in these actions, we build trust with community and create a more welcoming environment.

ALTERNATIVES:

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
----------------	--------------------	--------------------



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

1. Take no action	Maintains more positive relationship with federal government	Does not protect individuals from being targeted solely on the basis of race, religion, immigration, or citizenship status, or national or ethnic origin
-------------------	--	--

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

The City Manager will implement this direction from the City Council.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

Sponsors recommend adopting this resolution to clearly direct that the City may not provide information to federal immigration authorities for civil immigration enforcement or provide nonpublic personal information about an individual to federal immigration authorities in noncriminal matters unless required by law.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Immediate costs to implement this policy can be incorporated into ongoing process and program work.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1. N/A			
TOTAL			

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?

NO, PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW

Immediate costs to implement this policy can be incorporated into ongoing process and program work. There is an indeterminate ongoing cost that will need to be evaluated over time.

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

No

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

There is an indeterminate ongoing cost that will need to be evaluated over time.

Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?

No

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A