

HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR THE JUNE 16, 2026 REGULAR MEETING

Date:	Tuesday, June 16 th 2026
Time:	6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting Link (ZOOM):	https://kingcounty.zoom.us/j/81298850677
Meeting ID:	812 9885 0677
Password:	936342
On site location:	None for this meeting.

Meetings are open to the public. Meeting minutes will be made available on [King County's HCRC Website](#) once approved.

KING COUNTY STAFF LIAISON

Senayet Negusse and Scarleth Lever Ortiz, King County Executive's Office

2026 HCRC Commissioners

Position	Name	Term Expires	Roles
1	Betlehem Michael	July 31, 2028	Vice-Chair and member of Sub-Committee #3
2	Emily Huynh	July 31, 2028	Commissioner and member of Sub-Committee #1
3	Allison Hastings	July 31, 2027	Secretary/Historian and member of Sub-Committee #1
4	Jacob Joens-Poulton	July 31, 2026	Commissioner and member of Sub-Committee #2
5	Vacant	July 31, 2028	Vacant
6	Jennifer Karls	July 31, 2028	Chair and member of Sub-Committee #2
7	Mona Jaber	July 31, 2028	Co-Chair and member of Sub-Committee #3
8	Steven Sawyer	July 31, 2028	Commissioner and member of Sub-Committee #1
9	Daisy Wong	July 31, 2027	Co-Chair and members of Sub-Committee #3
10	Vanessa Sanchez-Mexicano	July 31, 2026	Commissioner and member of Sub-Committee #2
11	Vacant	July 31, 2026	Vacant

Member	Present/Excused/Absent/Vacant
Position 1: Betelhem Michael	Absent
Position 2: Emily Huynh	Present
Position 3: Allison Hastings	Present
Position 4: Jacob Joens-Poulton	Present
Position 5: Vacant	Vacant
Position 6: Jennifer Karls	Present
Position 7: Mona Jaber	Present
Position 8: Steven Sawyer	Absent
Position 9: Daisy Wong	Present
Position 10: Vanessa Sanchez-Mexicano	Present
Position 11: Vacant	Vacant

Lalita Uppala is in attendance tonight.

AGENDA

TIME	ITEM	PRESENTER & ACTION
6:00 PM (5 mins)	Call to Order Called to order: 6:01pm	HCRC CO-CHAIRS Administrative
6:05 PM (5 mins)	Public Comments – No one in attendance. Following up on previous public comments: - Shiuli Saha (6/2/2026) email (Mohammed Shoreline Resident Story).	HCRC CO-CHAIRS Administrative
6:10 PM (5 mins)	Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes for May 19th 2026, meeting Approval of Meeting Minutes: Yes (Motion introduced by Daisy and seconded by Mona) Votes: 7 (all who are present)	HCRC CO-CHAIRS Action Item
6:15 PM (10 mins)	HCRC Updates - Commission Appointments & Re-Appointments Update Position 5: No viable candidate from 2025 applicant pool. Executive Office is opening recruitment. Position 11: Lalita Uppala will be confirmed. Re-appointments are in process (Confirmed 3 year term extension Vanessa Sanchez-Mexicano. Tentative Jacob Joens-Poulton - Review of Internal Sharepoint:	STAFF LIASION Senayet Negusse & Scarleth Lever Ortiz Action Item: Commissioners to review internal Sharepoint to make sure they have access and everything in there is accurate.

	1. New Parking/Mileage Reimbursement Form 2. New Public Comment Form (also posted on website) 3. New Compensation Agreement Form They will be sunsetting the monthly invoice process, and, instead, we will fill out a form for the year, and payment will be based on attendance roster for meetings. For this meeting, we will still be submitting a monthly invoice. - HCRC “Study Sessions” Curriculum Proposal - o Robust discussion related to available materials and need to identify needs of each Sub-Committee to develop a study session curriculum that meets the needs of HCRC. Survey will be released to help with scheduling and topic selection. - Key Deliverables Timeline Review Scarleth is going to send out a survey for availability in July for a retreat and for the study sessions. Attendance to study sessions will be limited to three Commissioners. Coordination from Sub-Committee members is encouraged to cover all topics. Recordings will be available. Ideally, the commission will have a packet for the Council for September with the appointments and report. Scarleth is going to do some work around compiling helpful information. All of the internal links that Scarleth has mentioned are in the meeting presentation. Introductions: Lalita Uppala, Scarleth, Commissioners.	Person(s) Responsible: All commissioners Action Items: Scarleth to send survey; commissioners fill out survey. Person responsible: Scarleth will send. All commissioners to fill out.
6:25 PM (30 mins)	Subcommittee Report Outs - Internal (County) Subcommittee Presentations from Christopher Bhang (EEO Office at Metro Transit Department) and Shannon Harris (Civil Rights Investigator) Some high-level themes: • Look at existing protected classes and think about how to flesh them out or make them more specific.	HCRC Subcommittee Chairs or Representatives Action Item: Create an outline/map that provides a helicopter view of what commission needs to do for Sept. 29 (Powers and Duties) report. Person Responsible: Scarleth

