

THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**

ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

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CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

**2021 Annual Report**

*The Municipal Civil Service Commission of Columbus, Ohio*

*77 North Front Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215  
[www.columbus.gov/civilservice](http://www.columbus.gov/civilservice)*

## **MISSION**

The Civil Service Commission is committed to providing a quality workforce for the City of Columbus based upon merit system principles. Through our collective knowledge and experience, we strive for efficiency and consistency in the application of the Commission's Rules and Policies. We are dedicated to improving the services we provide by anticipating employment trends, by listening to the needs of the operating agencies, and by responding accordingly.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Civil Service Commission is the primary contact point for candidates seeking employment with the City of Columbus. The Commission acts as the gateway, assessing applicant qualifications for 90 percent of all City jobs. Through the online Employment Center and applicant testing, the Commission ensures the individuals who ultimately comprise the City's workforce of approximately 8,000 full-time employees, are of the highest caliber capable of providing exceptional service to the citizens of Columbus.

Together with its Civil Service Commissioners, the Civil Service Commission is responsible for upholding and administering all mandated provisions of the Columbus City Charter, including, but not limited to, the administration of the City's class plan, verifying personnel actions and certifying City payroll, and serving as a neutral hearing body for employee appeals regarding suspension or discharge actions by an appointing authority. As required by the Ohio Revised Code, the Commission also provides class plan maintenance, personnel actions oversight, and appeal hearing services for all classified employees of the Columbus City Schools.

## **CLASS PLAN MAINTENANCE**

The Civil Service Commission is responsible for maintaining the City's class plan, which provides a structural framework for all personnel actions and provides the basis for an equitable compensation plan. Regular class plan reviews and revisions are necessary to ensure each class specification continues to meet the ever-changing needs of each department. For this reason, an important Commission objective is to review every classification at least once every five years. At the close of 2021, 100 percent of the City's class plan was up-to-date. As part of this objective, staff completed a total of 136 class reviews with recommendations approved by the Commission in 2021.

The 136 reviews resulted in:

- 8 actions to create new classification specifications
- 2 action to abolish classifications
- 29 actions to review without change
- 93 actions to revise and/or retitle
- 4 action to lift or impose moratorium

Additionally, 84 positions were randomly reviewed to determine if their duties matched their current classification; of these, 83 positions (99%) of these positions were properly classified.

The Commission also conducts job audits upon request by an individual, a department, or a union. The purpose of these audits is to ensure that City employees are performing the duties for which they were hired, qualified, and being properly compensated. During 2021, Commission staff completed a total four position audits; one of those positions was identified as misclassified. Misclassifications are typically resolved through reassignment of duties to the position which are appropriate for the current class, or reallocation of the position to a different class for which the current duties best fit.

## **APPLICANT AND EMPLOYEE SERVICES**

In order to ensure that specific positions under each of the job classes in the class plan can be filled in a timely fashion with qualified employees, the City's Charter has designated primarily two classification types: noncompetitive and competitive. Noncompetitive classes are either non-skilled positions or those with qualifications that have a license or other conditions that must be met by an external source, such as a Registered Nurse, and for which it is impracticable to test. Competitive classes are those which require a broader set of

minimum qualifications and a variety of job-specific knowledge, skills, and abilities, such as an Office Assistant and for which testing is practical.

To identify an initial pool of candidates for City employment, the Commission uses its online Employment Center database. The Center includes a wealth of information about jobs with the City, including: current vacancies, exam opportunities, job descriptions, qualification requirements, and salary information. Additionally, the Center houses an automated job interest database and the convenience of submitting applications on-line. This service can be utilized via the Commission's website from any computer with web access or at kiosks located at the Commission's downtown offices at 77 N. Front Street on floors one and three. A potential applicant can indicate interest in multiple jobs and will automatically receive an email notice to apply when the City is taking applications for a given job.

