

CITY OF LONG BEACH
MEASURE ON CIVIL SERVICE & HUMAN RESOURCES CONSOLIDATION (MEASURE JB)

FAQ SHEET

1. What is being proposed?

- A consolidation of the Civil Service and Human Resources Departments into one unified hiring department operated within the Department of Human Resources and reporting to the City Manager, to manage all employee recruitment, hiring, and classified employee certifications.
- Establishment of an independent Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission to resolve complaints regarding Civil Service rules, adjudicate classified employee disciplinary appeals, and to receive complaints from applicants regarding any step of the classified hiring process; and, elimination of the Civil Service Commission due to this new Commission.
- Implementation of new local hiring preferences for Long Beach residents, students from local colleges and universities, current Non-Career City employees, and candidates who have participated in internships or apprenticeship programs relevant to the position they are applying for.

2. How would local hiring preferences be implemented?

- Candidates who qualify for a classified position and pass the assessment shall be granted a credit of five additional points if they meet one of the following criteria, up to a maximum of ten additional points if the candidate meets two or more of the criteria:
 - Residency: At the time of the application, the candidate resides within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Long Beach;
 - Higher Education: Where the job description requires or considers a degree, if the candidate graduated or otherwise received a degree from an institution of higher education with on-site campuses located within a ten-mile radius of the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Long Beach and within the County of Los Angeles;
 - Internal Non-Career candidate: at the time of application, the candidate is employed in a Non-Career capacity with the City of Long Beach and has completed at least 1,500 hours of service with the City within the two years preceding the date of the job announcement; and/or
 - Internship or Apprenticeship: the candidate participated in an internship or apprenticeship program(s) relevant to the position for which the candidate is seeking employment and has completed at least 1,000 hours of internship or apprenticeship within the two years preceding the date of the job announcement.
- Banding and qualifying lists would be the primary way to deploy preferences with the goal of making the hiring process more equitable by broadening the pool of candidates deemed eligible for a position.

- Veterans currently receive preference points under the City Charter. This proposal would add new local preference categories that veterans can additionally qualify for, thereby ensuring veteran preferences are strengthened through the proposal.

3. Would the Civil Service system and merit-based hiring remain in place?

- Yes, the Civil Service system would continue to be implemented but through the Human Resources Department, with the Civil Service Rules and Regulations remaining in place unless and until amendments thereto are adopted by the City Council. All City hiring processes continue to be merit-based and transparent. The City has agreed to meet and confer in good faith with its labor partners before presenting any recommendations to the City Council regarding an amendment to the Civil Service Rules and Regulations.

4. Would there still be an independent Commission for candidates and employees to go to for protections and complaints regarding the hiring process?

- Yes, the proposal would establish an independent Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission which would remain fully independent as the Civil Service Commission is today and would continue to carry out the City Charter mandate to resolve complaints regarding the Civil Service Rules, to adjudicate classified employee disciplinary appeals, and to receive complaints from applicants regarding any step of the hiring process.
- The Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission would receive an annual report on City hiring and be supported by a staff member from the independently elected City Attorney's Office.
- The Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission would continue to provide a forum for candidates to lodge complaints about the hiring process.

5. What types of safeguards are in place to protect the merit system?

- Safeguards for the merit-based system are ensured through:
 - **City Council Oversight:** Authority and oversight of Civil Service rules and regulations.
 - **Employee Appeals:** Ensure protected disciplinary appeal rights to the Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission.
 - **Legal Compliance:** Adhere to federal, state, and city laws and regulations protecting employee rights.
 - **Independent Investigations:** Allow for City Council to direct independent investigations into potential violations of Charter provisions with an outside investigator retained by the City Attorney's Office.

6. What organizational hiring structures do other cities operate under?

- Other organizations with a Civil Service Commission and or Civil Service Rules typically have their Human Resources Department administer the merit-based hiring

system. Long Beach and San Diego are the only two large cities in California that have separate Human Resources and Civil Service departments that function and operate independently from one another relative to hiring operations.

7. What are the goals of the proposed Charter Amendment?

- **Accelerate Hiring:** Reduce classified hiring timeframes to industry standards with a goal of 90 business days on average.
- **Modernize Processes:** Streamline and centralize recruitment and selection procedures under a one unified hiring department.
- **Prioritize Local Candidates:** Implement local preferences in classified recruitment.
- **Strengthen Capacity to Deliver Services:** Fill critical citywide vacancies promptly.
- **Improve Accessibility:** Increase testing frequency and flexibility.
- **Improve Efficiency:** Streamline hiring and administrative processes to reduce delays for qualified candidates.
- **Expedite Employee Appeals:** Address disciplinary appeals promptly as the Civil Service Employee Rights and Appeals Commission would not be required to allocate time to administrative tasks.
- **Consolidate Systems:** Eliminate redundancies and unify technology systems for more transparency.
- **Create a Unified Framework:** Establish consistent guidelines for hiring processes.

8. What is driving this proposed Charter Amendment?

- The City currently has an estimated 20% vacancy rate with some departments experiencing even higher vacancy rates. Chronic high vacancy rates continue to impact the City's ability to deliver services to residents. Data from 2021 and 2022 reflect an average of over seven months to fill vacancies in the classified service.
- The City's current hiring system is divided between the department of Civil Service for classified positions and the Department of Human Resources for unclassified positions, often leading to inefficiencies, redundancies, and inconsistent processes. The fragmented system contributes to slower hiring timelines than industry standards, creating a barrier for qualified applicants to work for the City of Long Beach. The Cities of Long Beach and San Diego are the only large municipalities in California that operate with this divided hiring structure.
- The City of Long Beach's Civil Service Commission has similar duties to other jurisdictions but unlike other jurisdictions, it is also responsible for additional administrative tasks typically handled by Human Resources staff in other jurisdictions such as approval of new classification specifications, approval of job bulletins, maintenance of eligible lists, exam and certification of classified service, non-career hour extensions, and probationary period extensions. The review and approval of each

of these routine items currently requires a regular Civil Service Commission business meeting that occurs on average once every two weeks.