	• There's a lot of value in the civil rights program being in the Executive's Office in terms of authority and enforcement. Things are in transition—Civil Rights Program is not a standalone office; they are part of a team in the Executive's Office. The program was previously embedded with Office of Equity Race Social Justice. The new administration's goal is to break down silos and have a more unified approach to the work. The ordinance regarding structure changes passed today. Some of the reports we're reviewing might be a little dated because of these changes, but they are still relevant. - External Subcommittee (Community) They have not all been together for a meeting yet. They are concerned about the time constraints. They are figuring out what agencies make sense to do outreach to and how selective/open they should be. They think it might be helpful to get a sense of specific issues that are rising to the top to help focus their efforts. They feel like they are at the starting point. They have also talked about the idea of using social media for outreach and using different languages. Social media posts that reflect different community members could help build trust with different communities. - External Subcommittee (Government & Systems) They have been meeting weekly to learn more about what systems currently exist to support human and civil rights work. They've also been reaching out to different cities. They've had some folks not respond, and others who've been interested. They spoke with Han Tran from the Washington State Human Rights Commission. They've also heard back from the Seattle Human Rights Commission. They are concerned about the timeframe as well and the scope—what are we trying to achieve with our work and how can we be responsible with our recommendations? They are also looking at interlocal agreements and gaps in systems at the city levels.	Deadline: She will send to the commissioners in the next week or so.
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	Discussion of how we will work together. Scarleth thinks she can put together an outline of deliverables for us because her role/position allows her to see the big picture/universe of the commission's work. Scarleth says it would be helpful to copy her and/or HCRC email on emails to presenters/speakers. She can pull resources/attachments/etc. from emails and put them in Sharepoint.	
6:55 PM (3 mins)	Future Agenda Topics - Ideas for presentations that would be relevant for Commission 1. Civil Rights Program Data 2. Immigrant and Refugee Commission and what they're doing to support immigrant and refugee communities in the wake of ICE activity in the county. a. Scarleth recommended Commissioners consider attending public meetings for this Commission, and others that align with HCRS's work e.g. Upcoming Developmental Disabilities Board Meeting (8/5/26) b. Scarleth offered identifying KC staff supporting relevant Commissions e.g. Immigrant and Refugee Commission for presentations to HCRC 3. Christopher Bhang and Shannon Harris could be helpful for the full commission to hear from. 4. Office of Law Enforcement could also be a good group to hear from.	HCRC Co-Chairs hear from Commission on future agenda topics Action Item: Scarleth will add links to Boards and Commissions or relevant events to the SharePoint site under Upcoming Events Commissioners are encouraged to participate in public meetings to help ease scheduling constraints.
6:58 PM (2 mins)	King County HCRC Commissioner Closing Comments - Opportunity to share events, news, opportunities to engage, etc.	Administrative
7:00 PM	Adjourn Adjourned at: 7:10pm	

2026
JUNETEENTH
will be observed on
Friday, June 19th

KING COUNTY HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

Tuesday, June 16th, 2026 | Virtual Meeting

2026
Pride
Parade
Sunday, June
28th



King County | Office of the Executive



AGENDA

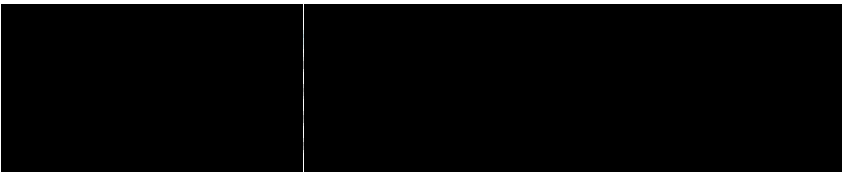
Call to Order	6:00 – 6:05 PM
Public Comments	6:05 – 6:10 PM
5/19/26 Meeting Minutes Approval	6:10 – 6:15 PM
HCRC Updates	6:15 – 6:25 PM
Sub-Committee Report Outs	6:25 – 6:55 PM
Future Agenda Topics	6:55 – 6:58 PM
Closing Comments	6:58 – 6:59 PM
Adjourn	7:00 PM



