CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

DANIEL LURIE
MAYOR

Date: October 5, 2026

To: Civil Service Commission

From: Sandra Eng
Executive Officer

Subject: **Year-End Report on the Civil Service Commission's Activities and Achievements for Fiscal Year 2025-26**

The following is a summary report on the activities of the Civil Service Commission (Commission or Department) in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 period covering July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

The Civil Service Commission continued to hold hybrid meetings to allow flexibility for appellants, witnesses and departments who have representatives that may be unable to attend the meeting in-person. Hybrid meetings also allow employees, union members, and the public to listen to the meeting live.

Staffing

After nearly 30 years of service, our 1203 Personnel Technician retired from the Civil Service Commission in December 2025. While we congratulate and honor our colleague, we are keenly aware of the loss of institutional knowledge that comes with retirement after a 30-year tenure. We could not immediately backfill the position due to a hiring freeze. However, our position was approved to fill during our budget presentation to the Board of Supervisors. Our 1426 Sr. Clerk Typist successfully promoted to 1203 Personnel Technician as project lead for our appeals and inspections database management system that was underway. We remained short-staffed with one vacancy throughout the remainder of the fiscal year. However, at the time of this report we have made an offer for our 1840 Jr. Management position that was accepted and is currently undergoing the background and onboarding processes. We anticipate being fully staff at the end of October.

Budget

Mayor's high-level overview of priorities when budget instructions were issued, included:

Safe and clean streets - Keep our city safe, transform health and homelessness systems, maintain clean, safe and welcoming public spaces

Economic revitalization – revitalize downtown San Francisco, make the city more affordable and livable for families, strengthen the City's economy, arts & culture

Underscored by effective common-sense government - modernize systems and structures that shape how we work and build data, technology, and talent capabilities. Innovate, improve service, and deliver results within our financial means

These priorities are designed to be accomplished by:

- Reorienting city spending towards 2026 priority core services
- Continuing to reduce the structural deficit; and
- Investing in long-term operational efficiencies

Overarching budget instructions for Departments - Reduce general fund spending by $400M ongoing by implementing the following:

- Eliminate discretionary programs
- Restructure departments around current staffing levels
- Review all contracted services and non-personnel expenditures to identify savings
- Reduce all city-wide workorders
- Identify redundancy and shared administrative needs
- Identify investment opportunities to reduce long-term costs

The Deputy Director assessed the budget with an eye to restructure the organization around our current budgeted staffing level to increase efficiency and eliminate redundancy; much of this work was already underway in the current budget cycle with the automation of appeals and inspection service processing. We also assessed non-personnel expenditure to identify savings and opportunities to share costs with other departments for required outside administrative services and have shifted the cost of ALJ hearings to the departments and the unions. The Commission offices are also scheduled to move to a smaller space in a different building in 2027, potentially reducing the rent rate.

Commission Streamlining Task Force

Charter Mandates for the Civil Service Commission

In response to concerns about cronyism, corruption, nepotism and favoritism in the City's hiring process, San Francisco voters established the Civil Service Commission in 1900. Its purpose was to establish and safeguard a merit-based personnel system, and to serve as the independent, final arbiter of the established system, ensuring that employment decisions remain free from political influence.

Charter Sec. 10.100 indicates the Commissioners are appointed by the Mayor, serve 6-year terms, and requires the Commissioners to take an oath not to reward appointments for political activity.

Charter Sec. 101 authorizes the Commission to oversee the merit system by adopting rules, policies, and procedures in matters such as examinations, eligibility, appointments, and layoffs; conduct inspection service requests regarding all appointments; and hear appeals on the decisions of the Human Resources Director on matters stated in the Rules such as examinations, discrimination complaints, and future employment restrictions. Proposed rule amendments are posted in advance of the Commission meetings to provide opportunity for public review and Commission discussions are heard in open session to also allow for public comment from all stakeholders. After Commission approval, Rules are posted for at least 10 days to allow for interested parties to meet and discuss. After any requests to meet, the proposed rules are presented to the Commission for discussion, public comment and adoption.

