



THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**

ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

# COMMISSION COMMENTS

## Test Center Update

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COVID-19 is affecting every aspect of our lives. One such side effect is that hiring for the City of Columbus has slowed—and

for certain positions, hiring has even been put on hold. Each department has had to make adjustments, and will continue to do so as needed to accommodate changes related to the pandemic.

But, the end is near! With the vaccine becoming more prevalent and restrictions slowly being lifted, we are gradually opening the Test Center so we will have eligible lists ready to go as hiring resumes its normal pace.

When you come for a test, you will notice some changes. The downtown Test Center has 50 stations. Our post-COVID capacity has been reduced to seating a maximum of 22 candidates per session, and candidates are not seated at adjacent stations. Stations

are used once per day. Overnight, each keyboard/mouse is wiped and all stations/chairs are sprayed with a cleaning solution.

Prior to check-in, you will be screened for COVID symptoms, including a temperature check. You will also be required to wear a facemask for the duration of the exam. You may bring your own, or a disposable mask will be provided for you. If you fail to keep the facemask over both your nose and mouth, you will be issued a warning before being asked to leave.

In some cases, your exam may take longer to grade. With the reduced capacity of the Test Center, it will take more sessions than it would have pre-COVID to get everyone tested. We do not begin grading until all sessions have been administered, so if you test during the first session and there are 10 sessions, it might feel like results are taking forever. In addition, for the safety of the graders, once we collect your materials, we set them aside for 24 hours or more, depending on the current guidelines.

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## What to Know While Hiring is Slow



If you visit the *Job Openings* section of our website, you will see that we are still recruiting for some City positions. This is due in part to normal turnover and in part to departments needing additional personnel to assist with COVID-related work adjustments.

In general, from a candidate's perspective, there are two main types of jobs— the type where your application goes straight to a department's human resources (non-competitive) and the type where your application goes to our Test Center (competitive). You can tell the difference on the website because those that go to the Test Center will have the word "EXAM" in the title.

Each type has advantages. A non-competitive job posting is oftentimes either high level, certified by a national board (like a nurse), or a unique skill set. Each department runs their interviewing process (...continued on page 2)

**Success is  
not final;  
failure is not  
fatal.  
It is the  
courage to  
continue that  
counts.**

~ Winston Churchill

**Slow (...continued from Page 1)** slightly differently, and usually there is only one position available at a time. After you submit your application, you should also reach out to the HR person listed on the posting.

A competitive job posting sends your application to the Test Center, where they verify you meet the minimum qualifications. Once they confirm you do, you have to take and pass a test to get your name on an eligible list. While there may only be one immediate vacancy when a Civil Service test is given, Civil Service normally maintains the list for a period of two (2) years. When additional vacancies occur during that time, the department hires directly from the eligible list.

If YOU are interested in employment with the City of Columbus, there are several ways you can get, or stay, involved with the hiring process:

- Explore **current job openings**—your dream job may be waiting!
- Subscribe to a **job alert**—receive notice when your dream job is vacant!
- Explore **Employment Guides and Resources**—check out all those how-to's!
- Explore **Civil Service Exam** webpages—luck favors the prepared!

These and other resources are available on the Civil Service website at [columbus.gov/civilservice/](http://columbus.gov/civilservice/)



## What is a Provisional Hire?

Over the last year, you may have seen postings for jobs that include the term “provisional appointment” instead of competitive; you may have even been hired as one! But what does it mean?

When a competitive job – meaning a job that applicants must pass a test to serve in – has no existing eligible list, candidates may be hired provisionally. An eligible list is made up of candidates who pass the test associated with that job. When departments need to hire someone in that job class, they use the eligible list to fill that vacancy. Due to COVID-19, testing large pools of applicants has been challenging to do in a safe manner, and so some jobs no longer have eligible lists to hire from. When this happens, departments can sometimes appoint someone provisionally, meaning that they meet the minimum qualifications for the job but have not yet had a chance to take the test.

Candidates who serve provisionally will be required to take the test once it is available. As vaccinations continue to increase, our Test Center is beginning to open up for larger and larger examination pools. If you've been appointed provisionally, you may soon be coming in to take the exam for your job class. Candidates who pass the test are able to stay in their position, and become original appointments. Candidates who do not pass the test will be unable to retain their position. When someone is hired provisionally, HR staff should ensure that the candidate knows that their employment is dependent on them eventually passing the exam for their class.