HCRC Chair: Jennifer Karls

HCRC Co-Chair: Daisy Wong

Shiuli Saha | ICE Activity & Shoreline Resident Story



[EXTERNAL Email Notice] External communication is important to us. Be cautious of phishing attempts. Do not click or open suspicious links or attachments.

Dear Members of the King County Human Rights Commission,

I am writing to follow up on the May 19 discussion regarding recent immigration enforcement activity in King County and to share urgent concerns from community members and organizations supporting families impacted by ICE.

Through my work with Shoreline Solidarity—a local mutual aid group that intentionally avoids a public online presence to protect vulnerable families—I continue to hear firsthand accounts from individuals who have been detained by ICE. These encounters are deeply traumatic, destabilizing families and causing significant emotional harm to children and caregivers. Rapid response volunteers who witness these actions also experience trauma, underscoring the broader community impact. **Just last week, at least 25 people were taken from the greater Seattle area.**

I am also deeply concerned about the local law enforcement response. In a recent conversation with the Chief of Police in Shoreline—whose department contracts through the King County Sheriff's Office—I was told directly that if ICE detains a child, local police **"will do nothing."** This leaves families without meaningful protection or recourse when minors are involved.

Given this, I urge the Commission to explore ways to hold the King County Sheriff's Office accountable when ICE violates the law or detains minors. We need clear mechanisms to document, track, and address civil rights violations.

I also encourage the Commission to strengthen engagement with key community-based organizations, including:

- National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON) • Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WASIN) • Local mutual aid and rapid response groups (including Shoreline Solidarity; I can serve as a point of contact)

These groups are often the first to learn of incidents, support affected families, and identify emerging patterns of concern.

With the upcoming FIFA World Cup matches in our region, many community members fear an increase in immigration enforcement around large international events, heightening anxiety among immigrant families.

Finally, I ask the Commission to consider dedicating time at an upcoming meeting to hear directly from individuals impacted by ICE enforcement. Mohammed, a Shoreline resident who recently experienced an encounter with ICE, is willing to share his story. His experience illustrates the human impact of these actions and would provide valuable insight for the Commission's work. I added him to this email chain.

Thank you for your continued commitment to equity, justice, and human rights in King County.

Best regards, Shiuli Saha



Appointments & Reappointments

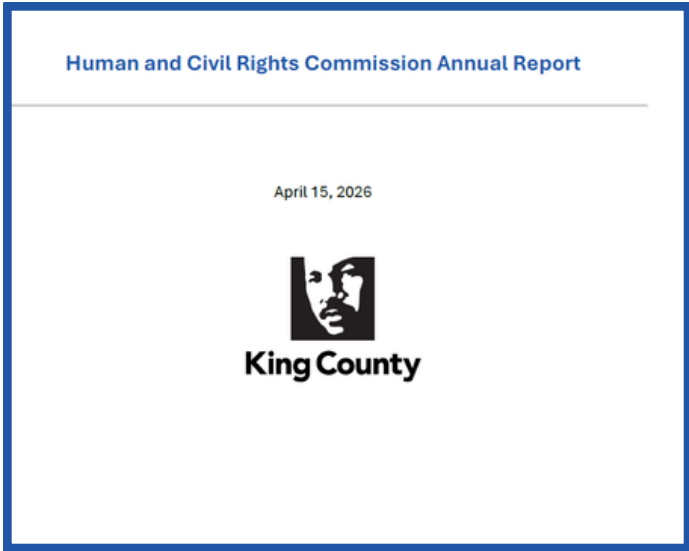
- **Position D-5 Vacancy:** Targeted Recruitment Opportunity
- **11th Position Appointment:** Lalita Uppala
- **Positions 4 and 11 Re-Appointments:** Joens-Poulton & Sanchez-Mexicano terms expire 7/31/2026

