

INTRODUCED: June 9, 2025

AN ORDINANCE No. 2025-138

To amend City Code § 2-1204, concerning the residency of certain officers and employees, to modify the City's residency requirement for certain officers and employees.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patrons – Ms. Abubaker, Ms. Gibson, Ms. Jones, Ms. Trammell,  
Mr. Breton, and Ms. Lynch

\_\_\_\_\_  
Approved as to form and legality  
by the City Attorney  
\_\_\_\_\_

PUBLIC HEARING: JUN 23 2025 AT 6 P.M.

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That section 2-1204 of the Code of City of Richmond (2020) be and is hereby **amended** as follows:

**Sec. 2-1204. Residency of certain officers and employees.**

(a) For the purposes of this section, words or terms not specially defined shall be interpreted in accord with such normal dictionary meaning or customary usage as is appropriate to the context. For purposes of this section, the term "principal residence" means that address where the employee can provide written documentation of the following:

(1) The payment of a mortgage or rent.

AYES: \_\_\_\_\_ NOES: \_\_\_\_\_ ABSTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_ REJECTED: \_\_\_\_\_ STRICKEN: \_\_\_\_\_

(2) The listing in the employee's name of household utility accounts, such as gas, electricity, telephone, water, stormwater, wastewater, cable television, and internet access.

(3) The receipt of U.S. mail.

(4) The use of such address for voter registration, vehicle registration, and the filing of Federal, State and local tax returns.

(b) The persons [~~holding the following enumerated positions in the City government~~] employed in one of the job classifications enumerated below shall be required to have their principal residence within the City during their continuance in such office or employment:

(1) Chief of Fire and Emergency Services.

(2) Chief of Police.

(3) Chief Administrative Officer.

(4) Director of Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response.

(5) Director of Public Utilities.

(6) Director of Public Works.

(7) Director of Social Services.

(8) Director of Information Technology.

(9) Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

(10) Council Chief of Staff.

(11) City Attorney.

(12) City Clerk.

(13) Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Senior.

(14) Senior Department Director.

- (15) Chief of Staff.
- (16) City Auditor.
- (17) Director of Economic Development.
- (18) Director of Finance.
- (19) Director of Richmond Gas Works.
- (20) Executive Director, Richmond Retirement System.
- (21) City Assessor.
- (22) Deputy City Attorney.
- (23) Director of Budget and Strategic Planning.
- (24) Director of Citizen Service and Response.
- (25) Director of General Services.
- (26) Director of Housing and Community Development.
- (27) Director of Human Resources.
- (28) Director of Justice Services.
- (29) Director of Neighborhood and Community Services.
- (30) Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities.
- (31) Director of Planning and Development Review.
- (32) Director of Procurement Services.
- (33) Director of Community Wealth Building.
- (34) Inspector General.
- (35) Library Director.
- (36) Director of Intergovernmental Affairs.
- (37) Director of Revenue Administration.

(38) Director of Strategic Communications and Civic Engagement.

(39) Director of Sustainability.

(40) Director of Animal Care and Control.

(41) Director of Minority Business Development.

(42) Commissioner of Buildings.

(43) Chief Capital Projects Manager.

(c) Notwithstanding the requirement to reside within the City as provided in subsection (b) of this section, all persons who are appointed to hold any of the positions listed in subsection (b) of this section and who have their principal residence within a ~~[100-mile]~~ 60-mile radius of the City's corporate boundaries at the time of their appointment may maintain such existing residence upon obtaining a residency waiver. A request for a residency waiver may be considered by an appointing authority only upon receipt of written documentation from the person selected demonstrating either of the following situations:

(1) Moving to the City will cause such person to either lose on the sale of the existing residence or expend on the purchase of a new residence an amount of money greater than twice the amount of increase in annual salary generated by the appointment;

(2) Moving to the City will cause such person to lose eligibility for special educational, medical or other special family services which are not available in the City;  
[or]

(3) Such person is the sole caretaker of an immediate family member and has to maintain such person's residence in close proximity to that family member to continue to provide such care~~[-]~~; or

(4) Such person has at least one child enrolled in an elementary or secondary school located within a 60-mile radius of the City's corporate boundaries and moving into the City's corporate boundaries would be disruptive to the child's educational experience.

