



Legislation Text

File #: ORD. 2019-264, **Version:** 1

To amend ch. 2, art. V of the City Code by adding therein a new div. 10 (§§ 2-1002-2-1006) for the purpose of establishing an Ethics Reform Commission. (As Amended)

WHEREAS, the City believes that it is in the best interests of the citizens of the city of Richmond that the City establish an Ethics Reform Commission to advise the Council and the Mayor on matters involving the implementation of the recommendations of the Ethics Reform Task Force established by Ordinance No. 2017-147, adopted September 11, 2017, as amended by Ordinance No. 2018-038, adopted February 26, 2018; and

WHEREAS, the Council intends to evaluate the purpose and duties of the Commission by December 31 on a biennial basis to determine if the Commission should continue in existence; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the annual operating costs for the Commission will be approximately \$5,000, including ten staff hours;

NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That Chapter 2, Article V of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015) be and is hereby amended and reordained by **adding therein a new** Division 10, consisting of sections numbered 2-1002 through 2-1006, as follows:

DIVISION 10

ETHICS REFORM COMMISSION

Sec. 2-1002. Created.

There is hereby created a commission of the City of Richmond with indefinite duration to be known as the Ethics Reform Commission for the purpose of providing to the Council and the Mayor information and advice concerning the implementation of the recommendations of the Ethics Reform Task Force established

pursuant to Ordinance No. 2017-147, adopted September 11, 2017, as amended by Ordinance No. 2018-038, adopted February 26, 2018.

Sec. 2-1003. Composition.

The Commission shall be composed of 11 members, subject to the conditions set forth in this section, as follows:

(a) The Council shall appoint nine members and the Mayor shall appoint two members.

(b) All appointments shall be otherwise governed by Sections 2-755 and 2-756.

(c) All other aspects of the Commission and its membership not addressed in this division shall be governed by Chapter 2, Article V, Division 1.

Sec. 2-1004. Qualifications.

The membership of the Commission should (i) be broadly representative of each of the City's nine Council districts and (ii) possess experience and expertise concerning ethical standards in both the public sector and the private sector and concerning areas including, but not limited to, procurement, human resources, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and related issues.

Sec. 2-1005. Duties.

The Commission shall serve as an advisory body to the Council and the Mayor. The Commission shall provide to the Council and the Mayor information and advice concerning the implementation of the recommendations of the Ethics Reform Task Force established pursuant to Ordinance No. 2017-147, adopted September 11, 2017, as amended by Ordinance No. 2018-038, adopted February 26, 2018. In addition, the Commission shall provide to the Council and the Mayor information and advice concerning the City's implementation of the following recommendations of the Ethics Reform Task Force:

(a) Implementation of a requirement that City employees must sign conflict of interest disclosure forms.

(b) Development of stronger policies for strict enforcement of disclosure of conflicts of interest

between City contractors and City employees.

(c) Update ordinances, administrative regulations, and any related City departmental policies to require the disclosure of conflicts of interest.

(d) Update ordinances, administrative regulations, and any related City departmental policies to reflect current state law related to lobbying and monitor compliance by City employees.

(e) Establish a uniform code of ethics for all City employees to be published in a handbook and on the City's website.

(f) Implementation of a requirement that the Department of Human Resources develop and implement an ethics training module by July 1, 2020, and monitor compliance with mandatory completion of ethics training.

The Commission shall submit a report to the Council's Organizational Development Standing Committee by December 31 of each year outlining the City's progress towards the implementation of the Ethics Reform Task Force's recommendations.

Sec. 2-1006. Administration.

(a) *Quorum.* Six voting members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum.

(b) *Officers.* The Commission shall select from among its membership a chair, a vice chair, a secretary, and such other officers as it may deem necessary to discharge its functions.

(c) *Meetings.* The Commission shall meet at least once every four months and as often as the Commission may deem necessary.

(d) *Reporting.* Within 15 days after the end of each quarter, the Commission shall provide the Council and the Mayor with a report on the Commission's activities and accomplishments for the preceding quarter.

(e) *Freedom of Information.* The Commission shall keep minutes of its meetings in accordance with the requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

(f) *Procedures.* The Commission may adopt rules of procedure or bylaws, approved as to form and legality by the City Attorney and not inconsistent with this division or other applicable law, to govern the conduct of its meetings and affairs. For purposes of section 2-761, the Commission is classified as “advisory.”

(g) *Staff and Resources.* The Office of the Council Chief of Staff, with the assistance of other departments and agencies of the City, as needed, shall provide the necessary support for the Commission subject to the appropriation of sufficient funds therefor, provided that City employees shall not be responsible for coordinating the logistics of meetings, coordinating meeting space, creating agendas, completing minutes, and preparing reports.

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