

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 3-24
Expanding Economic Opportunity for All by
Removing Barriers to City Employment

WHEREAS, equitable access to quality jobs – those with family-sustaining wages, benefits, and career pathways – is essential to providing economic opportunity for every resident of the City of Philadelphia;

WHEREAS, the City of Philadelphia, as one of the city’s and region’s largest employers, can help set the standard for being an employer of choice through its total benefits package, providing opportunities for career development, and creating equitable opportunities for employment;

WHEREAS, driven both by a commitment to equity and a desire to not leave talent on the sidelines, employers in the private and public sectors – starting, at the state level, in Maryland under the leadership of then-Governor Larry Hogan – have been re-examining traditional prerequisites for employment in various positions, including degree-based requirements that pose barriers for otherwise qualified potential applicants;

WHEREAS, employers are identifying alternative pathways for candidates – including acknowledgement of the role work experience plays in demonstrating needed competencies, skills, and experience – thereby expanding the pool of eligible candidates for in-demand jobs;

WHEREAS, in many fields, a degree requirement should be reserved only for those professional positions where industry standards require such higher-level education in order to obtain required professional licensure or carry out specific job functions;

WHEREAS, over the past several years, the City of Philadelphia has re-evaluated requirements for the wide range of positions within local government, beginning with civil service positions, which comprise the vast majority (approximately 92%) of City jobs and for which qualifications are established by the Civil Service Commission;

WHEREAS, as a result of this effort, the Office of Human Resources (OHR), in collaboration with the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), successfully presented approximately 60 job classes to the Civil Service Commission to allow applicants to substitute experience or other credentials in lieu of a degree requirement;

WHEREAS, at present, approximately 60% (or 500) of Civil Service job classes do not require a college degree, and, of the remaining 40% (or 340) that do, approximately half are

professional accounting positions, engineering positions, or medical positions, for which professional licensure requires a degree;

WHEREAS, OHR has already identified approximately 40 more civil service job classes for which it will propose experience or other credentials as a degree-alternative to the Civil Service Commission;

WHEREAS, although the majority of the still remaining degree-requiring classes are in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, there are additional classes for which degree-alternatives are appropriate;

WHEREAS, approximately eight percent (8%) of City jobs are exempt from Civil Service requirements;

WHEREAS, many of the position descriptions for exempt positions are unique/non-standardized, and not currently compiled in a centralized database;

WHEREAS, the City has not yet undertaken a comprehensive analysis of whether exempt positions with a degree-requirement are appropriate for an experience or other credentials alternative;

WHEREAS, in addition to re-evaluating degree requirements, the City should continue to explore removing other barriers to employment including, for example, by using time and experience (“T&E”) assessments rather than written examinations whenever possible;

WHEREAS, qualified potential applicants may not be aware of how many current employment opportunities with the City either do not require a college degree or allow for experience or other credentials as a degree-alternative;

WHEREAS, an expanded communications campaign, including engaging trusted intermediaries – such as City Council of Philadelphia, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and workforce development partners – could help raise awareness among potential applicants and attract additional talented team members to the City;

NOW THEREFORE, I, CHERELLE L. PARKER, Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, by the powers vested in me by the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, do hereby order as follows:

The term “department” as used herein refers to all departments, offices, agencies, boards, and commissions in the Mayor’s Administration.

SECTION 1. DEGREE-ALTERNATIVE AND T&E OPPORTUNITIES FOR CIVIL SERVICE POSITIONS

Under the leadership of OHR and the CAO, all departments will cooperate to continue evaluating civil service job classes that require a college degree and identify appropriate alternative pathways for candidates to demonstrate needed competencies and skills, including through experience and other credentials.

On an ongoing basis, the CAO will collaborate with and provide support to OHR to promote creating degree-alternatives across all City departments so that such alternatives may be presented to the Civil Service Commission for consideration and decision-making.

On an ongoing basis, the CAO will collaborate with and provide support to OHR to implement T&E rather than written examinations for job classes whenever possible.

On a quarterly basis, CAO will work with OHR to provide a status update to the Mayor's Office including: (1) any additional job classes for which degree-alternatives have been approved by the Civil Service Commission; (2) any recommendations for degree-alternatives still pending with the Civil Service Commission; and (3) any additional job classes for which T&E assessments are being used rather than written examinations.

SECTION 2. DEGREE-ALTERNATIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXEMPT POSITIONS

Within 90 days of the date of this Order, the CAO will submit a proposed plan to the Mayor's Office for assessing the universe of current exempt positions, specifying for each position: department, salary, essential functions of the position, required years of experience, how long the position has existed, and suitability for degree-alternatives. As these positions are not yet set forth in a centralized database, and tend to have more customized/non-standardized position descriptions, the proposed plan shall include:

- Recommendations for how to prioritize the assessment across exempt positions (e.g., starting with positions for which there are the most vacancies; positions in departments with the highest number or share of exempt positions; etc.);
- A proposed schedule for analyzing all exempt positions; and
- An investment proposal detailing the resources – including personnel and technology – needed to support the process of analyzing all exempt positions.

SECTION 3. COMMUNICATING ABOUT CITY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Within 120 days of the date of this Order, the CAO and the Mayor's Office of Communications, in collaboration with OHR, shall jointly develop a strategy to raise public awareness about the number and diversity of available City jobs, including those that do not require a college degree or offer a degree-alternative. The overarching goal of the strategy shall be to help reduce the number of vacancies in City government. To reach the widest possible audience, the strategy shall employ a range of communications tools and tactics.

The strategy shall include redesigning the centralized, online hub listing of available City jobs to be filterable by whether the position requires a degree or provides for degree-alternatives and to outline potential career pathways and professional development opportunities within City government.

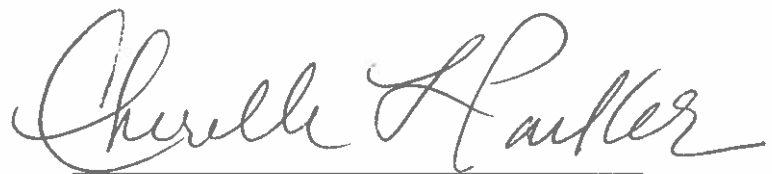
SECTION 4. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

I call upon my Business, Faith-Based, and Intergovernmental Roundtables to partner with the City in a joint effort to both reduce the number of vacancies in City government and help support and develop our current workforce. I further call upon these Roundtables to help spread awareness about the number and diversity of available City jobs, and identify and share best practices in recruiting and hiring for civil service and exempt positions that could be implemented locally.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Order shall take effect immediately.

Date: January 2, 2024



Cherelle L. Parker, Mayor

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA