



TO: Civil Service Commission
FROM: Michelle Sutherland, Secretary Examiner
DATE: May 8, 2025
SUBJECT: New Police Records Supervisor Position

Recommended Action:

Approve the classification of the new Police Records Supervisor position.

Background:

Law enforcement records are complex and in high demand by many agencies and the general public. The Police Department fields the vast majority of the City's public records requests (PDRs), managing about 75% of the City's PDRs each year. The number of requests has increased 43% in the past four years and is continuing to climb in 2025. Body-worn cameras, funded in the 2025-2026, are expected to both substantially increase the number of PDRs received as well as the complexity of each request for footage. In order to meet the demand, the 2025-2026 budget includes funding for a Records Supervisor and additional records staff. The Records Supervisor will oversee the Department's records disclosure and retention programs, supervise the employees who specialize in these areas, and provide critical expertise.

Public disclosure of records is a high-risk area for local municipalities. Multiple statutes govern what information can be disclosed and under what circumstances. Added to the plethora of pertinent statutes, the body of case law surrounding records disclosure is large and frequently changing. Law enforcement records are particularly risky because the stakes are often high. The records may be used by individuals in court cases or be of particular interest to the media, for example. They often contain sensitive information that, if released incorrectly, can impact the lives of individuals involved with the criminal justice system. Ensuring that law enforcement records are disclosed appropriately requires a high degree of expertise in the public disclosure laws and precedents. It also requires consistent oversight of the work.

Currently, the Police Administrative Manager manages the public disclosure and retention functions. The position also acts as the department's expert in public disclosure and case law. However, these duties are unsustainable given the workload of the Administrative Manager position, with the growth of other workloads managed by the Administrative Manager and the advent of body-worn cameras. A Records Supervisor will provide day-to-day supervision and records expertise that will ensure the workload is handled correctly and will reduce the City's risk of lawsuits related to public records disclosure.

Alternatives:

No alternatives suggested