

# SEOUL METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT ORDINANCE ON USE OF KOREAN LANGUAGE

Enactment No. 5724, Jul. 17, 2014  
Partial Amendment No. 6214, May. 19, 2016  
Partial Amendment No. 6270, Jul. 14, 2016  
Partial Amendment No. 6373, Jan. 05, 2017  
Partial Amendment No. 6436, Mar. 23, 2017  
Amendment of Other Laws No. 6851, Mar. 22, 2018  
Amendment of Other Laws No. 7046, Mar. 28, 2019  
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## Article 1 (Purpose)

The purpose of this Ordinance is to improve the quality of life of the citizens of Seoul and contribute to cultural development by encouraging the right use of the Korean language by the members of the Seoul Metropolitan Government and its affiliated public agencies.

## Article 2 (Definitions)

The terms used in this Ordinance are defined as follows:

1. "Korean language" means the Korean language as the official language of the Republic of Korea;
2. "Hangul" means the native characters of the Republic of Korea for notation in the Korean language;
3. "Norms of language" means norms necessary for the use of the Korean language, established through deliberation by the National Language Deliberation Council under Article 13 of the Framework Act on Korean Language, including the spelling rules of Hangul, and rules on standard language, loanword orthography, and the romanization of the Korean language;
4. "Public agencies" means the head office, subordinate agencies, and business offices of the Seoul Metropolitan Government (hereinafter referred to as the "Metropolitan Government"), and institutions invested or funded by the Seoul Metropolitan Government;
5. "Official documents, etc." means wordings, names, signs, documents (official letters and official notices), books, audio materials, video materials, web-pages (home-pages), Internet information, etc., officially created or produced by public agencies.

## Article 3 (Responsibility of Metropolitan Government)

The Mayor of the Seoul Metropolitan Government (hereinafter referred to as the "Mayor") shall endeavor to show an example in the right use of the Korean language to the citizens of Seoul (hereinafter referred to as "citizens") and preserve and enhance the Korean language by using easy expressions conforming to the norms of language for official documents, etc.

## Article 4 (Relationship with Other Municipal Ordinances)

The provisions of this Ordinance shall take precedence over other municipal ordinances with regard to the use of Korean language.

## Article 5 (Formulation of Master Plans for Development of Korean Language)

- (1) The Mayor shall formulate and implement a master plan for the development of Korean language every five years (hereinafter referred to as "master plan") for the development and preservation of Korean language.
- (2) Each master plan shall provide for the following matters:
  1. Basic direction-setting in policies on the use of the Korean Language and the objectives for implementation of such policies;
  2. Enhancing proficiency of the Metropolitan Government and citizens in the Korean language and improving the environment for the use of the Korean language;
  3. Widely promoting the value of the Korean language and preserving of the Korean language as cultural heritage;
  4. Giving assistance to citizens who have difficulties in the use of language due to a mental or physical disorder and foreigners who reside in Seoul to prevent inconvenience in the use of the Korean language;
  5. Providing educational programs for proper writing in the Korean language to public officials of the Metropolitan Government and citizens;
  6. Encouraging activities of the private sector for the development of the Korean language;
  7. Other matters concerning the development and preservation of the Korean language.
- (3) In order to formulate and implement a master plan, the Mayor may seek advice from corporations and organizations involved with the Korean language or Hangul or may request them to provide cooperation.

## Article 6 (Committee for Proper Writing of Korean Language)

- (1) The Mayor shall establish a committee for proper writing of Korean language (hereinafter referred to as the "Committee") for advice or deliberation on the following matters:

1. Matters concerning formulation of master plans;
2. Matters concerning refinement of administrative terms used in public agencies;
3. Matters concerning names of major government projects implemented by the Metropolitan Government;
4. Other matters concerning the development and preservation of the Korean language.

(2) The Committee may recommend improvements to the Mayor with regard to the matters referred to in paragraph (1), where necessary.

#### **Article 7 (Formation of Committee)**

(1) The Committee shall be composed of up to 15 members, including one chairperson and one vice chairperson, taking into consideration the ratio of female members under Article 14 of the Seoul Metropolitan Government Framework Ordinance on Gender Equality.

(2) The chairperson and vice chairperson of the Committee shall be elected from among members, and members shall be commissioned or appointed by the Mayor, from among the following persons: <Amended by Ordinance No. 6373, Jan. 5, 2017>

1. Representatives of civic organizations (referring to non-profit, non-governmental organizations, as defined under Article 2 of the Assistance for Non-Profit, Non-Governmental Organizations Act) involved with the Korean language or Hangeul or persons recommended by such civic organizations from among those who have performed duties in a civic organization for at least one year;
2. Persons who have served in a university or college as full-time faculty members in a department related to the Korean language or Hangeul;
3. Persons who have served in a position equivalent to or higher than a fellow in a research institute (referring to a research institute defined under Article 2 of the Act on the Establishment, Operation and Fostering of Government-Funded Research Institutes, Etc. or under Article 2 of the Act on the Establishment and Operation of Local Government-Invested Research Institutes) related to the Korean language or Hangeul;
4. Persons who engage in writing in the Korean language;
5. Director-General of the Bureau responsible for public relations;
6. Other persons with abundant knowledge and experience in the Korean language and deemed necessary by the Mayor.