[Review Commissioners Terms Matrix and Short Bios](#)

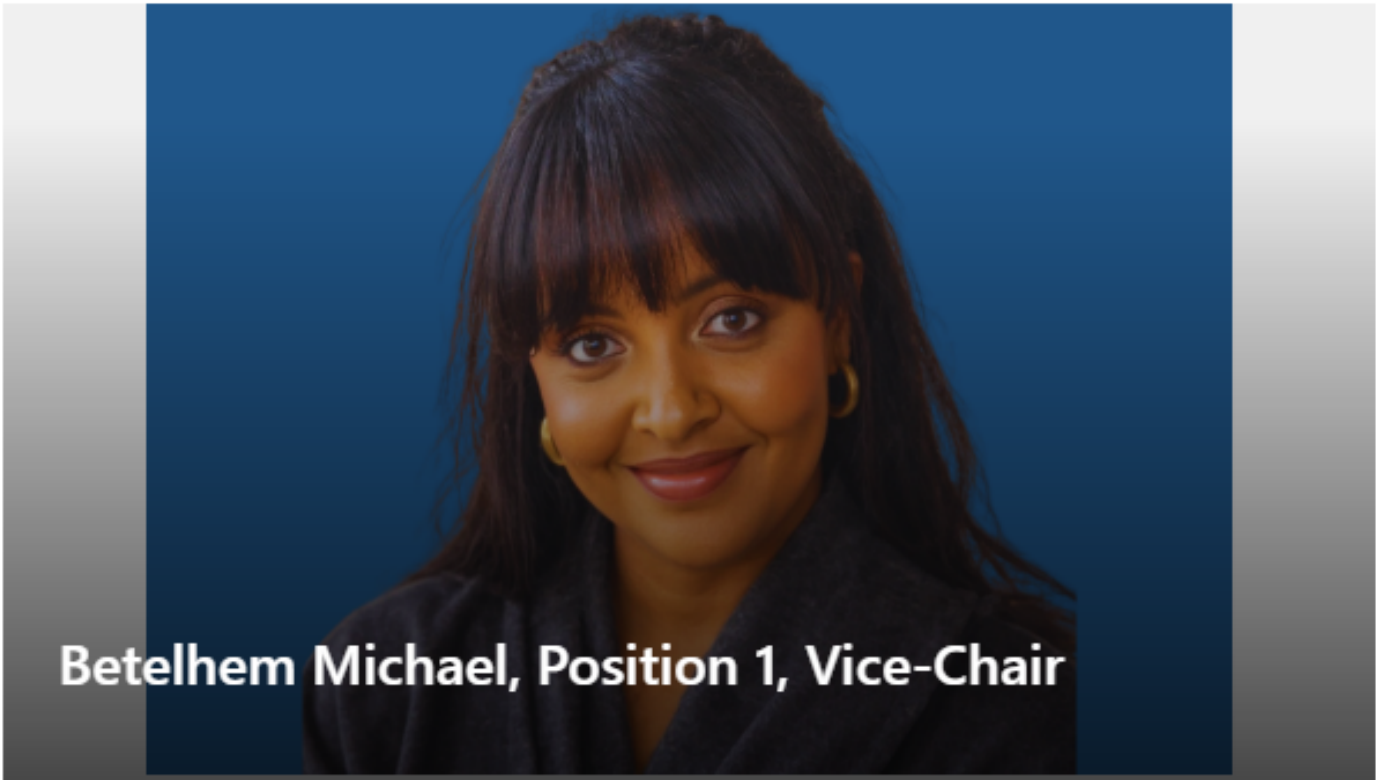


HCRC Reports

- [Update Workplan \(based on 4/15/26 Report & Sub-Committee Plans\)](#)



2025-2028 HCRC Members



< 1 of 9 >





HCRC Report Due Date:
9/29/2026

- > Analysis of the County Civil Rights Program
- > Recommendations on Program Structure & Duties
- > Recommendations on Protected Classes
- > Recommendations on Interlocal Agreements
- > Study Sessions
 - [SharePoint Site Materials](#)
 - Calendar, Topics, Format Discussion
 - Summer Retreat

Helpful Materials

WORKING DRAFTS

Collaboration Hub

This is the site where you can find draft of documents that are under review.