Over the years, the voters made the following additions expanding the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commission and continued to keep the Commission as an independent objective appellate and policy-making body.

Charter Sec. 10.102 (2004) states in part, "…Except for the purpose of inquiry, the Mayor shall deal with the administration of the civil service merit system solely through the Human Resources Director and the Civil Service Commission or their designees. The Mayor shall not dictate, suggest or interfere with the merit system activities of the Civil Service Commission or Human Resources Department. Administrative matters shall be dealt with only in the manner provided by this Charter, and any dictation, suggestion or interference herein prohibited shall constitute official misconduct; provided that nothing herein contacted shall restrict the power of hearing and inquiry as provided in this Charter."

Charter Sec. 10.103 (2004) states in part, "A Human Resources Director shall be selected by the Mayor from candidates nominated by the Civil Service Commission and confirmed by vote of the Board of Supervisors. The Human Resources Director shall possess not less than ten years professional experience in personnel, human resources management, labor or employee relations at least five years of which must be in federal, state or local governmental personnel management and such other qualifications as determined by the Commission. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Charter, the Human Resources Director shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Mayor, provided that the Mayor's removal of the Human Resources Director may be rejected by a four-fifths vote of the Commission. Failure of the Commission to act within 30 days shall be deemed approval of the Mayor's action. The nominee of the Mayor may be appointed acting Human Resources Director pending confirmation. The person so appointed shall, before taking office, make under oath and file in the Office of the County Clerk the following declaration: "I am opposed to appointments to the public service as a reward for political activity and will execute the Office of Human Resources Director in the spirit of this declaration…"

Charter Sec. 8A.100 (1999) states in part, "…At the same time, this Article is intended to ensure sufficient oversight of the Municipal Transportation Agency by, among other things, preserving the role of the City's Controller as to financial matters, the City Attorney as to legal matters, and

the Civil Service Commission, as to merit system issues… The Civil Service Commission shall annually review both exempt and non-exempt classifications of the Agency to ensure compliance with the provisions of subsections (h) and (i)…"

Charter Sec. 8A.104 (1999) states in part, "…Except as otherwise provided in this Section, the Agency shall be governed by the rules of the civil service system administered by the City and appeals provided in civil service rules shall be heard by the City's Civil Service Commission. Unless otherwise agreed by the Agency and affected employee organizations, appeals to the Civil Service Commission shall include only those matters within the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commission which establish, implement, and regulate the civil service merit system as listed in Section A8.409-3.

Charter Sec. 2.100 (2002) states in part, "…The Civil Service Commission shall set the Supervisors' salary once every five years. Before the Commission determines the Supervisors' salary, it shall conduct and consider a salary survey of other full time California City Councils and County Boards of Supervisors and it may consider the Consumer Price Index (CPI)…"

Charter Sec. A8.409-1 (2006) states in part, "…Except as otherwise provided by this Charter the Civil Service Commission shall set the wages and benefits of all elected officials of the City and County of San Francisco as follows: The Commission shall conduct a salary survey of the offices of chief executive officer, county counsel, district attorney, public defender, assessor-recorder, treasurer, and sheriff, in the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Mateo, and Santa Clara. The Commission shall then average the salaries for each of those offices to determine respectively the base five-year salaries for the Mayor, City Attorney, District Attorney, Public Defender, Assessor-Recorder, Treasurer, and Sheriff…"

Commission Streamlining Task Force

In November 2024, San Francisco voters approved Proposition E, establishing a Commission Streamlining Task Force to recommend changes to the City's boards and commissions including, potential modifications, eliminations, or consolidations aimed at improving the administration of City government. The Task Force was given one year to conduct a comprehensive public process to evaluate each board and commission in a systematic and equitable manner (Commission Streamlining Task Force Final Report).

The Task Force consisted of five members appointed by five authorities: City Administrator (or designee), Controller (or designee), City Attorney (or designee), public sector labor representative appointed by the Board of Supervisors, and an expert in open and accountable government appointed by the Mayor.