#### **Article 8 (Term of Office of Members)**

The term of office of the members commissioned by the Mayor shall be two years: Provided, That the term of office of the members under Article 7 (2) 5 shall be the period of service in the relevant position and the term of office of a member newly commissioned to fill a vacancy arising from the resignation of a member or any other reason shall be the remaining term of office of his/her predecessor.

[Wholly Amended by Ordinance No. 6373, Jan. 5, 2017]

#### **Article 8-2 (Withdrawal of Commission of Members)**

The Mayor may withdraw the commission of a member even before his/her term of office ends if the member falls under any of the following: <Amended by Ordinance No. 6851, Mar. 22, 2018>

1. Where the member needs long-term medical treatment for a disease;
2. Where the member is unable to conduct his/her duty due to overseas travel exceeding six months;
3. Where the member wishes to be withdrawn by himself/herself;
4. Where the member is deemed unfit to serve as a member on grounds of losing dignity or similar.

[This Article Newly Inserted by Ordinance No. 6373, Jan. 5, 2017]

#### **Article 9 (Duties of Chairperson)**

(1) The chairperson shall represent the Committee and administer all affairs of the Committee.

(2) The vice chairperson shall assist the chairperson and shall act on behalf of the chairperson when the chairperson is unable to perform his/her duties due to unavoidable reasons.

#### **Article 10 (Operation of Committee)**

(1) The Committee shall be operated in accordance with the following: <Amended by Ordinance No. 6373, Jan. 5, 2017>

1. A regular meeting shall be held on a quarterly basis, and a special meeting may be held when the chairperson deems it necessary or at the request of the Mayor;
2. A meeting may be substituted by exchange of correspondence, if inevitable;
3. A meeting shall be convened by the chairperson and duly opened upon the attendance of at least a majority of current members, and a resolution shall be adopted by the concurrent votes of at least one-half of the members present at the meeting.

(2) In order to enhance efficiency in the operation of the Committee, the Committee may organize and operate sub-committees.

#### **Article 11 (Allowances, etc.)**

Members who attend a meeting of the Committee may be paid allowances for attendance and reimbursed for travel expenses, within budgetary limits, in accordance with the Seoul Metropolitan Government Ordinance on the Payment of Committee

Allowances and Travel Expenses.

#### **Article 12 (Execution of Administrative Affairs of Committee)**

The Mayor shall publish the results of deliberation on refinement of administrative terms under Article 6 (1) 2 in the Official Bulletin of the Seoul Metropolitan Government.

#### **Article 13 (Use of Language in Official Documents, etc.)**

(1) Official documents, etc. of a public agency shall be written in Hangeul in accordance with the norms of language under Article 14 of the Framework Act on Korean Language and Article 11 of the Enforcement Decree of the Framework Act on Korean Language: Provided, That Chinese characters or other foreign letters may be added in parentheses to words requiring clarification or unfamiliar words.

(2) Official documents, etc. of a public agency shall be prepared in accordance with the following principles:

1. The Korean language generally used by citizens in daily life shall be used;
2. No vulgar or discriminatory words shall be used;
3. Reckless use of loanwords, foreign languages, or newly-coined phrases shall be avoided.

(3) The Mayor shall endeavor to formulate and implement guidelines necessary to practice the principles prescribed in paragraphs (1) and (2).

#### **Article 14 (Names of Major Government Projects, etc.)**

A major government project implemented by the head office, a subordinate agency, or a business office of the Metropolitan Government shall be named in compliance with the provisions of Article 13 after consultation with the officer in charge of the Korean language.

#### **Article 15 (Wording of Advertisements, etc. in Korean Language)**

(1) Pursuant to Article 12 (2) of the Enforcement Decree of the Act on the Management of Outdoor Advertisements, etc. and Promotion of Outdoor Advertisement Industry, words on an outdoor billboard or a posting facility (hereinafter referred to as "billboard, etc.") shall be written in the Korean language in accordance with the spelling rules of Hangeul and rules of loanword orthography: Provided, That if words are displayed in foreign letters, such words shall be accompanied by corresponding words in the Korean language, unless there is a compelling reasons not to do so. <Amended by Ordinance No. 6373, Jan. 5, 2017>

(2) The Mayor shall endeavor to formulate and implement guidelines necessary to practice the principles prescribed in paragraph (1).

