



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE**  
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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Kurt Triplett, City Manager

**From:** Jim Lopez, Deputy City Manager  
Erika Mascorro, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Manager  
Daniel Lazo, Senior Community Engagement Coordinator

**Date:** March 27, 2026

**Subject:** **2026 World Refugee Day Proclamation**

### RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Mayor, on behalf of City Council, proclaims June 20, 2026, as World Refugee Day in Kirkland.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- This proclamation aligns with City of Kirkland values and strong commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB).
- This proclamation is part of the City Council's adopted 2026 proclamation schedule.

### BACKGROUND:

World Refugee Day was held globally for the first time on June 20, 2001, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. It is an international day designated by the United Nations to honor refugees around the globe. Observed annually on June 20, World Refugee Day celebrates the strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their home country to escape conflict or persecution. The observance shines a light on the rights, needs, and dreams of refugees while helping to mobilize political will and resources so refugees will not only survive but also thrive.

The Kirkland community has a long history of welcoming and caring for refugees. Volunteer organizations assist people who have endured the unimaginable to pursue the dream of a safe country to call home. These volunteers support refugees by providing emergency food bags, hygiene products, bus tickets, and grocery or clothing gift cards and help refugees learn English, find a place to live and work, and gain citizenship.

For more information about World Refugee Day, visit the United Nations Refugee Agency website.<sup>1</sup>

#### DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

This proclamation aligns with Kirkland's City values and strong commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB). Council has adopted legislation supporting these values, including:

- **Resolution R-5240** (2017) declaring Kirkland a safe, inclusive, welcoming community for all people;
- **Resolution R-5434** (2020) expressing commitments to improving the safety and respect of Black people and approving the framework to create a community committed to examining and dismantling interpersonal, institutional, and structural racism in Kirkland;
- **Resolution R-5548** (2022) adopting the City's DEIB 5-Year Roadmap;
- **Resolution R-5686** (2025) declaring Kirkland as a welcoming, inclusive, and safe city for the Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual Plus (2SLGBTQIA+) people and recognizing their human rights and well-being; and
- **Resolution R-5693** (2025) reaffirming the City's commitment to being a safe, inclusive, and welcoming community where all people belong.

#### NEXT STEPS:

The person accepting this proclamation will be announced at the Council meeting.

#### ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – 2026 World Refugee Day Proclamation

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/us/get-involved/take-action/world-refugee-day>



# A PROCLAMATION OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND

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## World Refugee Day June 20, 2026

**WHEREAS**, World Refugee Day was first proclaimed by the United Nations in 2001 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees; and

**WHEREAS**, World Refugee Day shines a light on the rights, needs, and dreams of refugees, helping to mobilize political will and resources so refugees will not only survive but also thrive; and

**WHEREAS**, asylum seekers face numerous challenges, including not being able to work for an average of 18 months after arriving in the United States and having limited or no access to many federal benefits, which results in them being vulnerable to food insecurity and homelessness; and

**WHEREAS**, current federal actions related to admittance to and deportation from the United States are deeply impacting the refugee community and exacerbating individual, institutional, and systemic racism, stirring up fear, anger, and grief, and these actions can result in harmful disparities in education, employment, income, housing, criminal justice, and quality of life; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Kirkland supports several non-profit organizations that provide services to immigrants and refugees in this community, including organizations providing assistance to individuals who have endured the unimaginable in their journey to our community and who arrive with very little; and

**WHEREAS**, Kirkland believes that those who come to the United States in search of a better life—bringing with them hope, resilience, and a commitment to positively contribute to their new community—deserve the opportunity to achieve economic stability, liberty, and happiness.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, Mayor Kelli Curtis, on behalf of the City Council, does hereby proclaim June 20, 2026, as World Refugee Day in Kirkland, and invites all community members to explore opportunities to uplift refugees in Kirkland through individual actions or by supporting organizations that help refugees survive and thrive.

Signed this 16th day of June, 2026

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Kelli Curtis, Mayor