



**Seattle**  
Ethics & Elections  
Commission

# Democracy Voucher Program 2024 Report



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# Introduction

This report summarizes the administration of the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission's (SEEC) Democracy Voucher Program (DVP) in the 2024 election cycle. For additional information into program implementation and administration, please see prior reports.

Seattle's Democracy Voucher Program is the first public campaign financing of its kind. In regular election cycles, residents receive four \$25 Democracy Vouchers they can use to support program candidates running for local office. Candidates then collect vouchers to help fund their campaign.

In 2024, a Special Election was held to fill a vacancy in City Council Position 8, a citywide office. Candidates had the option of using the DVP and residents were issued two \$25 Democracy Vouchers.

This report is a snapshot of the 2024 activities.

# 2024 Special Election

For the 2024 Special Election, the Commission made several programmatic decisions.

## Issue two \$25 vouchers to residents.

This change acknowledged there would be a limited number of candidates and allowed for more residents to have their vouchers counted.

**Move the mailing deadline to a later date.** This change allowed time to reconfigure the voucher artwork in time for printing and mailing.

**Continuation of the Democracy Voucher Outreach Fund.** This decision allowed for continuation of funding to several existing organizations to provide ongoing program education and information about the Special Election.

These Democracy Vouchers are for the 2024 Seattle City Council special election. When you assign a Democracy Voucher, your name and your candidate selection is reported on our website. Additionally, your address may be reported on the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission website.

Use your vouchers online [seattle.gov/democracyvoucher](http://seattle.gov/democracyvoucher)

OR

Use your paper vouchers

 **1. Learn about the candidates.**  
Call (206) 727-8855 or visit [seattle.gov/democracyvoucher](http://seattle.gov/democracyvoucher).

 **2. Complete your vouchers.**  
Write in the candidate's name, your signature, and the date on each voucher. You can assign vouchers to one or more participating candidates.

 **3. Return your vouchers.**  
There are several ways to return your Democracy Vouchers.

- Give your vouchers directly to a candidate's campaign.
- Use the enclosed pre-paid envelope.
- Find a list of additional drop-off locations on the website.

**Questions?** See the enclosed information sheet for frequently asked questions.

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 **Democracy Voucher**  
2024 Seattle City Council

NO CASH VALUE - NON TRANSFERABLE  
VALID MARCH 12, 2024-NOVEMBER 29, 2024

**\$25**  
VOUCHER 1 OF 2

I am assigning this voucher to the participating City of Seattle candidate whose name is printed here:

**Candidate Name:**  
Participating candidate's name

I attest that I received this Democracy Voucher properly and make this assignment freely and not in exchange for payment of any kind. I am aware the assignment may not be changed and there is no guarantee of availability of funds. Assignment is complete upon delivery to the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission, the candidate, or the campaign's representative. Vouchers may only be assigned to program candidates.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Find a participating candidate at [www.seattle.gov/democracyvoucher](http://www.seattle.gov/democracyvoucher)

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 **Democracy Voucher**  
2024 Seattle City Council

NO CASH VALUE - NON TRANSFERABLE  
VALID MARCH 12, 2024-NOVEMBER 29, 2024

**\$25**  
VOUCHER 2 OF 2

I am assigning this voucher to the participating City of Seattle candidate whose name is printed here:

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Participating candidate's name

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**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Find a participating candidate at [www.seattle.gov/democracyvoucher](http://www.seattle.gov/democracyvoucher)

