



CIVIL SERVICE BOARD 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Summary

The City Charter provides for a Civil Service Board consisting of five (5) members to adopt, amend and enforce a code of rules and regulations, subject to the approval of the City Commission, providing for appointment and employment in all positions in the classified service. The Board is responsible for legislative, administrative and quasi-judicial functions that serve to protect and defend the merit system; and to ensure that established rules, regulations, policies, and procedures are utilized in the hiring, promoting and retaining of capable people into the City's workforce. The Board endeavors to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of City government, and is therefore serving current community needs. There is no other board, either public or private which would better serve the functions of the City of Miami Civil Service Board.

Listed herein are the responses to items required in accordance with City Code Sec. 2-890:

a. Whether the board is serving the purpose for which it was created.

When the Civil Service Board was originally created in 1921, it was designed to perform certain personnel-related managerial and adjudicatory functions simultaneously. However, the current City Charter provides for a Civil Service Board consisting of five (5) members to adopt, amend and enforce a code of rules and regulations providing for appointment and employment in all positions in the classified service subject to approval of the City Commission. The Board is responsible for investigations concerning the enforcement and effect of Section 36 of the City of Miami Charter and Code of Laws and of the Rules adopted. The principal functions of the Civil Service Board as they relate to the Civil Service Rules and Regulations are:

- To formulate personnel policies for City government and to review applicants' complaints and make recommendations as outlined in Civil Service Rule 4. This rule addresses the Board's policy function.
- To establish procedures and grounds for disciplinary actions and conduct hearings upon request of an employee dismissed, suspended, demoted, ordered to forfeit earned time, laid off or reduced in pay by the Department Director. These duties of the Board are conducted in accord with provisions of Rule 14 and are a part of its appellate function.
- To investigate concerns and hear complaints of employees concerning violation of F.S.S. 112.3187, "whistleblower" allegations; abuse of power in appointments, layoffs, demotions, and removals without justification. The authority of the Board is exercised in accord with Civil Service Rule 16 and Florida Statutes.
- To investigate allegations of fraud and discrimination in the employment process and impose appropriate sanctions. This responsibility is specified in Civil Service Rule 17 and relates to the Board's investigatory function.
- To amend, repeal or supplement any Civil Service Rule, subject only to approval of the City Commission, as in accord with Rule 18. This rule relates to the Board's legislative function.



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Additionally, the Civil Service Board is responsible for performing those administrative functions that affect the integrity of the merit system. These include the authority of the Board:

- To authorize active duty military leaves of absence and returns from active duty in accordance with Florida Statutes, Section 295.
- To conduct hearings and make retention decisions on employees who have received unsatisfactory annual evaluations as specified in Civil Service Rule 13.
- To extend probationary periods beyond the limits established in Civil Service Rule 9.3.
- To approve transfers to other classifications under specified conditions in accordance with Rule 11.1.
- To approve job assignments that are beyond the routine scope of the Rules. This responsibility is exercised in accord with Civil Service Rule 11.2.
- To approve re-employment of former employees under specified conditions in accordance with Civil Service Rule 12.4.
- To approve voluntary demotions/returns to former classifications.
- To approve applications for seniority rights from probationary employees appointed to the unclassified service as provided in Civil Service Rule 8.14.
- To approve applications for seniority credit from employees re-employed under Rule 12.4.
- To by-pass names on open, promotional, and lay off registers. The Board exercises this authority in accordance with Civil Service Rules 8.3, 8.4 and 12.2.

The Board is serving the purpose for which it was created as is evident by the issues acted upon during the Civil Service Board meetings held during the year. Verification of Civil Service Board action is documented in the Board's minutes and also under the "Major Significant Accomplishments" section of this report.

b. Whether the board is serving current community needs.

The Civil Service Board is serving the current needs of both the workplace community, which is comprised of City of Miami employees and applicants, and also the community that includes the residents and business owners of the City of Miami. The Board serves to protect and defend the merit system and to ensure that established rules, regulations, policies, and procedures are utilized in the hiring, promoting and retaining of competent people in the City's workforce. The Board endeavors to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of City government.

The Civil Service Board provides a relatively inexpensive and prompt forum for review of relevant personnel issues and formulation of personnel policy for City government; adjudication of classified employees' appeals of disciplinary actions; and investigation of employees complaints and allegations



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of fraud, discrimination and abuse of power. Such a forum is in keeping with the 14th amendment of the United States Constitution which not only requires that individuals be afforded "due process" in a tangible manner, but it also brings government and legal review to the grass roots level with involvement by way of both commission appointed and employee elected membership.

