

# Commonly asked questions about the Civil Service Commissions and Civil Service Commission Employee Elections / October 2020

## About the Commissions and the role of commissioners:

- What do the Commissions do?
  - The Civil Service Commission (CSC) is a three-member, impartial, quasi-judicial body. The CSC hears appeals involving disciplinary actions and alleged violations of the City Charter, Personnel Rules and the Personnel Ordinance. The Mayor and the City Council each appoint a member to the Commission and the City's Civil Service employees elect a third member.
  - Seattle's Public Safety Civil Service Commission (PSCSC) is a three-member, impartial, quasi-judicial body. The PSCSC hears appeals by sworn police and uniformed fire employees involving disciplinary actions, examination and testing, and alleged violations of the City Charter and Public Safety Civil Service Ordinance. The Mayor and the City Council each appoint a member to Commission and City's Civil Service employees elect a member.
- What qualities/skills are important for a commissioner 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 all 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, Fire and Police Exams 101, Civil Service Conference, and joint retreat with both commissions (1-2x/year)
  - Willingness to collaborate with Commission staff (2 FTEs, Executive Director and Administrative Staff Assistant)
- Is the employee-elected commissioner a paid position?
  - Yes, \$200/ pay period
- What is the length of the term?
  - 3 years, to begin on January 1
- What is the time commitment?
  - Monthly meeting, and special meetings as needed. Meetings last 1-2 hours.
  - As part of their quasi-judiciary role, commissioners preside over disciplinary appeal hearings. Appeal hearing are scheduled between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday-Friday on an as-needed basis.
  - Disciplinary hearings may take several hours up to several days.
- What support is available to commissioners to fulfill their duties?
  - Commission staff are available to assist and support both Commissions
  - Legal advice (if needed) is provided by the City Attorney's Office
- Where can I find more information about the commissions?
  - <https://www.seattle.gov/civil-service-commission>
  - <https://www.seattle.gov/public-safety-civil-service-commission>

## About the employee elections

- Who can vote in these elections?
  - Civil Service Commission: All regular and probationary employees of the City whose job positions are covered by the civil service system are eligible to vote in the Civil Service Commissioner elections. Elected officials, department heads, temporary employees and all other employees whose job positions are not part of the civil service system are not eligible to vote. Certain sworn public safety employees are covered by the Public Safety Civil Service system which has separate election rules
  - Public Safety Civil Service Commission: All regular and probationary Police Officers, Recruits, Special Recruits, Lieutenants, Sergeants, and Captains; and Fire Fighters, Pre-recruits, Lieutenants, Captains, Battalion Chiefs, Fireboat Pilots, and Fireboat Engineers, and other sworn public safety employees whose job positions are covered by Seattle's public safety civil service system, are eligible to vote in the PSCSC Commissioner elections. Certain non-sworn public safety employees are covered by the city's regular civil service system (see above)
- What is the timeline for this year's elections?
  - Employees interested in running for one of the employee-elected commission seats should file their Notice of Candidacy with the Office of the City Clerk during the week of 11/9. The deadline for filing is 5 p.m. on Friday 11/13.
  - Ballots and voting information will be mailed to eligible employees on December 4<sup>th</sup>
  - The election itself will take place the week of December 14
- Will employees be able to vote online?
  - Yes – the election materials mailed on December 4 will include instructions for voting online
  - Employees will still be able to choose to mail in paper ballots
- Can I e-mail my Notice of Candidacy to the Office of the City Clerk?
  - Yes – given the circumstances of this unusual year, employees may e-mail a scan of their notarized Notice of Candidacy to [janet.polata@seattle.gov](mailto:janet.polata@seattle.gov). Please also mail the form to the City Clerk's Office so that we will have the original signature for our records
- Can I drop off my Notice of Candidacy at the Office of the City Clerk during filing week?
  - Yes—City Hall is temporarily closed to the public, but we will have staff on site during filing week to accept Notices of Candidacy. Please e-mail [janet.polata@seattle.gov](mailto:janet.polata@seattle.gov) or call 206-386-4087 to arrange to drop off your Notice of Candidacy
  - Please note, however, that our office will be closed on Wednesday, November 11, in observance of the Veterans Day City holiday
- Where can I find more information about the election process?
  - <http://clerk.seattle.gov/public/clerk/civil-service-elections/>