The Applicant and Employee Services Unit is responsible for the notification and application process for the City's noncompetitive, provisional, and unclassified jobs.

In 2021, the Applicant and Employee Services Unit:

- received 9894 Job Interest Cards submitted electronically for all City jobs
- posted 754 noncompetitive/provisional/unclassified job vacancies
- received 21,613 online applications for noncompetitive/provisional/unclassified job postings

## **NON-UNIFORMED TESTING**

The Commission's Non-Uniformed Testing Unit administers exams to further determine candidates' suitability for the work which will be performed in all tested (competitive and qualifying noncompetitive) job classes, other than the Police and Fire sworn jobs. Exams open for testing are advertised (posted) on the Commission's website. Individuals interested in taking the exam can submit an application and then be invited to the test if it's determined they meet the minimum qualifications (education/experience/licensure) for the exam. Those passing the test have their names put on an eligible list, in score band order (or alphabetically for qualifying noncompetitive lists), for consideration for any upcoming vacancies a department may have.

If, after an eligible list is established through open recruitment, a City department has special recruiting needs for a position, they may request a candidate be considered and tested for a job class under provisions of CSC Rule VI. If the candidate meets all requirements and passes the test, their name is added to the existing eligible list in accordance with the established scoring structure and effective dates for the list.

In 2021, the Non-Uniformed Testing Unit:

- received 187 exam recruitment requests from departments (106 regular recruitments and 81 Rule VI)
- reviewed 7502 exam applications
- tested 2499 candidates
- received 49 Columbus City School requests for examinations
- tested and graded 636 Columbus City Schools candidates

The Commission is committed to having a current exam in place and ready to be administered for each of the 237 non-uniformed competitive and qualifying noncompetitive classifications in the City and to establishing an eligible list within 60 days from the date a test is requested by a department. The exams are directly based on the work performed by current employees in the job class and are comprised of varying combinations of components, called subtests. Some of the most common subtests include: computer skills, information ordering, logic and reasoning, mathematics, memorization, name/number comparison, oral communication, oral comprehension, problem sensitivity, reading maps/plans, written communication, reading comprehension, written expression, and situational judgement tests.

To keep tests current, our goal for 2021 was to complete a full job analysis and to review, revise, and/or develop the exam for 34 non-uniformed competitive and qualifying noncompetitive classifications. These reviews and revisions included consideration of methods to reduce adverse impact on minority candidates. For the year, we were able to complete all 34 projects scheduled for the City. Four job analysis/exam creation projects were also completed for Columbus City Schools. In addition to the class exam reviews, most requested exam administrations were opened, administered, and an eligible list created within the 60 day benchmark for such work. Twenty-four additional

recruitment requests were received and opened for filing, but could not be fit into the testing calendar until early 2022.

Commission Rules also allow latitude for City departments to hire personnel provisionally when there is a critical need to immediately fill a position but there is no eligible list in place. In order to ensure fair access to City jobs, the Commission is committed to maintaining a provisional employee count below two percent of the total number of full-time classified City employees. The City began 2021 with 11 full-time provisional employees, due to the pandemic and our inability to test in 2020. With testing back up and running, as of 12/31/2021, there were no active full-time provisionals.

**UNIFORMED TESTING**

The Civil Service Commission’s Uniformed Testing Unit administers exams for nine job classes that make up the Public Safety services for the City of Columbus. The majority of the examinations are comprised of at least three components, including a paper test, an oral response, and a physical assessment or tactical exercise. The Uniformed Testing Unit works closely with the IAFF and the FOP to ensure fairness and consistency in the testing processes of promotional exams. The following exams were administered in 2020 with resulting eligible lists established in 2021: Fire Battalion Chief and Fire Deputy Chief. The next group of exams were administered in 2021 with the resulting eligible lists established in 2021: Fire Lieutenant, Fire Captain and Police Sergeant. Additionally, the Police Officer exam was administered through Rule VI testing efforts with successful candidates being added to the existing 2020 Police Officer eligible list. Each of these exams was developed, administered, and validated by Civil Service Commission staff.