The Civil Service Commission attended all Task Force meetings, including the Task Force presentation to the Board of Supervisors, and provided public comment throughout the process. The public comment clarified the role of the Civil Service Commission and explained why the Commission must retain its oath of office and authority to independently review the qualifications

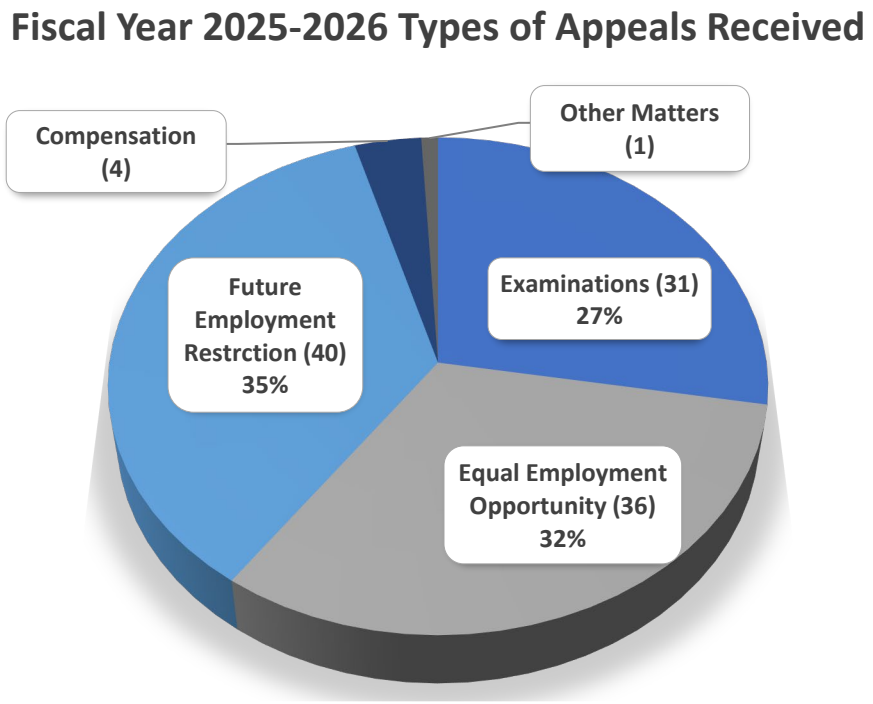
of candidates for Human Resources Director and make recommendations to the Mayor.

A review of the Charter provisions adopted by the voters highlights the importance of maintaining the Civil Service Commission as an independent appellate and policy-making body, free from political influence. The Commission Streamlining Task Force's thorough research and its willingness to reconsider initial proposals after hearing from the Commissioners, Commission staff, City employees, and union representatives. As a result, the Task Force recommended the following amendments to Charter Sec. 10.100 Civil Service Commission:

"The Commission shall consist of five members appointed by the Mayor*, pursuant to ~~Section 3.100~~,* for six-year terms. ~~*Not less than two members of the Commission shall be women*~~. *No person may serve as an appointed member of the Civil Service Commission for more than two terms. A part of a term that exceeds three years shall count as a full term; a part of a term that is three years or less shall not. The current term of any person serving on the Commission on January 1, 2027 shall count as a full term if the person serves more than three years of that term. Terms completed on or before December 31, 2026 shall not count as a term for the purpose of the lifetime term limit*.
~~*The persons so appointed*~~ *Members of the Commission* shall, before taking office, make under oath and file in the office of the County Clerk the following declaration: "I am opposed to appointments to the public service as a reward for political activity and will execute the office of Civil Service Commissioner in the spirit of this declaration."
A commissioner may be removed only *for official misconduct in the manner provided in Section 15.105(b)*~~*upon charges preferred in the same manner as in this Charter provided for elective officers*~~."

Proposition A Charter Changes Affecting Various City Departments and Commissions is on the ballot for this coming November.

Appeals and Hearings



Appeals and Hearings

The Department carried over fifty (52) appeals from Fiscal Year 2024-25 and **received (60)** new appeals for a total of 112 appeals as of June 30, 2026.