Still confused? You can always reach out to the Applicant and Employee Services team for more information about the provisional appointment process at (614) 645-8301.

## Welcome: Commissioner Lynch

Jen Lynch brings over 20 years of experience in legislative and regulatory affairs, with a focus on energy policy. Lynch has been coordinating successful policy and public affairs strategies at the local, state, and federal levels for years. She currently works for Remington Road Group as Vice President of Communications.

Previously, Lynch served as director of government relations at Roetzel and Andress, a National Law Journal “NLJ 250” law firm. Prior to joining Roetzel and Andress, Lynch served as the policy advisor to former Ohio Governor Ted Strickland.

Lynch also served as legislative director to U.S. Congressman Tim Ryan, serving as his lead policy advisor on domestic issues, including energy, natural resources, agriculture, health care, and education policy. In addition, she also served as the state policy director to President Obama during his 2008 successful campaign in Ohio.

Lynch formerly served on the Ohio Expositions Commission, which manages the Ohio Expo Center and its grounds. She currently sits on the board of New Resource Solutions, a platform developed to efficiently connect clean energy projects with clean energy investors. She is graduate of The Ohio State University with a bachelor's degree in political science.

## Who You Gonna Call?



*The City of Columbus is a large place. Knowing who to call and when can be critical in some instances. Getting to the right place the first time helps ensure concerns are handled appropriately and efficiently. Here are the most common call types received requiring a transfer:*

Call Type	Where to Go	Contact Number
Non-Emergency City Services:	Dept. of Neighborhoods	311 or 614-645-3111
Non-Emergency Police Report:	Columbus Police Dept.	614-645-4545
Off-Hour Water Emergencies:	Division of Water	614-645-7788
Off-Hour Electrical Emergencies:	Division of Power	614-645-7627
Off-Hour Sewer Emergencies:	Sewer Maintenance	614-645-7102

## ??? Ask Eyestein ???

**Dear Eyestein:**

**I keep checking your website to see if you are accepting applications for my dream job! I called your office to see when the next test is scheduled for. Unfortunately, there were no current plans to start accepting applications or test for my dream job in the next few months. I am worried I will miss the application filing period. Do you have any recommendations so I do not miss the application filing period?**

**Signed, Dreamer**

Dear Dreamer:

Yes! On the Commission's website ([columbus.gov/civilservice/](http://columbus.gov/civilservice/)) you can complete a Job Alert request, which is also called a Job Interest Card. This request allows you to receive an email notification each time a position or exam opens up within the City of Columbus for one of the job categories or a specific job in which you expressed interest.

There are two ways to set up a Job Alert request. The first type sends you alerts based on all the job classes within a job category. For example, the category could be Engineering or Law Enforcement. The second type will send you alerts based on a specific job class (i.e., job title) that you are interested in. For example, the job class could be Electrical Engineering Associate or 911 Emergency Call Taker.

**To set up a Job Alert request based on a job category:**

- 1) On the Commission's website, click on the word Job Alerts.
- 2) Place a check in the box next to each job category that you would like to receive notifications for and then click the "Subscribe" button.
- 3) Enter your contact information and click the "Submit" button to complete your Job Alert request.

**To complete a Job Alert request for a specific job class:**

- 1) On the Commission's website, click on the word Job Class Info.
- 2) In the search bar, type in the name of the job you are interested in.

- 3) Once you have located the job class you are interested in, click on the job class title. In the separate screen that pops up, click on the green "Subscribe" button in the right corner.
- 4) Enter your contact information and click the "Submit" button to complete your Job Alert request.

Once completed, your Job Alert request will be active for 12 months. If you change your email address during that 12 month period, you will need to submit a new Job Alert request to ensure you are notified.



**Dear Eyestein:**

**I applied for a job that says I have to have a college degree. But, I owe my school money, so they won't give me a transcript or a diploma. I have something called an "advising report," will that work?**

**Signed,**

**Educated But Can't Prove It**

Dear Educated:

We require a copy of official documentation of education, which is a transcript or a diploma. In some extraneous circumstances, we can accept an official statement from a university, confirming completion of all degree requirements. Advising reports typically have "this is not a transcript" in bold along the top. Advising reports can differ from final transcripts, and we rely on an individual institution's processes to determine when they are ready/able to certify your education. While it is definitely a frustrating situation and we sympathize with your plight, it is not up to us when a college or university is willing to provide you with a degree with their name on it.

