



PUBLIC SAFETY CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

EMPLOYEE ELECTIONS BACKGROUNDER

2023

The purpose of this backgrounder is to provide information about the employee election process for the public safety civil service commissioner.

Civil service systems protect public employees and provide value to taxpayers by ensuring that City employment is merit-based. The City has two civil service systems: one for public safety employees (most ranks of police officers and firefighters), and another for non-public safety employees.

Each civil service system is governed by three commissioners: one appointed by the Mayor, one appointed by City Council, and one who is elected by covered City employees.

Public Safety Civil Service Commission ("PSCSC") general information:

1. What does the PSCSC do?

The PSCSC

- Makes and enforces rules for examination, appointments, promotions, discipline, and other employment-related matters, in accordance with applicable law and collective bargaining agreements;
- Oversees development and administration of entry-level and promotional civil service exams for the Seattle Fire and Police departments;
- Hears employees appeals of serious disciplinary decisions; and
- Jointly with the CSC, the commissioners supervise the Civil Service Commissions Executive Director.

2. Who is covered by the PSCSC?

"Sworn" police officers and uniformed firefighters in the following ranks are covered by the PSCSC:

- Police Recruits and Special Recruits
- Police Officers
- Police Sergeants

- Police Lieutenants
- Police Captains
- Fire Fighters and Pre-Recruits
- Fire Lieutenants
- Fire Captains
- Fire Battalion Chiefs
- Fireboat Pilots
- Fireboat Engineers

Some civil service rights are dependent on passing a probationary period, but PSCSC members may vote to elect a commissioner regardless of probationary status.

The office of PSCSC Commissioner:

3. What qualities and skills are important for commissioners to have?

- Ability to be neutral when making decision that impact City employees;
- Ability to put aside personal opinions and apply [Public Safety Civil Service rules](#), etc.;
- Ability to work collaboratively with people from different backgrounds and perspectives;
- Willingness to learn about and implement City RSJI and anti-racist practices;
- Availability to participate in several trainings and workshops per year including Open Public Meetings Act training, and a joint retreat with both commissions; and
- Willingness to collaborate with Commission staff.

4. Is the position paid?

Yes, commissioners are paid a \$200 stipend each pay period.

5. What is the length of the term?

Three years, beginning on January 1, 2024. Commissioners may be elected to serve multiple terms.

6. What is the time commitment?

Commissioners meet monthly, for one to two hours. Commissioners also preside over disciplinary appeal hearings, which may last several hours to several days, on an as-needed basis. Monthly meetings and appeals are scheduled during business hours (8 am – 5 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays).

7. What support is available for commissioners to fulfill their duties?

Staff is available to help support the commission, and the City Attorney's Office provides legal advice as needed.

Employee elections:

8. What is the election timeline?

Candidate and Election Information Sessions will be held with remote and hybrid options for employees wanting to learn more about the election. Email publicsafety@seattle.gov or call (206)586-1991 to obtain a link and further information.

- September 13 at 9:00 a.m. (remote)
- September 18 at 6:00 p.m. (remote)
- September 21 at 12:00 noon (hybrid, SMT Room 1679)

Candidate filing: October 2 – 6

Employee voting: November 6 - 13

9. How are election processes managed?

The City Clerk oversees the election process for the employee-elected PSCSC commissioner. Election Rules may be found [here](#). Employees who are engaging in the election process (as candidates or voters) are expected to use City time for such activities as reasonable.

10. How do employees submit their filing for candidacy?

The declaration of candidacy form is available in the Office of the City Clerk during the candidacy declaration week, October 2 - 6, 2023. Candidates are allowed to provide a written statement and photograph for inclusion in the voters' pamphlet.

The deadline for filing candidacy and providing a statement and / or photograph, or withdraw candidacy is October 6, 2023, 5:00 p.m.

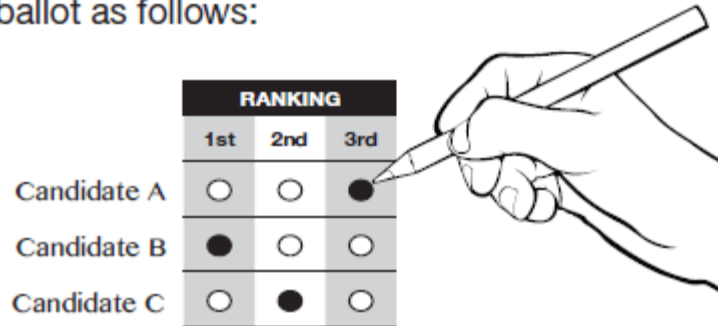
11. How do employees vote?

Employees will receive instructions for voting, which may be done via paper ballot (mail) or electronically (online).

12. How are votes tabulated?

Votes will be tabulated using ranked choice voting (sometimes known as preferential voting or instant runoff voting), in which voters rank the candidates in the order of the voter's preference.

EXAMPLE: To vote for Candidate B as a first choice, Candidate C as a second choice and Candidate A as your third choice, fill out your ballot as follows:



Additional resources:

13. Where can I find more information?

PSCSC/CIV Department -

- See the PSCSC website [for additional election news](#) and for links to attend information sessions, or [more information generally](#) about the PSCSC.
- Call or email Sarah Butler at (206)586-1991 / sarah.butler@seattle.gov for additional questions about the PSCSC.

City Clerk's Office -

- See the Clerk's [Employee Elections website](#) for a link to election Rules and for additional materials related to declaring candidacy and voting in the PSCSC election.
- Call or email Janet Polata at (206) 386-4087 / janet.polata@seattle.gov for additional questions about administration of the PSCSC election.