**Entry-Level Testing**

In 2021, Police Officer testing was limited to Rule VI testing. In total 770 candidates applied for the Police Officer Rule VI testing and as a result of these exams and additional opportunities to take the physical portion of the exam, 196 candidates were added to the 2020 Police Officer Eligible List. Prequalifying testing for Police Officer and Firefighter also occurred in 2021. The prequalifying testing allowed individuals to take the written portions of the exam before the regular administration of these exams. For Police Officer, 145 applications were received and 54 candidates took and passed the written portions of the exam and are ready for the final phase of the exam which will be administered in 2022. For Firefighter, 754 applications were received and 288 candidates took and passed the written portions of these exams and are ready for the final phases of the exam which will be administered in 2022.

**Promotional Testing**

	<b>Number of Exam Phases</b>	<b>Number of Applicants</b>	<b>Number of Candidates Tested</b>	<b>Number of Candidates Added to Eligible List</b>
Fire Battalion Chief	3	22	17	13
Fire Deputy Chief	1	11	3	2
Fire Lieutenant	3	214	147	90
Fire Captain	3	73	47	34
Police Sergeant	4	150	107	75

**Police Officer Selection Process Audit**

In accordance with Recommendation #13 of the Columbus Community Safety Advisory Commission (CCSAC) Recommendations, the Civil Service Commission was tasked with overseeing an independent audit of the Columbus Police Officer recruiting/testing process, with the audit findings to be included in the next annual report following the release of the audit findings.

Winfred Arthur, Jr., Ph.D. was identified as an accomplished professional in this niche area and selected to conduct the audit. Dr. Arthur’s 257 page final audit report was issued in November 2021 summarizing his observations and recommendations for improvement. In total, 38 recommendations covering: Recruitment, Early Application, CSC Testing (Written, COPE, Physical Test), Background Investigation, Background Interview, Applicant File Review, Oral Review Board, Conditional Offer, Post-offer Polygraph, Medical Exam, and Psychological Testing were presented. Recommendations are currently being reviewed with associated stakeholders, with the goal of having “accepted” recommendations in place for 2022 Police Officer selection process.

## PAYROLL AND PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Another City Charter responsibility conferred upon the Commission is the monitoring and certification of the entire bi-weekly City payroll. This means that no City employee can be paid until the Commission certifies that the individual was hired and continues to be employed in accordance with the City Charter, Civil Service Commission Rules, and current collective bargaining agreements/pay ordinances. The monitoring process includes verifying personnel transactions such as appointments, changes in pay, leaves of absences, and political activity.

## COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS

In addition to services provided to the City of Columbus and its employees, the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) provides that the Commission also oversees various administrative personnel functions for approximately 2,587 employees in the classified service of the Columbus Board of Education (Board). In accordance with the ORC and an agreement executed by both the Commission and the Board, services provided by Commission staff for the various administrative personnel functions are billed to the Board. The Commission will make such services available to the Board as long as Board funding is available for reimbursement of Commission costs for the services.

As of January 1, 2021 there were 126 classification specifications in the Columbus City Schools' class plan. During the year, staff completed a total of 6 class reviews with recommendations approved by the Commission.

The 6 reviews resulted in:

- 5 actions to create new classification specifications
- 1 actions to abolish classifications
- 0 actions to review without change
- 0 action to place a moratorium
- 0 actions to merge, revise and/or retitle

These actions resulted in the district's class plan totaling 130 classifications as of December 31, 2021.

Additionally Civil Service Commission received 4 position audit requests from Columbus City Schools in 2021. One was determined to be misclassified and 1 was determined to be properly classified. 2 other requests were later cancelled by the employee initially requesting the position audit.