[View Working Drafts](#)

Parking/Mileage Reimbursement Form

[Click here to submit request](#)

Public Comment Form

[Click here to view or share form](#)

Key Documents & Reports

KC Ordinance 2023-0417
Ordinance related to the establishment of a KC HCRC.

KC Code 2.31 HCRC
HCRC Duties, Purpose and Independence, Membership, Compensation

**** 2019 Research Recommendations | Korematsu Report**
Requested by (Councilmember Rod Dembowski) and Larry Gossett.

**** 2021 Disability Equity Plan**
Attachment A Motion 15954

**** 2023 Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Inclusion Task Force Strategy Report**
Attachment A to Motion 16389

2022 KC Wage Theft Study

2025- Office of Labor Standards Feasibility Report

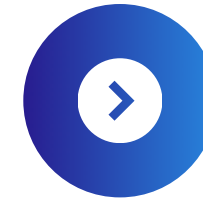
*** Must be considered in 2026 HCRC Report Recommendations*



Appointments & Reappointments

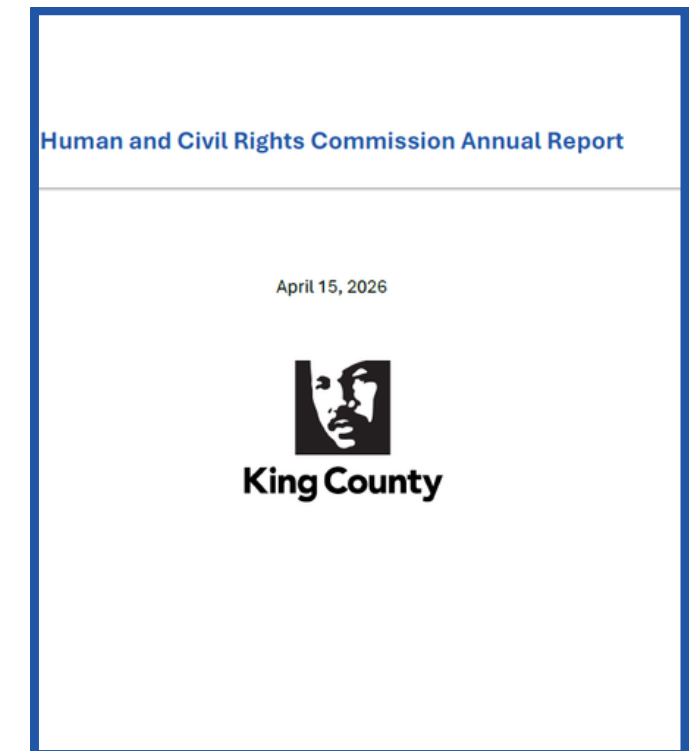
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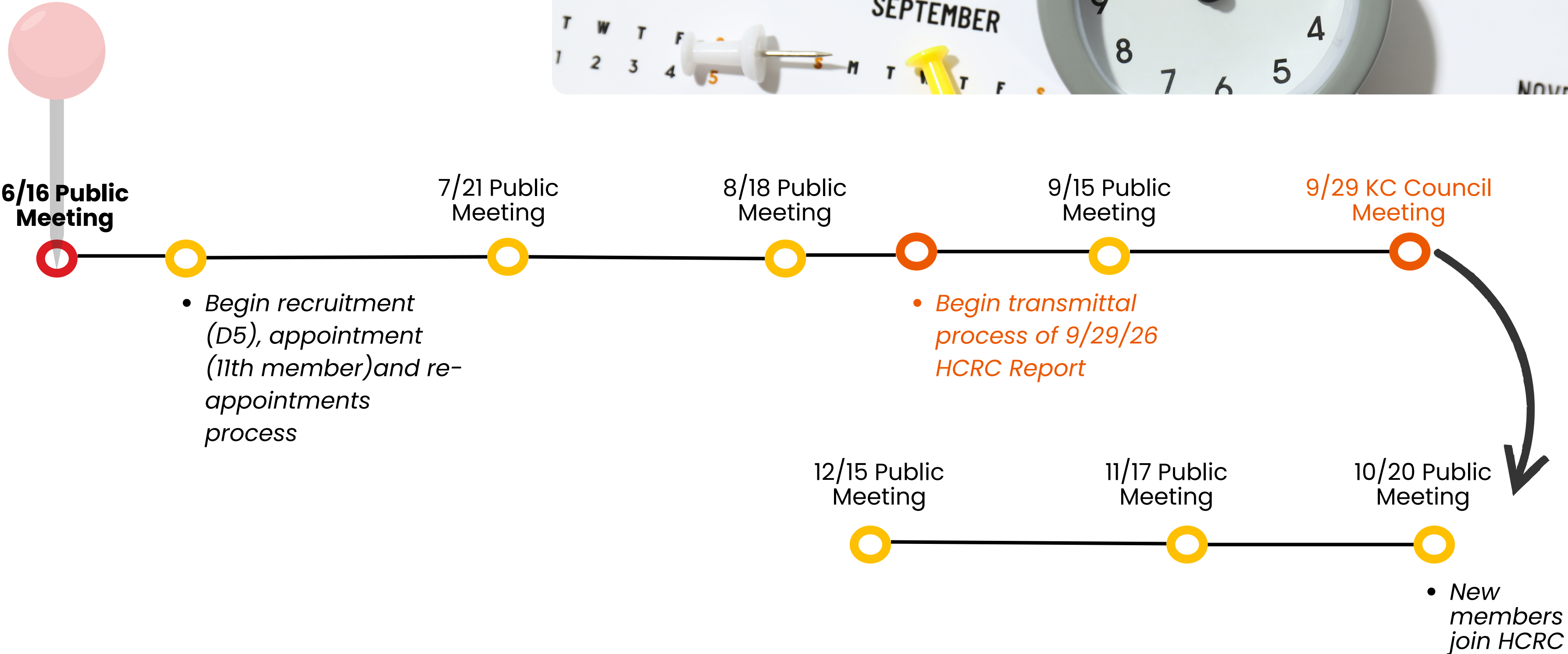
[See Commissioners Terms Matrix](#)



