



COPA CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR SELECTION PROCEDURES

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the procedures for the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability ("the Commission") to select the Chief Administrator of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA).¹

II. OVERVIEW OF THE COMMISSION AND COPA

In July 2021, the Chicago City Council passed an ordinance establishing the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability, Chicago Municipal Code Chapter 2-80. Pursuant to Section 2-80-050(m), when there is a vacancy in the position of Chief Administrator of COPA, the Commission is responsible for appointing the Chief Administrator, subject to City Council approval.

COPA is an independent department of the City of Chicago, established by ordinance in the Chicago Municipal Code Chapter 2-78. The mission of COPA is to "provide a just and efficient means to fairly and timely conduct investigations within its jurisdiction, including investigations of alleged police misconduct and to determine whether those allegations are well-founded, applying a preponderance of the of the evidence standard; to identify and address patterns of police misconduct; and, based on information obtained through such investigations, to make policy recommendations to improve the Chicago Police Department and reduce incidents of police misconduct." Chicago Municipal Code, 2-78-110.

Pursuant to Chicago Municipal Code 2-78-115, the Chief Administrator is COPA's chief executive officer. The Chief Administrator serves a term of four years, unless removed from office for cause in accordance with 2-80-090. At the conclusion of such term, the Commission may consider the Chief Administrator for reappointment.

¹ This policy is created to fulfill the requirements of Paragraph 525 of the Consent Decree entered in *State of Illinois v. City of Chicago*, 17 cv 6260:

525. Within 60 days of the Effective Date, the City will propose a permanent method of selecting the Chief Administrator of COPA. In creating the permanent selection method for COPA's Chief Administrator, the City will consider the views and recommendations of community stakeholders.

III. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

As specified in MCC Section 2-78-115, the Chief Administrator shall have the following minimum qualifications:

- a) An attorney with substantial experience in criminal, civil rights, and/or labor law, or corporate and/or governmental investigations; or an individual with substantial experience in law enforcement oversight, or investigating employee or other wrongdoing;
- b) Knowledge of law enforcement, particularly of internal investigations of wrongdoing and use of force;
- c) A commitment to and knowledge of the need for and responsibilities of law enforcement, as well as the need to protect basic constitutional rights of all affected parties;
- d) Demonstrated integrity, professionalism, sound judgment, and leadership; and
- e) The ability to work with diverse groups and individuals.

The Chief Administrator shall not be a current or former sworn employee of CPD, a non-sworn employee of the Police Department within the last five years, or an employee of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office within the last five years.

IV. SELECTION PROCESS

MCC Section 2-80-080(b) sets out the process that the Commission must follow to select the Chief Administrator of COPA:

1. "When a vacancy occurs or is anticipated in the position of Chief Administrator, the Commission shall engage a nationally recognized organization ("the firm") with expertise in government oversight to perform a nationwide search and identify at least ten candidates."
2. "The Commission shall select a Chief Administrator from among the candidates identified in this process. Such candidates shall fulfill the qualifications in Section 2-78-115. The Commission shall select the candidate it deems most qualified and publish its selection on its website."
3. "The mayor shall have the opportunity to provide written input on the Commission's selection before its referral to the City Council Committee on Public Safety."
4. "The Commission's selected candidate shall be referred to the City Council Committee on Public Safety for a hearing, and shall then be subject to City Council approval."
5. "If the City Council rejects the Commission's selected candidate, within 30 days thereafter the Commission shall select a new candidate."

The Commission shall identify two Commissioners to work closely with staff on the logistics and day-to-day needs of the selection process.

The two Commissioners, supported by staff, will select the firm required by MCC Section 2-80-080(b) to assist in searching for candidates. The Commission will announce the selection of the firm at its first public meeting following the selection. In addition to identifying at least ten candidates who meet the qualifications, the firm will perform background checks on the candidates.

The Commission staff will post a job description for the Chief Administrator and other pertinent information on the application process on the Commission's website. Applicants will need to submit at least a resume, cover letter, and list of references.

V. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Commission staff will post and disseminate educational materials to the public on the function, responsibilities, and jurisdiction of COPA, along with instructions for how to submit comments related to the selection of the next Chief Administrator. The Commission website will provide an opportunity for the public to submit comments online.

The Commission will host four public hearings on the search for the next Chief Administrator: one on the North Side, one on the West Side, one on the South Side, and one virtually. At these hearings, Commissioners will provide information about COPA's function, responsibilities, and jurisdiction. Commissioners will then gather public comment on (a) what qualities the community would like in a new Chief Administrator, (b) what priorities should be the focus of the new Chief Administrator, and (c) any other considerations for how Commissioners should assess candidates.

The Commission will host a listening session and provide an anonymous survey for COPA employees. Commissioners will ask COPA employees for specific feedback on (a) what qualities they would like in the new chief executive of the agency, and (b) what priorities should be the focus of the new Chief Administrator in improving COPA as an agency.

The Commission will host a listening session and provide an anonymous survey for CPD members. Commissioners will ask CPD members for specific feedback on COPA's investigations and disciplinary process and decisions.

The Commission may also host interviews with subject matter experts.

Commission staff will organize all notes from community engagement to assist Commissioners as they review the applicants.

VI. EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES

The Commission, with support from staff, will develop a rubric to be used to evaluate candidates. The Commission, with support from staff, will also develop a protocol for interviews. When developing the rubrics and interview protocol, the Commission will consider recommendations gathered through community engagement. The Commission will design interview questions to score candidates on items in the interview rubric.

Once the firm provides the Commission with the list of recommended candidates, Commissioners will review the applications and score them using the rubric to determine the preliminary ranking. The Commission will invite top-scoring candidates for interviews.

The interview protocol will outline at least two components of the interviews: a set of interview questions, and a case scenario related to the role of Chief Administrator. Commissioners will score candidates on their responses to questions and the case scenario based on the rubric to determine the ranking of candidates.

Commissioners will then meet to discuss the final candidates. The Commission may enter closed session to have these discussions pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. The Commission may also return to its list of recommended candidates to invite more candidates to interview. The Commission will select one candidate to appoint as Chief Administrator by majority vote of the Commissioners at a public meeting.

VII. POST-SELECTION PROCEDURES

The Commission shall provide the mayor with a 30-day opportunity to provide written input on the Commission's selection. After the 30-day period or after the mayor submits written input, whichever is sooner, the Commission will refer its selection to the City Council Committee on Public Safety.

If City Council rejects the Commission's selection, the Commission will have 30 days to submit a new name. The Commission will select a new candidate from the list provided by the firm or request that the firm identify additional candidates. The Commission may conduct additional interviews. The Commission will follow the same steps to evaluate candidates outlined in Section VI. This process shall repeat until City Council approves a candidate selected by the Commission.

Following the completion of the selection process, Commission staff will provide the opportunity for Commissioners, community members, COPA employees, CPD members, and the newly appointed COPA Chief Administrator to submit feedback on the process. Commission staff will review the feedback with Commissioners to identify options for improving its selection procedures.