



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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MAYOR SEEKS TO EXPAND WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS TO ALL RESIDENTS

First Major City in the U.S. to Extend Protections to Cover Residents and Job Applicants

Mayor Emanuel introduced an amendment to the city's ethics ordinance today that extends whistleblower protections to any individual who is denied a city permit or license, any city service, or employment with the City, if such denial is made in retaliation for that person's disclosing or threatening to disclose a misuse of city funds or official authority.

"This extension of the ethics reforms enacted earlier this summer will ensure that all residents may report ethics violations without the fear of losing a building permit, vital city services or a job opportunity because they reported unethical conduct," said Mayor Emanuel. "We have significantly strengthened Chicago's ethics regulations, closed loopholes and enhanced penalties for those public servants who break ethics laws and we will continue to enhance the City's ethics rules to create a culture of honesty and accountability throughout City government."

The proposed ordinance extends whistleblower protection to anyone who receives:

- A denial of any city permit, license, certification or financial subsidy;
- The denial of any city service, or;
- The denial of employment with the City for which the person is qualified.

The amendment makes the following relief available to a whistle blower who is retaliated against:

- Reconsideration of the denied or revoked city permit, license, certification, service or financial subsidy, if possible;
- Reconsideration of a job application rejected as a result of the violation, if possible, and;
- Damages directly and specifically caused by, and that would not have occurred but for, the retaliatory action, excluding claimed lost profits.



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The individual seeking relief against the City is required to notify the City within 30 days of becoming aware of the relevant facts, in order to allow the City an opportunity to correct any harm resulting from the asserted retaliatory action. The involved department is required to investigate the allegations and take all necessary and appropriate actions to remedy any retaliatory action. Any action for relief must be brought within 6 months of the alleged retaliatory action.

In July, the Chicago City Council approved reforms that, for the first time, incorporated whistleblower protections into the ethics ordinance for full- and part-time City employees.

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