- There is a need for new and innovative ways to attract and retain talent within the City. The goal of local hiring preferences in the classified service is to attract residents to City jobs and create a more community focused workforce through enhanced pathways to public service.

9. What is the difference between classified and unclassified positions?

- Classified positions make up approximately 60 percent of City positions and are reviewed by Civil Service staff for minimum qualifications with most recruitments requiring an assessment for specific skills. Applicants must meet the minimum qualifications and pass an assessment, when applicable, to be placed on an eligible list to be contacted by departments seeking to fill classified vacancies.
- Unclassified positions make up the remaining 40 percent of the workforce and are at-will in nature. Candidates for unclassified positions are reviewed by Human Resources staff for minimum qualifications to be placed on a qualified candidate list, which is then sent to departments to consider for selection. Unclassified positions are generally management, intern, seasonal, and temporary/non-career positions.

10. What types of duplicative operations and services are provided separately today by each hiring department?

- Both the Civil Service and Human Resources departments currently perform approval processes, review of personnel transactions, and development of job bulletins. Each department currently conducts separate job marketing and outreach efforts and implements their own policies and procedures for hiring, which can cause confusion for departments and applicants due to the inconsistency in the interpretation of hiring and who to contact for questions about the hiring process. This duplication can lead to inefficiencies and confusion for applicants seeking employment with the City of Long Beach.

11. Have there been other attempts to improve hiring timelines over the years?

- Yes, the City dedicated significant budgetary efforts to support the Civil Service department over the years. Recent data from 2021 and 2022 shows that the current classified hiring structure has resulted in excessive lengths of time for departments to receive a list of candidates eligible to hire from. City departments shared specific examples of their challenges with the current system which can be found in the letter to City Council recommending the proposal.
- To address the hiring challenges related to unclassified positions, the Human Resources Department underwent an organizational study in 2022 and implemented streamlined processes bringing the unclassified hiring timelines down from several months to an average of 70 business days, exceeding the average municipal agency hiring timeline.
- Concerns related to hiring were the number one concern discussed at the past two annual city management conferences, with an approximate 86 percent of managers

indicating that the City did not have efficient hiring practices in place as the largest internal issue in the organization.

12. Has consolidation of the Civil Service Department and Human Resources Department been given consideration before?

- Yes, recurring consideration has been given to the concept of consolidating both hiring departments into one unified hiring department over the past two decades to modernize and streamline the City's recruitment and hiring processes. An independent assessment was done in 2007 by a municipal advisory consultant that uncovered several shortcomings in the existing system and recommended establishing a centralized personnel department that would encompass the functions of both the Civil Service and Human Resources departments.

13. How is this different from Measure GG in 2010?

- Measure GG was placed on the ballot in 2010 primarily as a cost-cutting measure to establish a single, centralized personnel department thereby saving the City approximately \$400,000. The Measure was ultimately defeated by a vote of 53.3 percent to 46.7 percent, with primary concerns being that it would dismantle the merit system and reduce protections for employees.
- Unlike Measure GG from 2010, this proposal included collaboration and agreement on the initial meet and confer process from the City's 11 employee organizations, including all public safety groups, after significant discussion and feedback to address concerns from employee organizations relative to maintaining the merit system and employee protections..
- This proposal commits to preserve all staffing with guarantee of merit-based hiring and that the merit system would remain in place. This proposal has stronger employee rights and protections with an independent appeals body and regular third-party compliance audit of hiring practices.
- This proposal is focused on resolving the critical citywide vacancy rate currently estimated at 20%, adding localized preferences, and establishing a more streamlined and uniformed hiring practices. The prior proposal focused primarily on the benefit of cost savings the consolidation of the two hiring departments would generate.

14. Would current Civil Service employees lose their jobs?

- No, the proposal commits to preserving all staffing as guaranteed in the Letters of Agreement with the City's employee organizations. If the proposal is successful management staff in the Civil Service Department would integrate into the Human Resources Department and Non-management staff may choose to join the Human Resources Department or another City department with no loss of pay, seniority, or benefits.

15. Was the public provided the opportunity to hear detailed discussion and provide input?

- Yes, the proposed Charter Amendment was proposed by the Mayor and City Manager in January of 2024. The Mayor and City Manager personally visited the three affected Commissions being Utilities, Harbor, and Civil Service in February 2024, including two meetings with the Civil Service Commission. On May 7, 2024, the City Council voted to move the proposed Charter Amendment to the Charter Amendment Committee for consideration. On June 11 and July 16, 2024, the Charter Amendment Committee, comprised of the whole City Council, held two public hearings, to discuss the details of the proposed Charter Amendment.
- On August 6, 2024, after the public meeting and two public hearings, the City Council voted unanimously to place the proposal on the November 5th General Election ballot for the residents of Long Beach to make the final decision on the proposal.

16. What is the timeline for implementation?

- If approved by the voters, the City has agreed to a second meet and confer process with employee organizations before any changes to the hiring structure are implemented. Once that process is completed, the City would seek to implement promptly.