

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

AN OVERVIEW

The Crest Hill Civil Service Commission is empowered by law to oversee the hiring, promotion and termination of certain employees of the City. While the Illinois Civil Service Commission Act, 65 ILCS 5/10-1-1 *et seq.* establishes the legal authority for the establishment of a civil service commission, it was the residents to the City of Crest Hill that actually established the Crest Hill Civil Service Commission through the passage of a referendum. Section 10-1-43 of the Civil Service Commission Act sets out the process for the creation of a civil service commission. In order to abolish the civil service commission, the citizens of Crest Hill would have to pass another referendum to abolish the civil service commission. While the State of Illinois also maintains a civil service commission, it is not in any way affiliated with the Crest Hill Civil Service Commission. Both operate independently. If the City were to abolish the Civil Service Commission, the City would have to establish a fire and police commission to oversee the hiring of police officers. Other City employees would be hired by a process created by the City and overseen by City administration. All Illinois communities with a population of greater than 5,000 are required to establish a police and fire commission for the hiring, promotion and discipline of police officers.

The initial purpose of a civil service commission was to provide an independent, merit-based hiring process for public employers by removing political, nepotism and favoritism considerations.

The civil service commission oversees the administration of the hiring, promotion and termination process for employees not excluded from the classified service of the City. Section 3 of the Civil Service Commission Act requires the Commission to classify all offices and employees of the City for the purposes of establishing hiring and promotion lists. Section 17 of the Act lists those City employees that are exempted from civil service commission authority. These positions include elected municipal officials, the municipal manager, one deputy and one private secretary for each elected municipal official.

The Civil Service Commission is authorized to adopt rules to carry out the purposes of the Civil Service Commission Act. These rules should reflect the requirements set out in the Act. Absent home rule authority, neither the City nor the Civil Service Commission have any authority to expand the requirements of the statute. The Civil Service Commission Act in Section 22 requires the Commission to appoint a chief examiner who is to oversee any examination conducted by the Commission. The chief examiner can be anyone appointed by the Commission, but the chief examiner is subject to the direction of the Civil Service Commission. Historically, in Crest Hill, the chief examiner has been the City Administrator or the Human Resources Director. The chief examiner has no independent authority to conduct exams, hire or promote individuals but only acts at the direction of the Civil Service Commission. Ultimately hiring authority for City of Crest Hill employees comes from the City Council through the City Administrator or elected department head.