



General Counsel

Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability

INTRODUCTION

In July 2021, the Chicago City Council passed an ordinance establishing a new model for police oversight, accountability, and public safety. The ordinance creates two bodies: a citywide Commission for Public Safety and Accountability, with power to advance systemic reform, and District Councils which are elected in each police district and work to improve policing and public safety in the district. The Commission and District Councils bring police officers and Chicago residents together to plan, prioritize, and build mutual trust; strengthen the police accountability system; give Chicagoans a meaningful new role in oversight; and explore and advance alternative effective approaches to public safety. The Commission and District Councils are supported by a City department, also called the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability, with a full-time staff.

THE POSITION

The General Counsel provides legal counsel and support to the Executive Director and staff, Commissioners, and District Council members on matters related to Commission and District Council operations and affairs. Duties include: ensuring that the Commission's and District Councils' work is conducted in compliance with local, state, and federal law; performing legal research and providing legal counsel to Commissioners and District Council members regarding policies, initiatives, and programs under consideration by the Commission or District Councils; studying legal trends in law enforcement and civil rights to ensure that proposed policies are in compliance with local, state, and federal law, and consistent with best practices; developing and implementing Commission policies and procedures; reviewing and interpreting various documents including but not limited to legal documents, requests for information, contractual requirements, legislation, and general and special orders; ensuring compliance with the Open Meetings Act; ensuring compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA); preparing and drafting legal documents for the Commission and District Councils; and conducting training for staff, Commissioners, and District Council members on relevant legal issues.

ORGANIZATION

The Community Commission is a seven-member body whose members must be drawn from across the city and meet work- and experience-related requirements described in the ordinance. Commissioners are nominated by elected District Council members, selected by the Mayor, and confirmed by the City Council. Commissioners serve four-year terms. The Commission oversees the Police Department, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA), and the Police Board. The Commission's powers include: playing a central role in selecting and removing the Police Superintendent, COPA Chief Administrator, and Police Board members; setting Police Department policy; establishing annual goals and evaluating progress for CPD, COPA, and the Police Board; and promoting community engagement and transparency.

District Councils have been created in each of the city's 22 police districts. Each District Council is made of up three people elected in regular municipal elections. Members serve four-year terms. The District Councils' roles include: building connections between the police and the community at the district level, where the community is a true partner in making the neighborhood safer, addressing problems, and setting priorities; collaborating in the development and implementation of community policing initiatives; holding monthly public meetings, where residents can raise and work to address concerns about policing in the district, increase accountability, and work on local initiatives rooted in community concerns and priorities; working with the community to get input on police department policies and practices; working to develop and expand restorative justice and similar programs in the police district; and ensuring that the Commission gets input from the community, so that the Commission's work will be based on what people in neighborhoods across the city are concerned about.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES:

- Provide legal counsel and support to the Executive Director and staff, Commissioners, and District Council members on matters related to Commission and District Council operations and affairs
- Ensure that the Commission's and District Councils' work is conducted in compliance with local, state, and federal law
- Perform legal research and provide legal counsel to Commissioners and District Council members regarding policies, initiatives, and programs under consideration by the Commission or District Councils, including any proposed new or amended policy submitted by CPD, COPA, or the Police Board
- At the Commission's request, draft policies for CPD, COPA, and the Police Board
- Study legal trends in law enforcement and civil rights to ensure that proposed policies are compliant with local, state, and federal law, and consistent with best practices
- Communicate with the Consent Decree Monitor to ensure that Commission policymaking activities fall within the scope of the Commission's policymaking jurisdiction
- Ensure department compliance with the Consent Decree
- Develop and implement Commission policies and procedures
- Review and interpret various documents (including but not limited to legal documents, requests for information, contractual requirements, legislation, and general and special orders) for the Executive Director and staff
- Oversee the department's production of records and support Commissioners and District Council members in response to legal requests, including ensuring compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) by drafting legal documents in response to requests and other requirements for information, and ensuring documents conform with the law
- Draft legal documents for the department, Commission and District Councils
- Draft rules, regulations, policies and procedures for the conduct of the Commission, District Councils, and staff,
- Serve as a liaison between the department and the City of Chicago Department of Law, and
- Conduct training for staff, Commissioners, and District Council members on relevant legal issues

NOTE: *The list of essential duties is not intended to be inclusive; there may be other duties that are essential*

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience

- Graduation from an American Bar Association (ABA) accredited law school, plus eight (8) years of work experience in the legal profession as a licensed attorney of which at least two (2) years are in a supervisory role or case management capacity related to the responsibilities of the position

Licensure, Certification, or Other Qualifications

- Admission to the Illinois Bar (or eligible for admission on motion to the Illinois Bar pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 705)

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Excellent managerial, administration, and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work strategically and collaboratively across departments
- Effective, versatile, and action-oriented
- Exceptional writing and communication skills
- Committed to and knowledgeable about the need for and responsibilities of law enforcement, and the need to protect constitutional rights
- Demonstrated integrity, professionalism, sound judgment, and leadership
- The ability to work well with diverse groups and individuals
- The ability to work effectively under pressure
- Knowledge of federal and state law governing police policies and practices
- Knowledge of the Illinois Open Meetings Act
- Knowledge of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act

WORKING CONDITIONS

- General office environment

EQUIPMENT

- Standard office equipment (e.g. telephone, computer, printer, photocopier)

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- No specific requirements

CORE COMPETENCIES

- **Leadership** - Experience showing integrity, professionalism, sound judgment, and independence
- **Management** – Knowledge of organization and management practices and methods, including goal setting, program development and implementation, employee supervision, personnel management, employee relations, team building, budget development, and financial management
- **Critical Thinking** – Use logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems
- **Complex Problem Solving** – Identify complex problems and review related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions

- **Executive Presence/Communication** – Ability to engender confidence internally and externally through clear communication, credibility, and leadership
- **Collaboration** – Experience collaborating with senior executives, staff, and diverse groups/individuals to achieve goals
- **Negotiation** – Bring others together and try to reconcile differences
- **Community Relations** – Experience in community relations and outreach with the demonstrated ability to build strong, yet independent working relationships with diverse constituents and community representatives
- **Cultural Sensitivity** – Knowledge of and sensitivity to the needs and concerns of individuals from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and orientations
- **Communication** – Exceptional ability to communicate clearly and effectively, orally and in writing, with a wide range of audiences

COMPENSATION

Annual Salary -- \$135,084 (X Salary Schedule, Grade 32)

LOCATION

Employees must be residents of the City of Chicago. Proof of residency is required at the commencement of employment.

TO APPLY

Please send resume and cover letter to jacquelyn.walls@cityofchicago.org

THIS POSITION IS A SHAKMAN EXEMPT POSITION

All employees of the City of Chicago must demonstrate commitment to and compliance with applicable state and federal laws, and City ordinances and rules; the City's Ethics standards; and other City policies and procedures.

The City of Chicago will consider equivalent foreign degrees, accreditations, and credentials in evaluating qualifications.
