



ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

2025 Annual Report

The Municipal Civil Service Commission of Columbus, Ohio

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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 8,800 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 action 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 2025, 100 percent of the City's class plan was up-to-date. As part of this objective, staff completed a total of 188 class reviews with recommendations approved by the Commission in 2025.

The 188 reviews resulted in:

- 13 actions to create new classification specifications
- 8 actions to abolish classifications
- 30 actions to review without change
- 135 actions to revise, merge/revise, and/or retitle
- 2 actions to lift or impose moratorium

Additionally, 94 positions were randomly reviewed to determine if their duties matched their current classification; of these, 94 positions (100%) 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 2025, Commission staff completed a total of six position audits; none of these positions were 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 on the first floor at the Commission's downtown offices at 77 N. Front Street. 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 2025, the Applicant and Employee Services Unit:

- received 12,412 Job Interest Cards submitted electronically for all City jobs
- posted 592 noncompetitive/provisional/unclassified job vacancies
- received 27,042 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 order (or alphabetically for qualifying noncompetitive lists), for consideration for any upcoming department vacancies.

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 2025, the Non-Uniformed Testing Unit:

- received and processed 94 exam recruitment requests
- reviewed 12,005 exam applications
- tested 3276 candidates
- received and processed 56 Rule VI requests for 71 applicants

The Commission is committed to having a current exam in place and ready to be administered for each of the 220 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.

A full job analysis to review, revise, and/or develop an exam was completed for 26 non-uniformed competitive and qualifying noncompetitive classifications. These reviews and revisions included consideration of methods to reduce adverse impact on minority candidates. The non-uniformed testing team also offered weekend testing, evening testing, and open testing for the 911 Emergency Call Taker examination, providing more options to candidates.

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 and ended 2025 with no provisional employees.

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. Exams are administered for both entry-level and promotional job classes. 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 to ensure fairness and consistency in the testing processes for all uniformed exams.

Promotional Testing

Fire Battalion Chief was tested in 2024, and the resulting eligible list was established in 2025. Fire Lieutenant, Fire Captain, and Police Sergeant were administered in 2025, and the resulting eligible lists were established in 2025. Each of these exams were developed, administered, and validated by Civil Service Commission staff.

	Number of Exam Phases	Number of Applicants	Number Tested (first phase)	Number Added to Eligible List
Fire Battalion Chief	3	20	15	12
Fire Lieutenant	3	228	168	74
Fire Captain	3	65	48	26
Police Sergeant	3	144	99	80

Entry-Level Testing

Police Officer was tested monthly in 2025, and names were added the eligible list multiple times throughout the year. The Police Officer exam consists of two phases: a written and an oral. Applicants who possess a law enforcement certification may bypass the exam phases by applying through the certified lateral transfer process.

For the Police Officer recruitments used to fill academy classes for the year 2025, 4005 individuals applied, 1763 were tested, and 965 were placed on the Police Officer eligible list. These numbers include those who applied and were placed on the eligible list as part of the certified lateral 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.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

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

Commissioner	Date Appointed	Term Expiration
Larry Price	September 20, 2020	January 31, 2026
Mark Hatch	January 1, 2021	January 31, 2028
Dawn Tyler Lee	April 25, 2022	January 31, 2030

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 2025, 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 2025, the Commission:

- held 12 regular meetings
- held 1 special meeting
- held 10 trial board disciplinary appeal hearings
- held 0 full commission hearing

The Commission's 2025 docket included:

- 5 disciplinary appeals filed by employees/unions
- 0 disciplinary appeal rulings
- 7 non-disciplinary appeals filed by employees/unions
- 5 appeals withdrawn
- 0 full commission disciplinary appeal rulings
- 58 requests for background administrative reviews by applicants
- 58 background administrative review rulings

EXPENDITURES

Summary - Expenditures by Unit	2025	2026 - Budget
Administration	\$2,982,249.	\$1,744,960
Applicant & Current Employee Services	(part of Administration for 2025)	\$341,856
Safety Forces Testing & Certification	\$2,126,825	\$2,822,134
Non-Uniformed Testing	\$752,254	\$804,929
Jobs Management	(part of Administration for 2025)	\$939,930
Total Expenditures	\$5,861,328	\$6,653,809