



RESOLUTION NO. 41931

1 BY REQUEST OF COUNCIL MEMBERS HINES AND SADALGE

2 A RESOLUTION relating to unclassified city service; publishing the process and
3 criteria for determination of unclassified position classifications and positions
4 in city service, and disapproving amendments to the City's personnel rules
5 proposed by the Civil Service Board at its May 7, 2026, meeting that would
6 delegate authority over such determinations to the Civil Service Board.

7 WHEREAS the Civil Service Board, at its May 7, 2026, meeting,
8 approved for filing with the City Clerk, proposed amendments to Chapter 1.24
9 of the Tacoma Municipal Code ("TMC") adding new defined terms and a new
10 Section 1.24.295 governing the determination of unclassified status for position
11 classifications in City service, and

12 WHEREAS the proposed amendments would, among other things:

13 (1) Amend TMC 1.24.920 to define the terms "principal officer" and
14 "assistants to department heads" as those terms are used in Section 6.1 (d) of
15 the City Charter;

16 (2) Add a new TMC Section 1.24.295 requiring that recommendations by
17 the Human Resources Department for unclassified positions be reviewed and
18 approved by the Civil Service Board for compliance with Article VI of the City
19 Charter; and

20 (3) Empower the Civil Service Board to reclassify any position it determines
21 is improperly designated as classified or unclassified, and

22 WHEREAS Section 6.14 (a) of the City Charter grants authority to the
23 Civil Service Board to make and promulgate civil service and personnel rules
24 and amendments thereto, necessary to carry out and enforce the purpose of
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1 Article VI of the City Charter and to present such rules to the City Council for its
2 approval, rejection, alteration, amendment or repeal, and

3 WHEREAS the amendments proposed by the Civil Service Board would
4 more specifically, (1) delegate to the Civil Service Board, ministerial authority to
5 make decisions under Section 6.1 (a) - (c) and (e) - (i) of the City Charter to
6 determine position classifications that are unclassified, and (2) delegate to the
7 Civil Service Board the City Council's authority under to Section 6.1 (d) of the
8 City Charter to determine which employee positions constitute "principal officers"
9 and "assistants to department heads," and to prescribe which positions
10 classifications shall be unclassified, and
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13 WHEREAS the Government Performance and Finance Committee of the
14 City Council received presentations on September 16, 2025, and May 5, 2026,
15 from the Chair of the Civil Service Board ("Board") together with a memorandum
16 from the Chair regarding the Board's investigation of the practices of the Human
17 Resources Department pertaining to the designation of unclassified position
18 classifications and the Board's proposed amendments to the Civil Service Rules
19 to address the Board's concerns arising from that investigation, and
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21 WHEREAS the City Council has carefully considered the Boards' proposed
22 amendments and the underlying basis for those amendments, and understands
23 that the amendments have been proposed to address the internal administrative
24 process for making recommendations to the City Council regarding which position
25 classifications should be unclassified, and
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WHEREAS the City Council further understands that the Board has proposed the amendments to the personnel rules based upon its conclusion that the recommendations made to the City Council for determinations under Section 6.1 of the City Charter are not transparent and based upon clearly articulated criteria, and

WHEREAS the City Council appreciates the Board’s and Chair’s efforts to bring to the attention of the City Council the need for more transparency regarding the process and criteria for determinations of unclassified position classifications, and values the role of the Board in investigating this issue and proposing amendments to the City’s personnel rules to address the Board’s concerns, and

WHEREAS the City Council has reviewed and considered (1) the proposed rules and information provided by the Board through its Chair, (2) the City Charter, (3) the advice of legal counsel, and (4) Exhibit “A” (Flow Chart) describing the internal administrative process in which recommendations are made by the Human Resources Department, in collaboration with the City Attorney’s Office, to the City Council, regarding which position classifications should be unclassified, and

WHEREAS based upon the foregoing, the City Council finds that the administrative process and criteria described in Exhibit “A”:

(1) Conform with the provisions of Sections 6.1 (a) – (c) and (e) – (i) of the City Charter pursuant to which position classifications and positions as described in these sections of the City Charter are categorically unclassified;



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(2) Conforms with the intent of the City Charter and more specifically the provisions of Section 6.1 (d) of the City Charter that establish the position classifications that may, in the discretion of the City Council, be designated as unclassified;

(3) That Exhibit "A" adequately sets forth the process and criteria pursuant to which recommendations and determinations of unclassified position classifications and positions are made;

(4) That publication of Exhibit "A" will provide transparency regarding the process and the criteria supporting these recommendations, and addresses the issues identified by and through the Board's investigation; and

(5) That it is unnecessary to adopt the amendments proposed by the Civil Service Board; Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

Section 1. The City Council hereby adopts the foregoing recitals as findings of the City Council ("Findings") and through adoption of this resolution publishes the Flow Chart set forth in Exhibit "A," setting forth the general process and criteria followed in the administration of Section 6.1 of the City Charter.



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Section 2. That the amendments to Tacoma Municipal Code Chapter 1.24 as proposed by the Civil Service Board pursuant to its action taken May 7, 2026, and on file with the City Clerk, are for the reasons set forth in the Findings of the City Council, not approved and are thus rejected pursuant to Section 6.14 of the City Charter.

Adopted _____

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

CITY OF TACOMA CLASSIFIED vs. UNCLASSIFIED DECISION TREE

Use this decision tree to determine whether a new classification is UNCLASSIFIED or CLASSIFIED under the Tacoma City Charter.

