

Characteristic Charter Elements (Washington Home Rule Counties)

- **Preamble**
- **Powers of the County**
 - ↳ General Powers
 - ↳ Intergovernmental Relations
 - ↳ Interpretation/construction (liberally construed)
 - ↳ Name, boundaries, county seat
- **If Commission Form of Government:**
 - ↳ Specifying Commission as legislative and executive body
 - ↳ Composition of Commission (number of members)
 - ↳ Terms in office for Commissioners
 - ↳ Partisan or nonpartisan
 - ↳ Elected by district, or nominated by district and elected at large
 - ↳ Enumerated legislative powers of the Commission
 - ↳ Enumerated executive powers of the Commission
 - ↳ Emergency ordinances
 - ↳ Commission rules of organization
 - ↳ Motions
- **If County Executive/County Council Form of Government**
 - ↳ County Executive
 - ♦ Composition
 - ♦ Powers
 - ♦ Elections and term of office
 - ♦ Powers and duties (executive departments)
 - ♦ Executive veto
 - ♦ County administrative officer
 - ♦ Appointments by county executive
 - ♦ Appointments by county administrative officer
 - ♦ Qualification of appointments
 - ♦ Confirmation of appointments (by Council or County Executive)
 - ♦ Removal of appointments
 - ↳ County Council
 - ♦ Composition
 - ♦ Powers
 - ♦ Term of office
 - ♦ Powers of the Council
 - ♦ Relationship with other branches (limitation on power to direct exec. branch employees)
 - ♦ Organization (i.e., election of chair; executive pro tempore)
 - ♦ Rules of procedure
 - ♦ Introduction/adoption of ordinances
 - ♦ Right to executive veto
 - ♦ Emergency ordinances
 - ♦ Resolutions
 - ♦ Council subpoena powers
- **Legislation**
 - ↳ Regular ordinances
 - ↳ Emergency ordinances
 - ↳ Adoption of statutes and codes by reference

- ↳ Codification of ordinances
- ↳ Resolutions
- **Other Elected Officials**
 - ↳ Identification of other elected officials
 - ↳ Terms in office for other elected officials
 - ↳ Partisan or nonpartisan
 - ↳ Powers and duties
- **Administrative Departments**
 - ↳ Identification of administrative departments
 - ↳ Hearing examiner system
 - ↳ Definition of an administrative act
 - ↳ Power of executive authority over administration
 - ↳ County Administrator/manager (and duties/responsibilities)
- **Elections**
 - ↳ Election procedures
 - ↳ Qualifications of elected officials (citizenship, residency, registered voter)
 - ↳ Commissioner/Councilmember district boundaries
 - ↳ Redistricting (commission, committee, or otherwise)
 - ↳ Vacancies
- **Powers of the People**
 - ↳ Initiative
 - ♦ General provisions
 - ♦ Limitations (provisions for funding initiatives requiring new expenditures)
 - ♦ Filing requirements (filed with Auditor, signature threshold, time period, etc.)
 - ♦ Commission/Council action (to consider adopting without incurring cost of election)
 - ↳ Referendum
 - ♦ Referendum by Commission/Council
 - ♦ Referendum by the people (requirements)
 - ↳ Mini-Initiative
 - ♦ Requirements
 - ♦ Notice and publication costs borne by petitioners
 - ↳ Unique to King County: "Institutional Initiative"
 - ↳ Recall (usually just defers to state law since threshold is already so high in Washington)
- **Financial Administration/Procedures**
 - ↳ Budget
 - ♦ Budget provisions (e.g., biennial budget)
 - ♦ Presentation and adoption of budget
 - ♦ Copies of the budget
 - ♦ Submission of proposed annual budget
 - ♦ Meetings on the preliminary budget
 - ♦ Final budget narrative
 - ♦ Mid-term budget review
 - ♦ Budget message
 - ↳ Fiscal policies (listing)
 - ↳ Appropriations
 - ♦ Emergency appropriations
 - ♦ Contingency funds
 - ♦ Lapses in appropriations
 - ↳ Interfund borrowing and reimbursements

- ↳ Illegal contracts
- **Personnel System**
 - ↳ Requirement to adopt personnel system (rules)
 - ↳ Administration
 - ↳ Exemptions (positions not subject to this article in charter, e.g., temporary, contractors, etc.)
 - ↳ Employee representation/collective bargaining
 - ↳ Nondiscrimination
 - ↳ Right to public hearing
 - ↳ Political activities
 - ↳ Appointment restrictions (preventing electeds from holding appointive office for two years)
 - ↳ Personnel board/civil service commission (if applicable)
- **Charter Review/Amendment Commission**
 - ↳ How appointed or elected
 - ↳ Vacancies
 - ↳ Commission procedures
 - ↳ Amendment provisions
 - ♦ By charter review commission (requires countywide vote to approve amendments)
 - ♦ By the public (initiative petition; requires countywide vote to approve amendments)
 - ♦ By the Commission/Council (requires countywide vote to approve amendments)
 - ↳ Repeal of the charter by the people
- **General Provisions**
 - ↳ Severability
 - ↳ Purchasing, contracts, bonds
 - ↳ Franchises
 - ↳ Eminent domain
 - ↳ Claims against the county
 - ↳ Public disclosure (open records; public inspection)
 - ↳ Conflict of interest
 - ↳ Veteran's policy (if applicable)
 - ↳ Code of ethics
 - ↳ Oath of office
- **Transitional Provisions**
 - ↳ Effective date
 - ↳ District boundaries/initial districts (if applicable)
 - ↳ Continuation of ordinances and vested rights
 - ↳ Commencement of terms of office
 - ↳ Compensation for specific elected positions (if applicable)
 - ↳ Continuation of county employees
 - ↳ Boards and commissions
 - ↳ Continuation of county budget
 - ↳ Required ordinances (listing)