60% of examination appeals forwarded and resolved by the Commission each fiscal year*	**96%** of examination appeals (with no pending grievances, arbitration, litigation or settlement agreements) were resolved.
60% of equal employment opportunity appeals forwarded and resolved by the Commission each fiscal year*	**44%** of equal employment opportunity appeals (with no pending grievances, arbitration, litigation or settlement agreements) were resolved.
60% of future employment restriction appeal forwarded and resolved by the Commission each fiscal year*	**55%** of future employment restriction appeals (with no pending grievances, arbitration, litigation or settlement agreements) were resolved

60% of appeals regarding other matters (e.g., classification, out-of-class assignment, personal service contracts) each fiscal year*	**80 %** of appeals regarding other matters were resolved.

7% of the pending appeals are new appeals received in May and June 2026. **18**% of the pending appeals are on hold due to grievances, arbitration, and litigation.

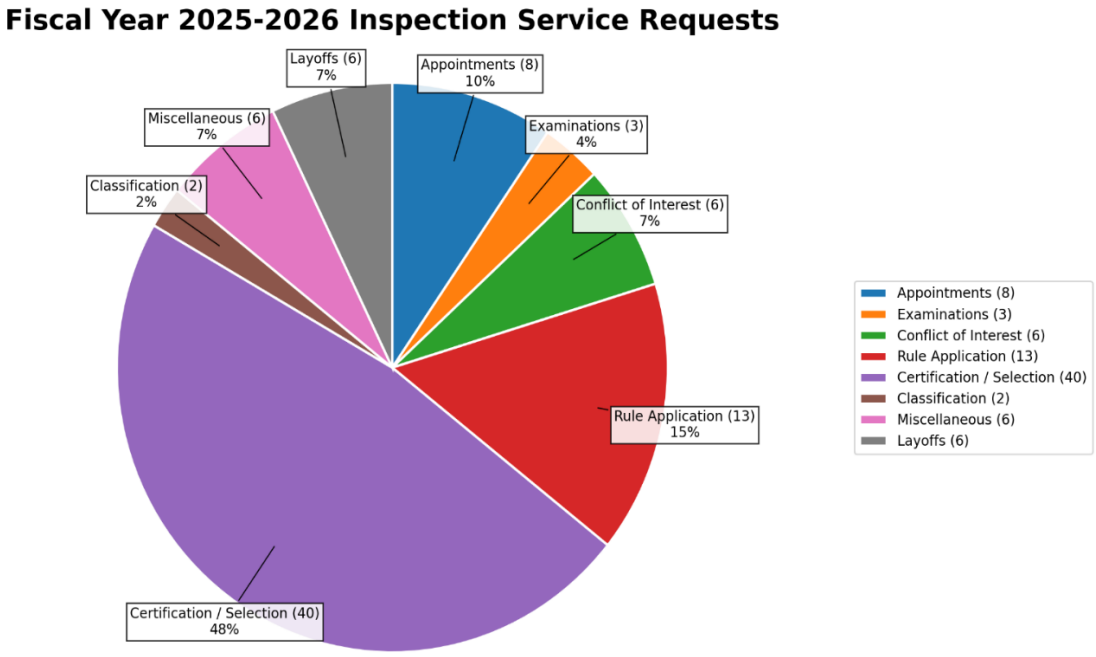
The Commission heard and/or resolved 29 of the 31 examination appeals representing 96%. The Commission heard and/or resolved 4 out of 5 appeals regarding other matters representing 80%. The Commission passed the performance measure goal of resolving 60% of the examination appeals and of appeals regarding other matters.

The Commission heard and/or resolved 15 of the 36 equal employment opportunity appeals representing 44 %. The Commission heard and/or resolved 22 of the 40 requests for hearing on future employment restrictions representing 55%.

The Commission did not reach the performance measure goal of resolving 60% of the equal employment opportunity appeals and the requests for hearing on future employment restrictions due to litigation, grievances, arbitration, settlement agreements, and DHR EEO requests for further investigations.