(d) Any person employed or appointed on a ~~[full-time]~~ permanent basis to fill any position subject to the residence requirements of this section shall establish a principal residence within the City not later than ~~[12]~~ 18 months after commencing work in such position. The appointing authority shall, in such instances, obtain a written acknowledgment of the residence requirement from the person appointed before such person commences work in the position.

(e) No other officer or employee of the City shall be required to live in the City, except as may otherwise be provided under the Charter or applicable State law.

(f) Any person ~~[occupying a position to which the residence requirements would otherwise apply, but who, prior to July 1, 2018, was not required to maintain a principal residence within the City]~~ employed or appointed on a permanent basis on or before July 1, 2025, shall not, by virtue of adoption of the ordinance from which this section is derived, be required to establish a principal residence in the City. ~~[Such]~~ As required in subsection (d) of this section, such person, however, shall ~~[be subject to]~~ comply with the residence requirements within eighteen months from the effective date of a promotion if such person is promoted to a more responsible position after adoption of the ordinance from which this section is derived.

§ 2. This ordinance shall be in force and effect on July 1, 2025.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



# Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

**RECEIVED**

By City Attorney's Office at 10:42 am, Jun 05, 2025

## Office of the Council Chief of Staff

### Ordinance/Resolution Request

**TO** Laura Drewry, City Attorney

**THROUGH** RJ Warren, Council Chief of Staff  
Office of the Council Chief of Staff

**FROM** Will Perkins, Senior Legislative Services Manager  
Office of the Council Chief of Staff

**COPY** Sarah Abubaker Councilmember, 4<sup>th</sup> District  
Timmy Siverd, 4<sup>th</sup> District Liaison  
Tabrica Rentz, Deputy City Attorney  
Danielle F. Smith, Assistant City Attorney

**DATE** June 5, 2025

**PAGE/s** 1 of 5

**TITLE** Amendment to Residency Requirements for Directors and Above

This is a request for the drafting of an **Ordinance** ☒ **Resolution** ☐

#### REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON

Chief Patron: Sarah Abubaker  
Co-Patrons: Kenya Gibson, Nicole Jones, Reva Trammell

#### SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE

Government Operations

#### ORDINANCE SUMMARY

To amend City Code § 2-1204, concerning residency of certain officers and employees for the purposes of the following:

- Expand the number of positions required to live in the City of Richmond to include 43 specific positions, aligned with the Senior Executive Service classification,
- Modify the waiver process by which persons in impacted positions may be exempted from residency requirements including that their principal residence must be within a 60-mile radius of the City and persons with at least one child enrolled in elementary or secondary school and moving into the City's corporate boundaries would be disruptive to the child's educational experience.
- Extend the time for impacted persons to relocate to the city to 18 months, and
- Exempt persons already in the Senior Executive Service or who previously qualified for a residency waiver as of July 1, 2025, from these requirements unless such person is promoted.

## BACKGROUND

This ordinance amends Sec. 2-1204, Residency of Certain Officers and Employees. It seeks to provide Richmond residents with a local government that is more directly attuned to and accountable for their needs. Through the requirement to live within City limits, Directors will more directly feel issues, including infrastructure, billing issues, etc. It would also provide more visibility for Directors among residents.

There was historically a residency requirement for senior-level City staff that was repealed in 2018 (Ord. 2018-110). This ordinance seeks to return to the pre-2018 standard for residency of senior officials.

This ordinance establishes a new, longer list of positions required to have their principal residence in the City of Richmond. The ordinance identifies **43 specific positions**, aligned with the current [Senior Executive Service \(SES\)](#) (Sec. 2-1291 and current pay plan, Ordinance 2024-101) as the classification of employees required to maintain their principal residence within the City.