# Democracy Vouchers

## Issuing Vouchers

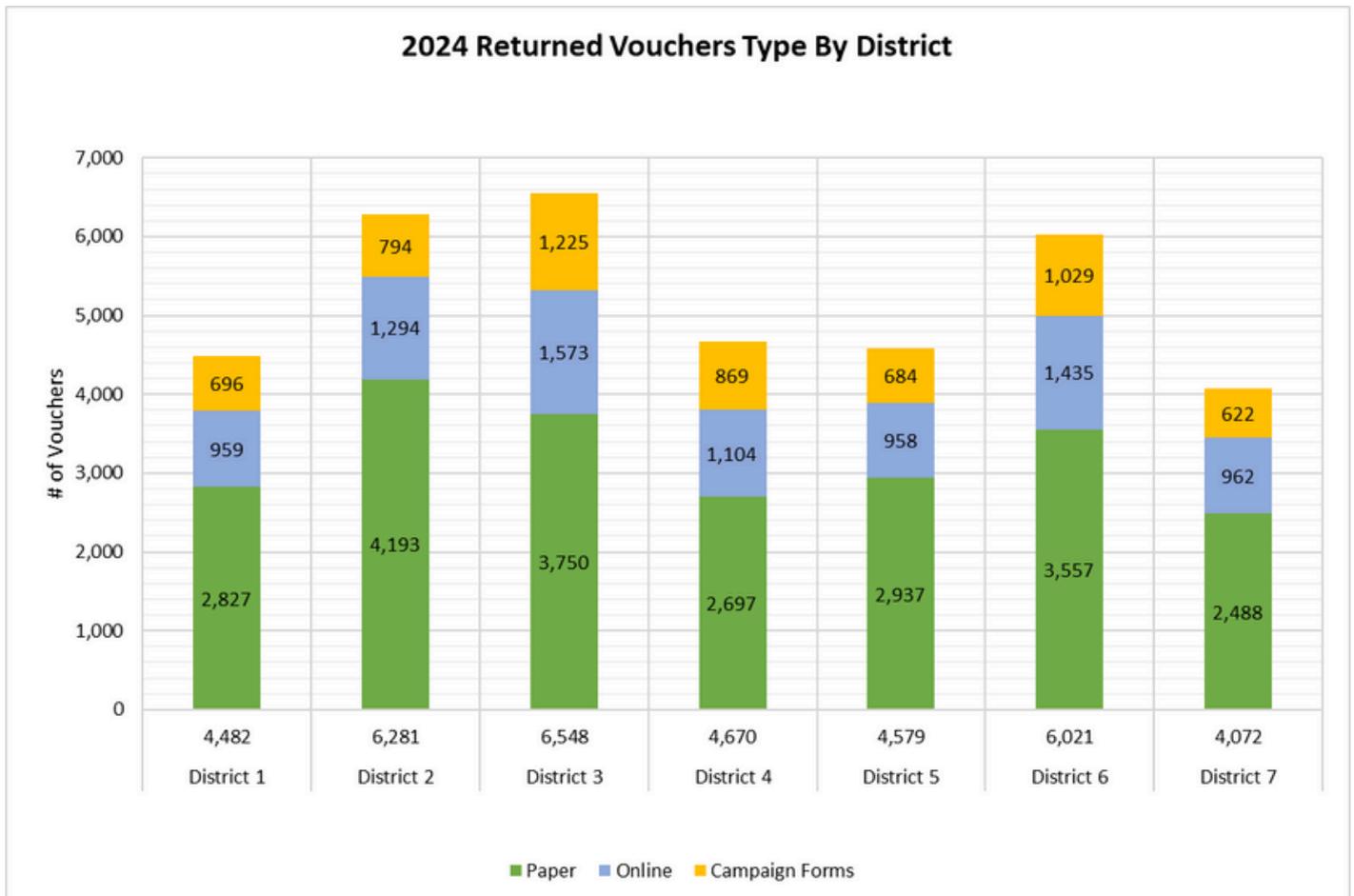
On March 12, 2024, the SEEC began mailing Democracy Voucher packets to Seattle residents, with subsequent monthly mailings to newly registered voters. Online voucher users received an email notice that their vouchers were accessible online.

Inactive registered voters were sent a postcard notifying them of an issue with their voter registration and encouraging them to contact King County Elections.

## Processing Vouchers

The SEEC received 36,653 vouchers representing 18,106 residents. The chart below shows the districts vouchers came from, and the total received by type.

- Paper vouchers - 22,449
- Online - 8,285
- Campaign Replacement Forms - 5,919



# Candidates

## **Participation**

The four candidates who appeared on the ballot also participated in the program. Three qualified to receive funding.

Candidates were required to collect 400 qualifying contributions of at least \$10 and 400 signatures from Seattle residents.

The maximum campaign valuation was set at \$225,000 for the Primary Election and \$450,000 total for the Primary and General Elections.

## **Funding**

\$1.8 million was available to candidates.

\$766,025 was distributed to qualified candidates representing 30,641 redeemed vouchers.