Inspection Service Requests

For matters that are not appealable to the Commission, the Charter authorizes Commission staff to conduct inspection service requests to investigate the conduct or an action of appointees in all positions by reviewing all records regarding the hiring process and conduct interviews



with department staff. The Charter requires all departments to cooperate with the Commission during its investigation. If there are findings of violations of the Charter, Civil Service Commission Rules, policies, and procedures, the Executive Officer will make recommendations for corrective action. Corrective actions may include training, reviewing policies and practices, or referring to the Labor Relations Division on matters that may lead to counsel, discipline or separation.

From July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, the Commission received Eighty-three (83) inspection service requests. The performance measure goal is to complete 70% of the Inspection Service Requests within 60 days. As of June 30, 2026, the department completed 69 % of the requests within 60 days and did not meet its goal of 70%. Although most departments were quick to respond to the inspection service requests in a timely manner, there were findings that led to further meetings with other departments resulting in additional meetings for corrective action. For this fiscal year, complaints were made regarding favoritism/nepotism in the hiring process, appointees meeting the minimum qualifications, departments not maintaining verification of meeting minimum qualifications for exempt appointments and claims of completing probationary periods. Through our investigations, former exempt employees qualified for promotions because of their experience gained in the exempt positions, but further investigation found that the departments did not maintain verification of how the employees met the minimum qualifications at the time they were appointed to the exempt position. Departments can still request verification of work experience after the individual has been appointed.

Update on the Appeal Management System

The Appeal Management System database (including appeals and inspection service requests)

is advancing, with core features already developed and in active performance stages. The Department of Technology project lead has completed initial data mapping and designed the system to support streamlined appeals and inspection service entries. Commission staff have been entering all incoming appeals and inspection service requests, ensuring that each appeal and inspection record can be updated, edited, and closed out. Staff are also confirming that all data fields, formats, and required inputs align with Commission protocols, and verifying that related documents load accurately, including large file uploads. Testing also includes reviewing search filters for appeals and inspections such as status, date ranges, appeal or inspection type, and assigned staff to ensure efficiency. Additionally, system generated reports are being evaluated to confirm accurate counts, timelines, and resolutions. Commission staff who regularly manage appeals and inspections are participating in workflow testing to validate operational alignment. Also, ongoing testing continues after each fix or enhancement, with all identified issues, resolutions, and retesting results documented to ensure the system is fully prepared for official release.

Rule Amendments, Policies, and Procedures

Proposing rule amendments include reviewing recent changes in law, hiring patterns and challenges through appeals and inspection service requests, listening to concerns from employees, departmental human resources management and unions, and meeting with subject matter experts from the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA). If proposed amendments are approved by the Commission for public posting, DHR, MTA, and Commission management conduct meetings with interested stakeholders and union representatives. After the questions have been answered and if there are no changes to the proposed amendments, the Executive Officer, DHR, and MTA return to the Commission for adoption of the rule amendments.

At the Civil Service Commission Special Meeting of August 11, 2025, the Commission adopted Amendments to Volume I Miscellaneous Classifications and IV Service-Critical Classifications for Civil Service Commission Rule Series 02 Definitions, 010 Examination Announcements and Applicants, 011 Examinations, 011A Position -Based Testing, 012 Eligible Lists, and 013 Certification of Eligibles to remove de-identification.

At the Civil Service Commission meeting of October 6, 2025, the Commission adopted amendments to Rule 114 Article V Employment in Class 8304/8305 Deputy Sheriff and Class 8302 Deputy Sheriff I to allow 8302 Deputy Sheriff I appointments between 2012 and 2019 to be reclassified to Class 8504 Deputy Sheriff upon successful graduation from the academy while serving their probationary period to align with the changes made in 2019.