#### **Article 16 (Survey and Evaluation of Actual Conditions)**

(1) The Mayor shall survey and evaluate the actual conditions of the use of the Korean language and Hangeul in official documents, etc. under Article 13 on a yearly basis at the head office, subordinate agencies, business offices, and institutions invested or funded by the Metropolitan Government. <Amended by Ordinance No. 6270, Jul. 14, 2016>

(2) A survey on actual conditions of advertisements, etc. in Hangeul under Article 15 shall be conducted every two years. <Amended by Ordinance No. 6436, Mar. 23, 2017>

(3) The Mayor may entrust a specialized institution with the survey and evaluation of actual conditions under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(4) The Mayor shall publish the results of the survey and evaluation on actual conditions under paragraph (1) and (2) on the website, etc. <Newly Inserted by Ordinance No. 6373, Jan. 5, 2017>

#### **Article 17 (Designation and Duties of Officer in Charge of Korean Language)**

(1) The Mayor shall designate the head of the Bureau responsible for public relations in the head office of the Metropolitan Government or a public official in an equivalent position as the officer in charge of the Korean language, and each subordinate agency, business office, and institution invested or funded by the Metropolitan Government shall appoint the head of the department/division responsible for public relations or an employee in an equivalent position as the assistant officer in charge of the Korean language.

(2) The duties of the officer in charge of the Korean language are as follows:

1. Coordination in affairs concerning the development and preservation of the Korean language;
2. Development and diffusion of terms easy to understand for effectively informing citizens of policies implemented by the Metropolitan Government and encouragement of the use of proper expressions;
3. Formulation and implementation of programs for the improvement of proficiency of public officials of the Metropolitan Government and citizens in the Korean language;
4. Survey and evaluation of actual conditions under Article 16;
5. The duties specified in Article 3 of the Enforcement Decree of the Framework Act on Korean Language and other duties that the Mayor deems necessary for the development and preservation of Korean language.

(3) The officer in charge of the Korean language shall inspect and enforce compliance with Article 14 and may seek advice from the Committee, where necessary.

(4) The duties of an assistance officer in charge of the Korean language shall be as follows:

1. Supervision over general affairs concerning the development and preservation of the Korean language at the relevant agency, office, or institution;
2. Development and diffusion of terms easy to understand for effectively informing citizens of policies implemented by the relevant agency, office, or institution and encouragement of the use of proper expressions;
3. Formulation and implementation of plans to improve the proficiency of public officials of the relevant agency, office, or institution in the Korean language;
4. Other duties of assisting the officer in charge of the Korean language at the relevant agency, office, or institution in connection with the Korean language.

#### **Article 18 (Preservation of Dialect of Native Seoulites and Hangeul Fonts)**

- (1) Pursuant to Article 4 (1) of the Framework Act on Korean Language, the Mayor shall endeavor to preserve and develop the dialect of native Seoulites that symbolizes the historicity and cultural characteristics of Seoul.
- (2) The Mayor may survey actual conditions of the dialect of Seoulites and may publish the results thereof.
- (3) The Mayor shall endeavor to preserve and develop Hangeul fonts.

#### **Article 19 (Hearings)**

The Mayor shall prepare and implement measures to hear opinions from citizens regarding matters necessary for the development and preservation of the Korean language. <Amended by Ordinance No. 6373, Jan. 5, 2017>

#### **Article 20 (Education)**

- (1) The Mayor shall provide educational programs to public officials of the Metropolitan Government and citizens to promote proper use of the Korean language and Hangeul and to improve their proficiency in the Korean language.
- (2) The Mayor shall prepare educational programs for smooth communication in the Korean language of citizens who have difficulties in the use of language due to a mental or physical disorder and foreigners who reside in Seoul. <Amended by Ordinance No. 6373, Jan. 5, 2017>
- (3) The Mayor may entrust a specialized institution with the implementation of educational programs prescribed under paragraphs (1) and (2) and may subsidize such institution for expenses incurred therein, within budgetary limits.

#### **Article 21 (Commendation)**

- (1) The Mayor may issue commendations to public agencies and public officials in connection with the use of language in official documents, etc. under Articles 13 and 16 or for contribution to the development and preservation of the Korean language.
- (2) The Mayor may issue commendations to citizens and organizations for contribution to the development of the Korean language and Hangeul.
- (3) The provisions of the Seoul Metropolitan Government Ordinance on Commendation shall apply to the commendations under paragraphs (1) and (2), and the fields and persons eligible for commendation and other necessary matters shall be determined by the Mayor.

#### **Article 22 (International Exchanges)**

The Mayor shall endeavor for the globalization of Hangeul through international exchanges.

[Newly Inserted by Ordinance No. 6214, May 19, 2016]

#### **Article 23 (Administrative Fines)**

The Mayor may recommend each autonomous Gu to impose administrative fines pursuant to Article 55 of the Act on the Management of Outdoor Advertisements, etc. and Promotion of Outdoor Advertisement Industry.

#### **Article 24 (Municipal Rules)**

Matters necessary for the enforcement of this Ordinance shall be prescribed by municipal rules.