

INTRODUCED: April 13, 2026

AN ORDINANCE No. 2026-081

To amend City Code § 12-16, concerning publication of the City’s payment register, for the purpose of promoting transparency and accountability in the expenditure of public funds by providing public access to information regarding payments made by the City to vendors for goods and services and reimbursements to employees, while protecting confidential and personal information as required by law.

Patron – Mayor Avula

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: APR 27 2026 AT 6 P.M.

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That section 12-16 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020) be and is hereby **amended** as follows:

Sec. 12-16. Publication of payment register.

(a) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to promote transparency and accountability in the expenditure of public funds by providing public access to information regarding payments made by the City for goods and services, while protecting confidential and personal information as required by law.

AYES: _____ NOES: _____ ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: _____ REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

(b) *Definitions.* The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this section, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this subsection, unless the context clearly requires the application of a different meaning:

Payment means (i) a disbursement by the City to ~~[any person]~~ a vendor for ~~[operating purposes]~~ goods or services provided to the City pursuant to a contract, purchase order, procurement, grant agreement, or other authorized operational expenditure and (ii) reimbursements to employees for authorized expenses paid. The term “payment” ~~[does]~~ shall not include ~~[disbursements by the City to any employee of the City, a constitutional officer of the City, or any other entity for which the City manages accounts payable for personnel purposes except for reimbursement of expenses of an operating nature.]:~~

- (1) Payments to City employees, excluding reimbursements;
- (2) Payments to individuals receiving refunds or assistance payments;
- (3) Tax refunds or tax-related payments;
- (4) Payments made pursuant to legal settlements or claims;
- (5) Payments protected under state or federal privacy laws; and
- (6) Any payment that would disclose personally identifiable information protected by law.

Person means a person as defined by Code of Virginia, § 1-230.

Register means a record, derived from the City’s financial records, of all vendor payments and employee reimbursements during a month that states for each vendor or employee payment the ~~[following:]~~ information identified in subsection (c).

Vendor means any person who provides goods and services to the City for operational purposes.

(c) Contents of the Register. Subject to subsection (e) below, the register shall include for each payee:

- (1) The name of the [~~payee~~] vendor or employee being reimbursed.
- (2) [~~The check number, wire number, or electronic funds transfer number.~~
- (3) ~~The date of the payment.~~
- (4)] The total amount of the payment.
- [(5) ~~The invoice description.~~
- (6) ~~The fund code.~~
- (7)] (3) The cost center.
- [(8) ~~The account code.~~
- (9) ~~The payment document used.~~
- (10) ~~The type of the disbursement.]~~
- (4) The City Department issuing the payment.

[(b)] (d) Publication required. The Director of Finance shall [~~cause to be published~~] publish, in a searchable electronic format, the payment register on the City's website [a read-only, searchable version of each month's register accessible to the general public beginning no later than the month beginning July 1, 2015. The Director of Finance shall cause each month's register to be published on the City's website at the time of the close of that month and shall maintain that month's register on the City's website for the period of time that the City is required to maintain that month's register pursuant to the Virginia Public Records Act, Code of Virginia, §§ 42.01-76—42.1-90.1] on a monthly basis within a reasonable period following the close of the reporting period to allow for reconciliation and review. The published data shall reflect transactions as recorded at the time of reporting and may be subject to consequent adjustment through normal

accounting processes. The Director of Finance may redact particular fields for particular payments only if and to the extent required by law or permitted by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Code of Virginia, §§ 2.2-3700—2.2-3714, provided that nothing in this section shall require the Director of Finance to redact any of the information in the register simply because the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Code of Virginia, §§ 2.2-3700—2.2-3714, so permits.

(e) Confidential and Exempt Information. Nothing in this section shall require the disclosure of information that is confidential or exempt from disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.), the Government Data Collection and Dissemination Practices Act (§ 2.2-3800 et seq.), federal law, state law, or any other applicable privacy or confidentiality law. The register shall not include social security numbers, tax identification numbers, bank account numbers, personal addresses, medical information, personnel information, or any other information made confidential by law.

(f) Administration and Internal Controls. The Director of Finance shall establish procedures for the preparation, review, and publication of the payment register, including appropriate internal controls to ensure data accuracy, consistency, and compliance with applicable laws. Departments shall cooperate with the Department of Finance, as needed, to support accurate classification and reporting of expenditures. The Director of Finance, in consultation with the City Attorney, shall determine the appropriate application of exemptions and may withhold, redact, or aggregate information as necessary to ensure compliance with this Section and applicable law.

§ 2. That the payment register provided for by this ordinance shall be implemented within 90 days after the adoption of this ordinance. The Chief Administrative Officer shall confer with the Director of Finance as necessary to implement the payment register.

§ 3. This ordinance shall be in force and effect upon adoption.

DATE: April 9, 2026

TO: The Honorable Members of City Council

THROUGH: The Honorable Dr. Danny Avula, Mayor

THROUGH: Odie Donald II, Chief Administrative Officer

THROUGH: Tanikia Jackson, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Finance and Administration

THROUGH: Letitia Shelton, Director of Finance

FROM: Lawson Wijesooriya, Chief of Staff

RE: **Update to Payment Register Publication Ordinance**

PURPOSE: To amend Section 12-16 of the City Code by updating it to align with the standards of other Virginia localities by providing public access to information regarding payments made by the City for goods and services, while protecting confidential and personal information as required by law.

BACKGROUND: A City government that operates transparently, responsibly, and effectively is essential to meeting community needs and is a core priority of the Avula administration. As part of the Mayoral Action Plan, advancing a thriving City Hall that gets things done requires ensuring that policies are practical and implementable. This ordinance proposes an updated approach to how the City publishes financial data related to payments, with a focus on improving clarity and supporting consistent implementation. The current ordinance does not support an implementable approach. The updated ordinance proposes a payment registry that provides clear and accessible information about how public dollars are spent. The updated approach supports compliance with Virginia FOIA and applicable privacy laws. It also reflects the Administration's broader effort to close the gap between policy intent and day-to-day implementation, including improvements to workflows, staffing, and technology. As such, the Administration is advancing this ordinance as part of its core priority to strengthen City operations, improve the delivery of public information, and ensure that the public has access to financial information.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: NA

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND OTHER GOVERNMENTAL: Pillar One of the Mayoral Action Plan (A Thriving City Hall); Goal A: Do the basics better: Improve core operations of City government; Goal G: Steward public resources through strong financial management.

FISCAL IMPACT: None

DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE: Ninety days from date ordinance is passed.

REQUESTED INTRODUCTION DATE: April 13, 2026

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING DATE: April 27, 2026

REQUESTED AGENDA: Regular Agenda

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL COMMITTEE: Finance Committee

AFFECTED AGENCIES: All departments that authorize payments to vendors who provide goods and services to the City.

RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ORD. OR RES.: Amends Section 12-16 of the City Code.

ATTACHMENTS: NA

STAFF: Letitia Shelton, Director of Finance