

# 2018 Cuyahoga County Charter Amendment FAQs

## Issue 10: Personnel Review Commission/Department of Human Resources

Summary: This charter amendment clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the county's Personnel Review Commission and the Department of Human Resources, prohibits discrimination in county employment on the basis of gender identity/expression, and provides for the creation of "unclassified" positions by county ordinance.

- What is the Personnel Review Commission (PRC)? How does it differ from the Department of Human Resources (HR)?
  - The PRC is the county's civil service commission. Among other things, the PRC is responsible for overseeing the civil service system of Cuyahoga County to ensure fairness and equity in county employment. HR, by contrast, is responsible for day-to-day employment decisions, including hiring, firing, discipline, benefits, training, etc.
- Why do the roles of the PRC and HR need to be clarified?
  - The county charter currently gives both the PRC and HR broad (and in some cases, overlapping) authority over the county's employment processes. This amendment more clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of each agency to improve the operations of each office.
- What does it mean for a position to be "unclassified"? Why create these positions by ordinance?
  - "Unclassified" positions are not part of the county's "classified" civil service. Unclassified employees typically hold positions of trust, and are not subject to the normal requirements or protections mandated for civil service employees. Historically, state law has defined which positions are classified or unclassified, however the adoption of the county charter has resulted in the reorganization of county government. This amendment would allow the county to establish additional unclassified positions to address the operational needs of county agencies.
- What does it mean to prohibit discrimination in county employment on the basis of gender identity/expression?
  - The charter already prohibits discrimination in county employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, or ancestry. The county also prohibited discrimination on the basis of gender identity/expression by ordinance and the approval of the employee handbook. This amendment would simply update the charter to reflect current county policy.

## **Issue 11: Internal Auditor**

Summary: This charter amendment gives the county's internal audit department more flexibility in determining when to charge other county agencies for conducting audits. It also eliminates a potential "catch-22" in complying with generally accepted auditing standards.

- Why should the internal auditor be able to choose whether or not to charge county agencies?
  - The internal auditor conducts audits of a multitude of county agencies supported by the county's general fund. By using a centralized auditing budget, rather than multiple budgets across several different agencies, the departmental budget planning becomes simpler and more stable, and will remain fully transparent through the county's normal legislative process. The internal auditor will still have the ability to charge-back agencies supported by non-general revenue funding in accordance with standard auditing practice.
- What are auditing standards? Why change them?
  - Auditing standards are basically the set of rules and guidelines that auditors use to conduct their work. The county's auditing standards will not be meaningfully changed with this amendment. The charter currently requires the internal auditor to comply with two different sets of rules, which are not necessarily aligned with one another. This puts the auditor in the position of having to comply with two sets of potentially conflicting rules. This amendment would eliminate this "catch-22" by allowing the county to comply with only one set of established rules at a time.

## **Issue 12: Inspector General**

Summary: This amendment would permanently enshrine the Agency of Inspector General (AIG) in the Cuyahoga County Charter, and provide for the basic powers, duties, and qualifications of the county's Inspector General.

- What does the Inspector General do?
  - The Inspector General is the chief ethics officer of the county, charged with investigating ethical violations based on whistleblower complaints and other types of waste, fraud, and abuse. The Inspector General also maintains an active registry of county contractors and lobbyists.
- Doesn't the county already have an Inspector General? Why is this amendment necessary?
  - Yes the county currently has an Agency of Inspector General, established by county ordinance in 2011. This new charter amendment would make the Inspector General a permanent fixture in the county charter, meaning the agency could not be fundamentally changed or abolished by future Councils.
- What is the Inspector General's law enforcement authority?
  - The Inspector General has no direct law enforcement authority. Instead, the IG issues findings and recommendations based on his or her investigations. Unlike the County Prosecutor, the Inspector General investigates both criminal and non-criminal wrongdoing, but will refer any criminal findings to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.
- Who appoints the Inspector General? How long does s/he serve?
  - The Inspector General is appointed by the County Executive, confirmed by County Council, and will serve a term of four years. The Inspector General can only be removed from office for cause, by a super-majority of the Council.