The Board could be responsible for conducting special studies covering topics representing current personnel issues in government and new City personnel policies. The Board's completion of such studies on personnel issues better serves the community by bringing issues to the surface, having public hearings on these issues, and making its findings known in the form of reports which could be made available to the community.

c. A list of the board's major accomplishments.

CIVIL SERVICE BOARD MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2024

During the 18 meetings held in 2024, the Civil Service Board Members and Staff:

- Handled 98 administrative, military leave/return, personnel matters and related requests, and documented the actions of the Board via Minutes, Findings & Reports.
- Conducted 12 hearings regarding disciplinary action appeals, whistleblowers, grievances, investigations, and unsatisfactory service ratings, and closed 18 cases.
- Researched 113 requests from residents, applicants and employees regarding application of the Rules, and prepared responses, corrective actions and process improvements for review or implementation.
- Conducted 18 workshops and New Employee or Supervisor Orientation sessions regarding the functions of the Board and responsibilities of employees, to improve the knowledge of and adherence to the Civil Service Rules. Over 260 employees were trained by the Civil Service Board.
- Provided the services of trained raters & monitors who participated in, and/or reported on five (5) interview processes, of 6-10 candidates each, in accordance Labor/Management Policy LMP-3-92, "Interview Process".
- Wrote and disseminated five (5) newsletters.

d. Whether there is any other board, either public or private, which would better serve the function of the Board.



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There is no other board, either public or private which would better serve the function of the City of Miami Civil Service Board. Although other municipalities typically have personnel or appeal boards, locally, this Board is the only one of its kind. Further, there needs to be an independent entity which is free to act and oversee the actions of City Administration as it relates to employment matters, to ensure that there is no abuse. Our research shows that unlike most merit or Civil Service Systems Boards, the City's Civil Service Board has the involvement of both community leaders and labor unions. Such a mixture of involvement balances the frequently competing interests of City Administration, employees and citizens of the City and has fostered an element of trust and fairness in the minds of many employees.

e. Whether the ordinance creating the board should be amended to better enable the board to serve the purpose for which it was created.

The Civil Service Board's current principal responsibilities, as mandated in the Charter, are to perform adjudicatory functions to ensure that merit system principles are being followed. Board members believe that the following merit system principles should be incorporated as part of the current Civil Service Rules. These principles would serve as a basis for having the rules and the Board could guard these principles and ensure that they are exemplified in all personnel management practices initiated by the City of Miami.

Merit System Principles

- All employees and applicants should be treated fairly, without discrimination, and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights.
- Recruitment should serve to achieve a work force made up of qualified people from all segments of society, and selection and promotion should be based solely on merit, after fair and open competition.
- The City workforce should be used efficiently and effectively.
- Employees should maintain high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest.
- Retention should be based on performance, inadequate performance should be corrected, and employees who cannot or will not improve their performance to meet required standards should be separated.
- Employees should be provided effective education and training in order to achieve better organizational and individual performance.
- Employees should be protected against partisan politics and may not use their offices for partisan political purposes.
- When employees legally disclose information evidencing wrongdoing, they should be protected from reprisal.



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- Equal pay should be provided for work of equal value, with appropriate consideration for the rates paid by private sector employers, and appropriate incentives and recognition should be provided for excellent performance.

The Board agrees that the current prohibited personnel practices listed under its ordinance should be expanded to include the following additional prohibited personnel practices:

- Soliciting or considering statements concerning a person under consideration for a personnel action unless the statement is based on personal knowledge and concerns the person's qualifications and character;
- Coercing the political activity of any person, or taking any action as a reprisal for a person's refusal to engage in political activity;
- Deceiving or willfully obstructing anyone from competing for employment;
- Influencing anyone to withdraw from competition for any position, whether to help or hurt anyone else's employment prospects;
- Giving unauthorized preferential treatment to any employee or applicant;
- Nepotism;
- Taking or failing to take, or threatening to take, a personnel action because of an individual's exercising any appeal, complaint, or grievance right; testifying or lawfully assisting any individual in the exercise of any appeal, complaint, or grievance right; or refusing to obey an order that would require the individual to violate a law.

The Civil Service Board's responsibilities should include the annual review of significant actions and personnel policies of the Department of Human Resources to determine if they are in accord with merit system principles and free from prohibited personnel practices.

f. Whether the Board's membership requirements should be modified.

Not at this time. Sec. 2-884(c) of the City Code advises that the “primary consideration in appointing board members shall be to provide the board with the needed technical, professional, financial, business or administrative expertise.” Strong consideration for appointment should be given to non-employee city residents and business-owners.

g. The cost, both direct and indirect of maintaining the Board.

The approved budget of the Civil Service Board for FY ‘2023-24 was \$647,000. There are no identifiable indirect costs associated with this Board.