

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON, AMENDING CHAPTER 2.14 OF THE OLYMPIA MUNICIPAL CODE (OMC) TO DECLARE ALL REFERENCES IN THE OMC TO THE OLYMPIA MUNICIPAL COURT TO BE DEEMED REFERENCES TO THURSTON COUNTY DISTRICT COURT AND TERMINATING THE OLYMPIA MUNICIPAL COURT, DECLARING AN EMERGENCY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the City of Olympia created a municipal court, which was later amended pursuant to the Court Improvement Act, codified as Chapter 3.50 RCW, in Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) Chapter 2.14, with such court known as the Olympia Municipal Court; and

WHEREAS, the Olympia Municipal Court is located in the Lee Creighton Justice Center, which was originally constructed in 1966, at which time it served as the Olympia City Hall. After 2011, it was repurposed as a justice center. The courtroom was renovated in 2019. Subsequently, a Building Condition Assessment was completed, which examined the ability of the Lee Creighton Justice Center to continue to serve as a justice center and house the Olympia Municipal Court. Unique challenges were identified that posed substantial costs regarding continued use of the justice center; and

WHEREAS, an investigation commenced into replacing or relocating the Olympia Municipal Court. On April 8, 2025, the Olympia City Council authorized the sale of the Lee Creighton Justice Center to the Squaxin Island Tribe for future redevelopment of the property. Three options were explored for relocation of the Olympia Municipal Court, including (1) leasing commercial office space; (2) relocating all programs and services to City-owned buildings such as 108 State Avenue and Olympia City Council Chambers, and (3) relocating prosecution, victim and domestic violence assistance programs and public defense to other City-owned buildings and exploring the transition of judicial services to Thurston County; and

WHEREAS, on April 22, 2025, the Olympia City Council in Resolution No. M-2604 legislatively found of the three options available to the City of Olympia, the most economically feasible was to enter into an interlocal agreement with Thurston County for Thurston County District Court to provide judicial services, jail alternatives, and supervised probation services, and to terminate the Olympia Municipal Court upon six months' notice to the Administrative Office of the Courts, as permitted by state law and the Court Improvement Act, Chapter 3.50 RCW, and Chapter 39.34.RCW; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to RCW 39.34.180, on July 29, 2025, the City of Olympia entered into a negotiated Interlocal Agreement with Thurston County for costs associated with direct filing of cases in Thurston County District Court. Subsequently, on August 4, 2025, the City of Olympia gave six months' notice to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) of the City's intent to terminate its municipal court and commence filing cases in Thurston County District Court in accordance with RCW 3.50.805; and

WHEREAS, the Olympia City Council legislatively finds that the decision to terminate the Olympia Municipal Court and to directly file cases in Thurston County District Court commencing February 5, 2026, supports the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the City of Olympia, and is in the best interests of the residents of the City of Olympia; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to RCW 3.50.060, the City of Olympia wishes to terminate its municipal court effective at midnight February 4, 2026; and

WHEREAS, due to the time constraints to complete the transition on time, the Olympia City Council finds a public emergency exists to protect public health, safety, and welfare;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE OLYMPIA CITY COUNCIL ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Amendment of OMC 2.14. Chapter 2.14 of the Olympia Municipal Code, "MUNICIPAL COURT," is hereby amended to read as follows:

2.14.010 Established

~~The Olympia municipal court operates pursuant to RCW Chapter 3.50. The current references in City Ordinances and in the Olympia Municipal Code to the Olympia Municipal Court or the municipal court of Olympia, shall be hereafter references to the District Court in and for the State of Washington for Thurston County.~~

~~**2.14.020 Powers and duties—Jurisdiction**~~

~~The municipal court shall possess such jurisdiction and shall exercise such power and duties as are set~~

~~**2.14.030 Olympia Municipal Court Judge's salary**~~

~~A.—The salary for the Olympia Municipal Court Judge position shall be set at 95% of a district court judge's annual salary.~~

~~B.—The Olympia Municipal Court Judge's salary shall automatically be adjusted on the same date and to an amount equal to 95% of the salary of district court judges as set by the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials, which was established pursuant to the authority granted in Article 28 of the Washington State Constitution, RCW 43.03.300, RCW 43.03.305, and RCW 43.03.310.~~

Section 2. Compliance. The City of Olympia has complied with RCW 39.34.180, RCW 3.50.060, and RCW 3.50.805, and hereby terminates its municipal court, effective at midnight February 4, 2026.

Section 3. Ratification. Any act consistent with the authority and prior to the effective date of this Ordinance is hereby ratified and affirmed.

Section 4. Severability. The provisions of this Ordinance are declared separate and severable. If any provision of this Ordinance or its application to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the remainder of this Ordinance or application of the provision to other persons or circumstances shall be unaffected and shall not affect the validity of the remainder of the ordinance, or the validity to other persons or circumstances.

Section 5. Declaration of Emergency and Effective Date. For the reasons set forth in the legislative recitals above, the Olympia City Council finds that a public emergency exists and in order to protect the public health, safety, property and general welfare of the residents of the City of Olympia, this Ordinance shall become effective immediately.


MAYOR

ATTEST:

Sean Krier
CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Mark Barber
CITY ATTORNEY

- PASSED:** February 3rd, 2026
- APPROVED:** February 3rd, 2026
- PUBLISHED:** February 8th, 2026