In 2021, Columbus City Schools utilized the Commission's downtown test center for 12 days of testing, and the Hearing Room for three days for trial board hearings. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, one virtual trial board was held via WebEx.

## CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

The City Charter provides that the Mayor, with the approval of City Council, appoint the three Civil Service Commissioners:

<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>Date Appointed</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>
Grady L Pettigrew	April 18, 2000	February 1, 2024
Larry Price	September 20, 2020	January 31, 2026
Jennifer Lynch	January 1, 2021	January 31, 2022

The Commissioners have the responsibility to establish the Rules that govern the selection, classification, promotion, and termination of the classified employees of the City of Columbus and the Columbus City Schools. During 2021, the Commissioners ruled on applicant appeals, heard employee disciplinary appeals, amended Commission Rules and Regulations, and responded to personnel requests from department directors, elected City Officials, and the School Board.

Throughout 2021, the Commission:

- held 12 regular meetings
- held 1 special meeting
- held 3 trial board disciplinary appeal hearings

- held 1 full commission hearing

The Commission’s 2021 docket included:

- 8 disciplinary appeals filed by employees/unions
- 5 non-disciplinary appeals filed by employees/unions
- 3 appeals withdrawn
- 3 disciplinary appeal rulings
- 1 full commission disciplinary appeal rulings
- 5 non-disciplinary appeal rulings (all dismissed)
- 74 requests for background administrative reviews by applicants
- 73 background administrative review rulings

## EXPENDITURES

<b>Summary - Expenditures by Unit</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Administration	\$2,434,435	\$2,334,973
Classification & Testing-Sworn Employees	966,840	1,193,213
Classification & Testing-Civilian Employees	529,023	597,350
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$3,930,298</b>	<b>4,125,536</b>

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT STATEMENT REGARDING DIVERSITY

Mayor Ginther established an Equity Agenda in order to identify key objectives he and the City organization are committed to obtaining under his leadership. Those objectives covered such things as reducing infant mortality in our Black communities, ensuring access to pre-kindergarten and affordable housing, and fostering a culture of inclusion to ensure our workforce and suppliers reflect the rich diversity of Columbus.

The Commission’s part in helping to advance the Equity Agenda centers around committing to fostering a culture of inclusion in order to ensure the City’s workforce reflects the rich diversity of Columbus. Our efforts toward this end have focused primarily on implementation of six (6) recommendations identified in the report published by the Columbus Community Safety Advisory Commission Report in 2020.

The six recommendations were:

- **Recommendation 12:** CSC contracted with an outside consulting group to conduct a Cultural Sensitivity Review of the Police Officer Test materials. This review was completed in 2020 and CSC implemented the recommendations in 2021.
- **Recommendation 13:** CSC contracted with Winfred Arthur, Jr., Ph.D. to conduct an audit of the police officer selection process. CSC facilitated the contacts and materials needed for the consultant to conduct the review. This audit was completed and a final report was published in November of 2021.
- **Recommendations 14 & 15:** CSC researched and validated the means and methods to consider additional points added to test scores for cadets and for additional languages. CSC finalized both processes, but will only pilot language points for the 2022 Police Officer testing.
- **Recommendation 16:** CSC will continue to partner with the Department of Human Resources to provide Cultural Competency Training for Situational Response Assessment (formerly COPE) evaluators. This effort was completed during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2020 and will be completed with the 2022 SRA evaluators.
- **Recommendation 17:** CSC will maintain trained Community Evaluators on SRA.

In addition to work associated with the aforementioned recommendations, in 2021 the Commission completed a full-review of the Police Officer and Firefighter Background Standards, as well as continued to have pre-qualification tests for both Police Officer and Firefighter exams to ensure accessible and equitable selection of our safety forces.

Furthermore, we implemented an expanded review of our non-uniformed tests for adverse impact and cultural bias to ensure these assessment tools, like our entry-level safety tests, are barrier free, resulting in a fair, equitable, and accessible selection process for City jobs!