HCRC Reports

- [Update Workplan \(based on 4/15/26 Report\)](#)
- Review Report Requirements (Due 9/29/2026)







#1 County Operations

- **Chair:** Bishop Sawyer
- **Members:** Allison Hastings, Emily Huynh



#2 Community Engagement

- **Chair:** TBD (Bethelhem Michael or Sanchez-Mexicano)
- **Members:** Vanessa Sanchez-Mexicano, Mona Jaber, Betelhem Michael

Recommendation to add upcoming Board member Lalita Uppala



#3 Governance & Systems

- **Chair:** Jacob Joens-Poulton
- **Members:** Daisy Wong, Jennifer Karls

HCRC Sub-Committees

INTERNAL #1 County Operations [KCC 2.31.030.D] Monitor and review the procedures and processes of antidiscrimination ordinances and affirmative action policies to determine compliance and effectiveness. We achieve this by analyzing the county's current civil rights program, its structure, and operations to identify its effectiveness and gaps.	EXTERNAL #2 Community Engagement [KCC 2.31.030.B] Conduct and prioritize a robust and ongoing engagement process with community members and county entities to consider their input in implementing and carrying out the purposes and provisions of the Commission. Engagement shall be prioritized for historically disadvantaged communities who have historically lacked power to influence policies for the community. We do this to better understand community members' experiences and barriers to achieving social justice.	EXTERNAL #3 Governance and Systems [KCC 2.31.030.A.5] Advise King County leaders to implement and carry out the purposes and provisions of the Commission by reviewing and researching policies, practices, and procedures to assist county decision-makers in fulfilling the county's commitment to address the root causes of inequities and distribute resources equitably. We accomplish this by studying other jurisdictions' civil rights programs and understanding what practices are feasible for the county.
#1 County Operations Members HCRC2 HCRC2@kingcounty.gov HCRC3 HCRC3@kingcounty.gov HCRC8 HCRC8@kingcounty.gov	#2 Community Engagement Members HCRC4 HCRC4@kingcounty.gov HCRC6 HCRC6@kingcounty.gov HCRC10 HCRC10@kingcounty.gov	#3 Governance and Systems Members HCRC1 HCRC1@kingcounty.gov HCRC7 HCRC7@kingcounty.gov HCRC9 HCRC9@kingcounty.gov



HCRC Chair: Jennifer Karls
HCRC Co-Chair: Daisy Wong



HCRC Members & Staff



HCRC Chair: Jennifer Karls

thank you!