Classification Title	Salary Minimum	Salary Midpoint	Salary Maximum
Chief Administrative Officer	227,280	303,424	379,568
City Attorney	206,621	275,841	345,061
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Senior	206,621	275,841	345,061
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer	187,836	250,765	313,695
Chief of Fire and Emergency Services	170,757	227,971	285,184
Chief of Police	170,757	227,971	285,184
Director of Public Utilities	170,757	227,971	285,184
Senior Department Director	170,757	227,971	285,184
Chief of Staff	155,242	207,246	259,250
City Auditor	155,242	207,246	259,250
Council Chief of Staff	155,242	207,246	259,250
Director of Economic Development	155,242	207,246	259,250
Director of Emergency Communications, Preparedness, and Response	155,242	207,246	259,250
Director of Finance	155,242	207,246	259,250
Director of Information Technology	155,242	207,246	259,250
Director of Public Works	155,242	207,246	259,250
Director of Richmond Gas Works	155,242	207,246	259,250
Director of Social Services	155,242	207,246	259,250
Executive Director, Richmond Retirement System	155,242	207,246	259,250
City Assessor	141,119	188,403	235,687
Deputy City Attorney	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director of Budget and Strategic Planning	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director of Citizen Service and Response	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director of General Services	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director of Housing and Community Development	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director of Human Resources	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director of Justice Services	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director of Neighborhood & Community Services	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director of Planning and Development Review	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director of Procurement Services	141,119	188,403	235,687
Director, Office of Community Wealth Building	141,119	188,403	235,687
Inspector General	141,119	188,403	235,687
Library Director	141,119	188,403	235,687
City Clerk	128,297	171,271	214,244
Director of Intergovernmental Affairs	128,297	171,271	214,244
Director of Revenue Administration	128,297	171,271	214,244
Director of the Office of Strategic Communications and Civic Engagement	128,297	171,271	214,244

Director of the Office of Sustainability	128,297	171,271	214,244
Director, Office of Animal Care and Control	128,297	171,271	214,244
Director, Office of Minority Business Development	128,297	171,271	214,244
Commissioner of Buildings	116,626	155,696	194,765
Chief Capital Projects Manager	106,021	141,537	177,053

Chapter 15 of the Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-1505.) allows localities to condition employment on the basis of residency in a particular locality for ((i) appointees of elected groups or individuals, (ii) officials and employees who by charter or other law serve at the will or pleasure of an appointing authority, (iii) deputies and executive assistants to the chief administrative officer of a locality, or (iv) agency heads, department heads or their equivalents or chief executive officers of government operations. Regionally, the City of Richmond is unique for requiring even a small number of employees to establish principal residency in the City. However, several localities of similar size do have residency requirements for senior staff including Hampton, Norfolk, Charleston, SC and Louisville, KY.

Further, the City of Richmond has made significant investments in increasing employee salaries in recent years, now referring to itself as an "Employer of Choice." The City recently signed collective bargaining agreements with several of its key employee unions. It also raised the minimum wage for City employees to \$20 per hour – up 72% since 2017. The median midpoint salary for SES employees is \$188,403 – over three times the median household income for City of Richmond residents (\$59,000). These salary rates are competitive if not above those available for comparable work in the City's surrounding counties.

To counterbalance these reductions in flexibility, however, the ordinance extends the amount of time employees have to move their principal residence into the City from 12 months to 18 months (new subsection (c), formerly subsection (d)) and refreshes the date before which existing appointees in impacted positions may avoid compliance with this change to residency requirements to July 1, 2025 (new subsection (e), formerly subsection (f)).

The patrons wish to "grandfather in" all SES employees as of July 1, 2025, regardless of residency and does not wish to remove any current employees by virtue of this ordinance including individuals who previously qualified for a residency waiver under Sec. 2-1204 (c)(1)-(3), but believe the radius for waiver eligibility should be shrunk to 60 miles (from 100 miles) for future employees to require greater proximity to the City itself and add a fourth waiver qualification for parents of school-aged children:

*"(c) Notwithstanding the requirement to reside within the City ... A request for a residency waiver may be considered by an appointing authority only upon receipt of written documentation from the person selected demonstrating either of the following situations:*

- 1) Moving to the City will cause such person to either lose on the sale of the existing residence or expend on the purchase of a new residence an amount of money greater than twice the amount of increase in annual salary generated by the appointment;*
- 2) Moving to the City will cause such person to lose eligibility for special educational, medical or other special family services which are not available in the City; or*
- 3) Such person is the sole caretaker of an immediate family member and has to maintain such person's residence in close proximity to that family member to continue to provide such care.*
- 4) Such person has at least one child enrolled in an elementary or*



secondary school located within a 60-mile radius of the City's corporate boundaries and moving into the City's corporate boundaries would be disruptive to the child's educational experience."

