

THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS

ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

2020 Annual Report

The Municipal Civil Service Commission of Columbus, Ohio

77 North Front Street, 3rd Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215
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 8,100 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 2020, 100 percent of the City's class plan was up-to-date. As part of this objective, staff completed a total of 139 class reviews with recommendations approved by the Commission in 2020.

The 139 reviews resulted in:

- 4 actions to create new classification specifications
- 0 action to abolish classifications
- 51 actions to review without change
- 83 actions to revise and/or retitle
- 1 action to impose moratorium

Additionally, 85 positions were randomly reviewed to determine if their duties matched their current classification; of these, 84 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 2020, Commission staff completed a total six position audits; three of those 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 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 2020, the Applicant and Employee Services Unit:

- received 12,634 Job Interest Cards submitted electronically for all City jobs
- posted 416 noncompetitive/provisional/unclassified job vacancies
- received 19,546 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 2020, the Non-Uniformed Testing Unit:

- received 76 exam recruitment requests from departments (37 regular recruitments and 39 Rule VI)
- reviewed 535 exam applications
- tested 905 candidates (866 regular and 39 Rule VI)
- cancelled 13 recruitments (1706 approved candidates) due to the COVID-19 pandemic/Stay at Home Order
- received 17 Columbus City School requests for examinations
- tested and graded 186 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. 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, and written expression.

To keep tests current, our goal for 2020 was to complete a full job analysis and to review, revise, and/or develop the exam for 41 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 only 34 of the 41 projects scheduled for the City due to seven of the traffic series classifications being put on hold while the Department of Public Service considered internal reorganization options. However, as a result of the hold, one additional City review (for a total of 35) and one for Columbus City Schools were completed. In

addition to the class exam reviews, all requested exam administrations were opened, administered, and an eligible list created within 59 days of the request from the department; one day less than our 60 day benchmark for such work.

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 2020 with no full-time provisional employees. However, due to the pandemic and our inability to test, several eligible lists expired during the year, creating a need for provisional appointments. As of 12/31/2020, there were nine active full-time provisionals (equating to one tenth of one percent of the measured employee pool), well below the two percent target maximum.

UNIFORMED TESTING

The 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 developed, administered, and validated by Commission staff in 2020 with resulting eligible lists established in 2020: Entry-level Police Officer, Police Lieutenant, and Police Commander. Data associated with these three exams is included in the appendices of this report.

The following listing includes those exams developed and partially administered in 2020 or early 2021, and will have eligible lists established in 2021: Fire Lieutenant, Fire Captain, Fire Battalion Chief, and Fire Deputy Chief. Final data for these exams will be included in the 2021 Annual Report.

Entry-Level Testing

The Entry-level Police Officer exam consists of four phases. In 2020, there were 1,521 individuals who applied to take the Police Officer exam. In all, 339 candidates were placed on the Police Officer eligible list. The Civil Service Commission also administered a Rule VI Firefighter Exam and Prequalifying Testing for Police Officer and Firefighter in 2020. The prequalifying testing allowed for candidates to take the written portions of the exam prior to the regular administration of these exams. The Rule VI testing allowed for candidates to be added to the eligible list in effect at the time of testing. For the Rule VI testing 37 candidates applied and 30 were added to the 2019 eligible list.

Promotional Testing

	Number of Exam Phases	Number of Applicants	Number of Candidates Tested	Number of Candidates Added to Eligible List
Police Lieutenant	4	56	42	30
Police Commander	2	25	21	15

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. This agreement covers any and all work associated with class plan maintenance (creation, revision, abolishment of class specifications), test development and/or administration, and trial board administration for 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, 2020 there were 125 classification specifications in the Columbus City Schools' class plan. During the year, staff completed a total of 7 class reviews with recommendations approved by the Commission.

The 7 reviews resulted in:

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

These actions resulted in the district's class plan totaling 126 classifications as of December 31, 2020.

In 2020, Columbus City Schools utilized the Commission's downtown test center for 12 days of testing, and the Hearing Room for one day for a trial board hearing. 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:

Commissioner	Date Appointed	Term Expiration	Notes
Grady L Pettigrew	April 18, 2000	February 1, 2024	
Delena Edwards	January 31, 2014	September 19, 2020	
Larry Price	September 20, 2020	January 31, 2026	Replaced Delena Edwards
Stefanie Coe	February 23, 2016	October 19, 2020	Resigned/Replacement Jan 2021

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 2020, 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 2020, the Commission:

- held 10 regular meetings
- held 1 special meeting
- held 2 trial board disciplinary appeal hearings

The Commission's 2020 docket included:

- 3 disciplinary appeals filed by employees/unions
- 2 non-disciplinary appeals filed by employees/unions
- 0 appeals withdrawn
- 3 disciplinary appeal rulings (1 dismissed)
- 2 non-disciplinary appeal rulings (all dismissed)
- 67 requests for background administrative reviews by applicants
- 66 background administrative review rulings

EXPENDITURES

Summary - Expenditures by Unit	2019	2020
Administration	\$2,330,634	\$2,434,435
Classification & Testing-Sworn Employees	1,528,848	966,840
Classification & Testing-Civilian Employees	544,941	529,023
Total Expenditures	\$4,404,423	\$3,930,298

2020 ANNUAL REPORT STATEMENT REGARDING DIVERSITY

In 2020, 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 in 2020, primarily, on implementation of six (6) of the eighty (80) recommendations identified in the report published by the Columbus Community Safety Advisory Commission Report in 2020.

The six recommendations were:

- **Recommendation 12:** CSC to contract with an outside consulting group to conduct a Cultural Sensitivity Review of the Police Officer Test materials. This review has been completed and the CSC will begin implementing recommendations in 2021.
- **Recommendation 13:** CSC to contract with an outside consulting group to conduct an audit of the police officer selection process. CSC is facilitating the contacts and materials needed for the consultant to conduct the review. This audit should be completed and a final report published by 4th Quarter 2021.
- **Recommendations 14 & 15:** CSC to research and validate the means and methods to consider additional points added to test scores for cadets and for additional languages. Preliminary review completed. CSC plans to finalize process and implement in forthcoming Police Officer testing.
- **Recommendation 16:** CSC to partner with the Department of Human Resources to provide Cultural Competency Training for COPE evaluators. This effort was completed during the 3rd Quarter 2020.
- **Recommendation 17:** CSC to maintain trained Community Evaluators on COPE. Implemented expanded training objectives in 2020 and will continue to review and update as necessary for each year's training.

In addition to work associated with the aforementioned recommendations, in 2020 Commission staff participated in a variety of diversity/inclusion-focused trainings, took part on several Citywide committees/groups addressing diversity/inclusion opportunities, adopted a plan to intensify the review of our 253 non-uniformed exams over the next three years focused on eliminating adverse impact where possible, and implemented a new test management software which will provide us with more robust data that can be used to support diversity efforts.

The Commission will always endeavor to ensure there is a fair, equitable, and accessible selection process for City jobs as demonstrated by our efforts above!