# Communications and Outreach

## Media

In 2024, the DVP partnered with 20 ethnic and local media outlets to help spread public awareness of the program. DVP staff worked with media to execute the following campaigns:

- Democracy Voucher Program Launch
- 'Request Replacement Vouchers' Mid-year Campaign
- 'Final List of Candidates Now Available'

Types of media used to spread program awareness included press releases, newsletter highlights, online, print, and PSA advertisements.



## Bus Advertisements

The DVP launched a bus advertisement campaign for the first time in 2024. The campaign included two phases that each lasted four weeks each:

- First Flight - Democracy Voucher Program Launch
- Second Flight - Request Replacement Democracy Vouchers

Each flight included an exterior ad along the side of the bus and an interior ad behind the bus driver.



## Outreach & Marketing Materials

In 2024, staff conducted DVP outreach at in-person and virtual events. Staff attended 15 outreach events which events included outdoor street fairs, festivals, and cultural events. Staff improved DVP marketing materials including new flyers for both candidates and residents, and new swag materials such as stickers and fans.

# 2024 Democracy Voucher Outreach Fund

The Democracy Voucher Program budgeted \$225,000 to award to 501 (c) (3) community-based organizations to conduct outreach in underserved communities. Of the overall budget, \$150,000 was dedicated to organizations focused on lawful permanent resident enrollment and education.

Organizations conducted outreach based on the following objectives:

- Promote civic engagement in underserved communities by educating residents about the Democracy Voucher Program.
- Provide program education and enrollment with a high degree of cultural competency.
- Remove barriers to the program by providing in-language program education and distributing translated program materials.

## Organizations Funded

- Asian Counseling and Referral Service
- Refugee Women's Alliance
- Somali Community Services of Seattle
- Villa Comunitaria
- Washington Bus Education Fund
- Chinese Information and Service Center
- Eritrean Association in Greater Seattle
- Literacy Source

## Outreach Impacts

### Direct Outreach

- 176 outreach events
- 16,051 interactions

### Digital Outreach

- 20+ digital activities
- 20,734 interactions

### Materials

- 14,646 materials distributed

Community-based organizations reached a total of 53,521 Seattle residents.

## DEMOCRACY VOUCHER OUTREACH FUND

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

PROPOSALS  
DUE ON  
OCTOBER 11

ACCESS THE APPLICATION ON  
[SEATTLE.GOV/DEMOCRACVOUCHER](https://seattle.gov/democracvoucher)

# Budget Summary Report

<b>Democracy Voucher Program - Budget Summary</b>									
Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Implementation (see prior year reports for detail)</b>									
Total	\$685,836	\$36,000	\$17,200	\$459,497	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Program Administration</b>									
Voucher Production and Mailing		\$358,000	\$1,140	\$326,309	\$120,517	\$266,324	\$1,101	\$455,115	\$491,731
Outreach Media and Materials	\$5,000	\$85,000	\$53,099	\$39,333	\$8,680	\$18,509	\$347	\$26,523	\$7,100
Language Access	\$22,000	\$16,000	\$10,763	\$48,208	\$10,932	\$80,735	\$2,143	\$59,779	\$20,005
Outreach Contracting and Events		\$30,000		\$149,885		\$203,590	\$45,089	\$217,617	\$203,818
King County Elections		\$18,500		\$34,580		\$54,706		\$38,600	\$18,059
Administration and Program Eval *		\$114,700	\$48,487	\$113,997	\$138,301	\$118,722	\$116,850	\$119,560	\$124,242
Program Staff	\$273,000	\$359,400	\$343,873	\$343,678	\$370,100	\$427,336	\$486,991	\$504,842	\$555,264
Temporary Staff		\$55,000		\$103,407		\$131,508		\$43,889	
Total	\$300,000	\$1,036,600	\$457,362	\$1,159,397	\$648,530	\$1,301,430	\$652,521	\$1,465,925	\$1,420,220
* Beginning 2021, academic researchers began providing contracted evaluation of the program. See <a href="#">prior year biennial reports</a> for paid program eval cost.									
<b>Candidate Disbursements</b>									
Total		\$1,140,525		\$2,454,475		\$3,397,050		\$2,402,900	\$766,025
<b>Total Program Cost</b>	\$985,836	\$2,213,125	\$474,562	\$4,073,369	\$648,530	\$4,698,480	\$652,521	\$3,868,825	\$2,186,245
<b>Funding</b>									
Levy	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Returned Voucher Funds		\$34,958		\$22,854		\$21,057		\$51,147	\$301