



## CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

### EMPLOYEE ELECTIONS BACKGROUNDER

### 2023

*The purpose of this backgrounder is to provide information about the employee election process for the non-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 (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.

#### Civil Service Commission ("CSC") general information:

##### **1. What does the CSC do?**

The CSC

- Conducts hearings on disciplinary and other employment-related appeals filed by non-public safety CSC civil service covered employees ,
- Investigates allegations of political patronage in hiring,
- Advises on the administration of the City's personnel system, and
- Jointly with the PSCSC, the commission supervises the Civil Service Commissions Executive Director.

##### **2. Who is covered by the CSC?**

Most City positions are covered by the civil service system, but City Charter and Ordinance make some exceptions. Some civil service rights are dependent on passing a probationary period, but CSC members may vote to elect a commissioner regardless of probationary status.

Elected officials, department heads, assistant City Attorneys, executives, temporary employees, and Seattle Public Library employees are always exempt from the civil service

system. Certain other positions are exempted on a case-by-case basis, [as authorized by Ordinance](#).

Police officers and firefighters belong to a separate public safety civil service system.

Contact your HR representative or call (206)586-1991 to confirm your civil service status.

The office of CSC 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 [Civil Service Rules](#), [Personnel 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 stipend of \$200 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 [civilservice@seattle.gov](mailto:civilservice@seattle.gov) or call (206)586-1991 to obtain a link and further information.

- September 14 at 8:30 a.m. (remote)
- September 18 at 1:00 p.m. (hybrid, SMT Room 1679)
- September 20 at 6:00 p.m. (remote)

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 civil service 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.

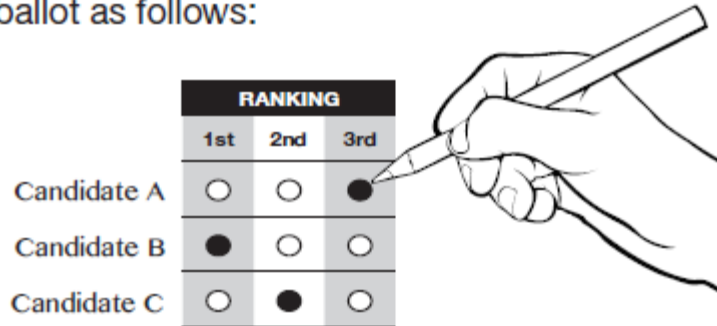
### **11. How do employees vote?**

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?

CSC/CIV Department -

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

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 CSC election.
- Call or email Janet Polata at (206) 386-4087 / [janet.polata@seattle.gov](mailto:janet.polata@seattle.gov) for additional questions about administration of the CSC election.