At the Civil Service Commission meeting of November 3, 2025, the Commission adopted amendments to Rule 212 Eligible Lists – Police Department and 213 Certification of Eligibles – Police Department to support the San Francisco Police Department in the hiring of lateral and external police academy graduate candidates at the meeting of November 3, 2025

In Fiscal Year 2025-26, Commission staff conducted rule review meetings bi-weekly with human resources management staff from various participating departments including the Department of Human Resources and the Municipal Transportation Agency along with designated subject matter experts on each rule in Volumes I and IV. These meetings were held in two-hour sessions to methodically review the rules for procedural provisions that may be out of date or no longer in practice. The group assembled reviewed the current rule provisions and proposed updates and amendments to the entire rulebook for Volumes I and IV to address procedures that may have changed and provide clerical amendments. The Deputy Director and the Senior Human Resources Analyst are presently working on proposed revisions to the final two rules with the subject matter experts at SFMTA and DHR. The proposed plan is to request the City Attorney's Office to review the proposed amendments before presenting the two rulebook changes to the Commission in 2027.

Training

Fourteen (14) trainings were conducted on application of merit system principles, appealable matters, preparing and presenting staff reports, responding to inspection service requests, policies and procedures on personal service contracts, role of the Civil Service Commission, applicability of the Civil Service Commission Rules and policies, and the ability to expand equity within the Rules for the following departments, unions, and groups: Department of Public Health, Department of Building Inspection, Department of Technology, Public Utilities Commission, Planning Commission, City Attorney's Office, Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, Mayor's Office, Human Services Agency, Service Employees International Union 1021, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers Local 21, and the San Francisco Municipal Executives Association. There was an increase for a better understanding of the Civil Service Commission Policy on Personal Service Contracts, layoff process, and fairness in determining the best qualified candidates for appointments. The training clarified the role of the Civil Service Commission as a neutral objective policy making body and why providing necessary information in response to the Commission's questions is instrumental in their decision-making process.

Setting of Salary and Benefits for Elected Officials and Members of the Board of Supervisors

The Commission sets the salary and benefits of all Elected Officials, including members of the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco in accordance with the Charter Section A8,409-1 and Section 2.100.

At the Civil Service Commission meeting on May 18,2026**,** the Commission had for its consideration the annual salary adjustment for the 5th year of the 5-year cycle for Elected Officials (Mayor, City Attorney, District Attorney, Public Defender, Assessor- Recorder, Treasurer, and Sheriff) in accordance with Charter Section A8.409-1 for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 effective July 1, 2025. The Commission voted to approve a 2.7% salary increase for the Elected Officials

effective July 1, 2026, for the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget.

At the Civil Service Commission meeting on May 18, 2026**,** the Commission had for its consideration the annual salary adjustment for the 3rd of the 5-year cycle for Members of the Board of Supervisors for the five-year cycle effective July 1, 2026, in accordance with Charter Section 2.100 commencing Fiscal Year 2026-2027. The Commission voted to approve 2.7% increase for the Members of the Board of Supervisors for the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget.

Merit System Audit Program

All candidates selected for permanent civil service, provisional, and exempt appointments must meet the minimum qualifications for the jobs to which they are appointed. It is the City's policy that employment verification for all applicants be completed by departmental Human Resources professionals prior to an offer of employment with the City and County of San Francisco. This means that prior to extending an employment offer, or processing a candidate's appointment, hiring departments are required to verify information provided by the applicant regarding their qualifying experience and education, licenses, certifications, etc. Throughout the fiscal year, the Commission receives numerous complaints alleging that appointees do not meet the required qualifications for the position to which they are appointed.

Therefore, for FY 2026 the Commission focused on reviewing the selection and appointment practices for twelve (12) management recruitments conducted by various City departments to assess the department's compliance with applicable Charter provisions, Commission Rules, and merit system policies and procedures. Specifically, the requirement to verify information provided by the applicant regarding their qualifying experience, education, licenses, and certifications.

A total of twelve (12) audits were conducted from selected departments for compliance with obtaining verification of qualifying education and experience, for the appointees selected to fill temporary exempt or permanent exempt management positions. Commission staff audited the following departments: Human Services Agency, Department of Public Works, Public Utilities Commission, Office of the Treasurer/Tax Collector, Department of Building Inspection, Office of the City Administrator, Department of Public Health.

Recommendation: Adopt the report.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Appeals Log
Attachment B: Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Inspection Service Requests
Attachment C: Civil Service Commission 5 Year Strategic Plan, approved January 26, 2026.
Attachment D: Charter References