A similar situation occurs when one of our jobs requires a drivers' license. A person may owe the BMV fines and fees that prevent them from having a valid license. Even though that person knows how to drive, it is not up to us when the BMV is ready to issue the license.

## How is Civil Service Organized?

The Civil Service Commission is comprised of the Administrative, Applicant & Employee Services, Classification, Non-Uniformed Testing, and Uniformed Testing units. As a collective, these five units carry out hiring for all City of Columbus employees.

**Administrative** prepares and manages the budget for the Commission staff, oversees the background process and certification for police and fire candidates, and conducts disciplinary, investigative and residency hearings.

**Applicant & Employee Services** posts and accepts applications for vacancies and exams, handles all hiring paperwork and certifies non-safety eligible lists.

**Classification** certifies payroll, maintains employee personnel files, creates or modifies job classification

specifications to accurately reflect associated job responsibilities and conducts position audits to verify performed job duties are consistent with the job class.

**Non-Uniformed Testing**

conducts job analyses, develops and administers exams for all jobs with the City of Columbus that are classified as competitive except for uniformed police and fire positions.

**Uniformed Testing** conducts job analyses, develops and administers exams for all uniformed entry-level and promotional positions within the Division of Police and Fire that are tested.





**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

**Main Office and Test Center**

77 North Front Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-1895  
614-645-8300  
CivilService@columbus.gov  
TestCenter@columbus.gov  
Fax: 614-645-8379

**Uniformed Test Center**

1111 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43205  
614-645-0848  
PoliceFireTesting@columbus.gov

[columbus.gov/civilservice](http://columbus.gov/civilservice)  
[cscfeedback@columbus.gov](mailto:cscfeedback@columbus.gov)

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## Meet the Staff: Chelsea Whims



Originally from small towns south of Akron, Ohio, Chelsea and her husband, James, moved to Columbus three years ago. Columbus is 75 times larger than Chelsea's hometown of Norton and 300 times larger than James' hometown of Doylestown! Chelsea and James eloped last year in the Outer Banks.

Chelsea began working with the Civil Service Commission (CSC) in August 2018 as a Personnel Analyst with the CSC first in a part-time role, and then she accepted a full-time position later that year. Chelsea works with the uniformed testing team, developing and administering tests for the police and fire promotional ranks. When asked what she likes best about her job, Chelsea responded, "My co-workers, working with police and fire personnel, and getting to make a difference. Coming from a small town, it is nice to have opportunities here to make a difference."

When she isn't working, Chelsea loves to spend time with her three nephews (Reed 10, Tucker 8, Henry 5), bake, and watch baseball. Chelsea has a tradition where she makes her nephews' birthday cakes, whatever the request. She has made cakes with the themes of Minions, puppy, Minecraft, and so many more! Some years the birthday cake requests have even come with a draft drawing from her nephews months in advance.

Chelsea also enjoys playing with her 65 pound Great Pyrenees puppy, Vivi! She is one-year-old and always keeps them on their toes! The picture included of Vivi is her 2020 "Back to Daycare" photo, "Donut Grow-up to Soon."

Chelsea is also a member of the Cuyahoga Portage Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) for ten years. She currently sits on the board of the Cuyahoga Portage Chapter DAR as the Historian and has held this position for seven years. Chelsea has been the past Senior Historian Officer for Anner Maria Hudson Society Children of the American Revolution (CAR) for four years.



## WHERE IS IT?

See if you recognize the location in our title banner on the first page and email your guess to [CEEmhuff@columbus.gov](mailto:CEEmhuff@columbus.gov)

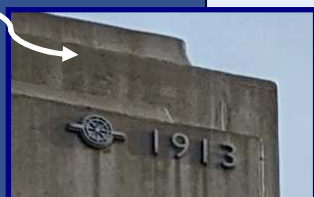
We will print the answer and the names of the first five correct responses in our next issue.

### LAST QUARTER'S ANSWER:

**Flood Marker along Scioto River  
near West Broad Bridge**

Zoomed in

Since we only received one correct answer, from Jason Rollison of Power & Water, check out the photos we found of the 1913 flood, pulled from Wikipedia and [columbusunderground.com](http://columbusunderground.com)



Columbus, Ohio.  
Flood of Mar. 1913.



The added red line is the indicated "high water mark"



"In the main path of the flood"



W. Town Street