**Review of local legislative record:**

[Ord. 2018-110 \(Adopted 1/28/2019\)](#)

- Made several changes to residency requirements, including:
  - Removed several positions from (b), the list of enumerated positions required to maintain principal residence in the City, cutting the total number of positions from 26 to 12:
    1. Chief of Fire and Emergency Services
    2. Chief of Police
    3. Chief Administrative Officer
    4. Director of Emergency Communications
    5. Director of Public Utilities
    6. Director of Public Works
    7. Director of Social Services
    8. Director of Information Technology
    9. Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
    10. Council Chief of Staff
    11. City Attorney
    12. City Clerk
  - Deleted (c) and (d) which included residency requirements for all City Council appointees, Deputies or assistants to the mayor or Chief Administrative officer (CAO), directors or agency heads appointed by the CAO, and all at-will employees at pay range 21 and above or who receive equivalent pay and six additional specific positions:
    1. Business Management Officer
    2. Chief of Risk Management
    3. City Engineer
    4. Commissioner of Buildings
    5. Deputy City Clerk
    6. Information Technology Manager I.
  - Adjusted the area in which employees may live to obtain a waiver from residency requirements from the Richmond-Petersburg Metropolitan Statistical Area to within 100-mile radius of the city's corporate boundaries.
  - Clarified that residency requirements only apply to full-time basis (not interim) employees.
  - Allowed impacted employees in their position prior to July 1, 2018 to not move into the City unless they receive a promotion to a more responsible position.
- Justification provided at the time of introduction included that "The City currently has one of the strictest residency requirement policies compared to surrounding localities. The patrons believe that to be an attractive employer in the region, the City should be able to employ qualified professionals that live in other nearby and surrounding counties without requiring them to establish residency in the City limits ... the patrons believe that the residency requirement remains vital for elected officials, and the limited number of positions where the need for a quick, in-person response to emergency situations is important for public safety."

[Ord. 2018-080 \(Adopted 5/14/2018\)](#)

- Added three enumerated positions (Director of Housing and Community Development, Director of Citizen Service and Response, and Inspector General) and removed one position (Executive Director, Port of Richmond) from the list required to maintain principal residency in the City, making the total 26 positions.

[Ord. 2010-21-67 \(Adopted 4/26/2010\)](#)

- Shrunk the list of positions required to maintain principal residency from 32 to 25 positions.

[Ord. 2007-287-255 \(Adopted 11/12/2007\)](#)

- Council gave itself the authority to waive residency requirements for individuals by resolution.
- Notably, Mayor Wilder vetoed this ordinance, citing six objections including that it was written to protect the City Auditor who was attempting to move out of the City reportedly for cultural and/or religious reasons. A separate ordinance (Ord. 2007-260) was stricken on 11/12/2007 but would have removed the City Auditor from the list of positions required to maintain principal residency in the City.

[Ord. 2005-206-182 \(Adopted 9/12/2005\)](#)

- Adjusted the list of appointed positions required to maintain principal residence in the City in (d), citing updates to the City's pay classifications since 1992 to realign residency requirements with organizational status and relative pay range value.

[Ord. 1997-035-65 \(Adopted 2/24/1997\)](#)

- Removed dozens of positions from the list of enumerated positions required to maintain principal residency in the City.
- Added a waiver process for employees living in the Richmond-Petersburg Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and extended the time period for them to move into the area to 12 months – up from 6 months.

[Ord. 81-254-1982-006 \(Adopted 1/11/1982\)](#)

- Eliminated residency requirements for City employees below the level of directors and assistant directors, the city librarian, and the heads of departments and agencies subject to appointment by the City Council.

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Fiscal Impact	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Budget Amendment Required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Estimated Cost or Revenue Impact	
None	

Attachment/s No ☒