

**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2022**

**CITY OF SPOKANE**

# **CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

2022

### **CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

Mark Lindsey	Chair
Judith Gilmore	Vice Chair
Craig Hult	
Scott Stephens	
Nicole Palmerton	

### **COMMISSION STAFF**

Kelsey Pearson	Chief Examiner
Jerri Bjork	Examination & Classification Analyst III
Bryan Sullivan	Examination & Classification Analyst III
Ken Hoekema	Examination & Classification Analyst III
Colin Martin	Examination & Classification Analyst III
Lisa Olson	Examination & Classification Analyst III
Blake Munroe	Personnel Analyst I
Elizabeth Caverly	Personnel Analyst I
Caitlin Mackercher	Personnel Analyst I
Shellee Ives	Administrative Specialist
Stephanie Puckett	Clerk III
Morgan Vanderkamp	Clerk III

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## **Mission Statement, Values, and Vision**

### **MISSION**

The Commission is to provide an efficient, effective, merit-based system of employment ensuring that the most qualified applicants are equitably selected and retained.

### **VISION**

Our well-trained, competent, and professional team will utilize best practices, cost-effective technology, and innovation to provide a merit-based employment system that is recognized for excellence in public service.

### **VALUES**

Teamwork

Excellence

Service

Transparency

Equal Opportunity

Merit Principles

## Civil Service Commissioners

The Spokane Civil Service Commission is an independent body created by the City Charter to administer that portion of the Charter pertaining to Civil Service. By mandate of the citizens of Spokane, the Commission is specifically charged with the responsibility of developing and maintaining a classification plan, a comprehensive recruitment program, and practical selection standards for all classified positions in the municipal government.

It is also responsible for providing procedural rules for administration of classified employment and for resolving any differences which may arise as a result of these rules or the Charter. The Spokane City Charter, Article VI, provides the mandate and authority for the City of Spokane's civil service system.

The Civil Service Commission consists of five members: two nominated by the Mayor and appointed by the city council, two appointed by the city employee groups, and one appointed by the other four members. The Commission conducts public meetings on the third Tuesday of each month.

### *Current Commissioners and terms*

Mark Lindsey, Chair.....	Jan. 2015 – Present
Uniformed Employee Groups Appointee.....	Current term ends Dec. 2026
Judith Gilmore, Vice Chair.....	Sep. 2016 – Present
Employee Retirement Board Appointee.....	Current term ends Dec. 2024
Nicole Palmerton.....	Apr. 2021 – Present
City Council Appointee .....	Current term ends Dec. 2024
Scott Stephens.....	Aug. 2017 – Present
Civil Service Commission Appointee .....	Current term ends Dec. 2025
Craig Hult .....	Mar. 2011 - Present
City Council Appointee .....	Current term ends Dec. 2026

### *Commission Legal Counsel*

Mike Piccolo

### *Chief Examiner*

Kelsey Pearson

## *Previous Commissioners and Terms*

Pam Decounter .....	Jan. 2017 – Dec. 2020
Kathryn Sewell.....	Mar. 2015 – Feb. 2017
Jim DeWalt.....	Feb. 2011 – Dec. 2014
Phyllis Gabel .....	Aug. 2008 – Dec. 2016
Cheryl Beckett.....	Dec. 2007 – Jun. 2016
Ronald Stanley .....	Aug. 2007 – Dec. 2010
Robert Van Leuven.....	Mar. 2002 – Dec. 2006
Gerald Sailing .....	Jul. 2001 – Dec. 2007
Carol Lawton.....	Jun. 2000 – Dec. 2010
Ivan Bush.....	Jul. 1997 – Dec. 2000
James L. Kirschbaum .....	Jan. 1995 – Sep. 2001
John Krall .....	Apr. 1993 – Apr. 1995
Kate Quinn .....	Jan. 1992 – Apr. 2000
John M. Maurice.....	Dec. 1991 – Dec. 2007
Barry E. Ryan.....	Oct. 1988 – Mar. 1993
Douglas Amsbury.....	Oct. 1987 – Dec. 2002
Delphine Faison.....	Apr. 1987 – Jan. 1992
Paul P. Nolan .....	Jan. 1987 – Oct. 1987
James E. Bates.....	Apr. 1986 – Sep. 1988
O’Neil Vinson.....	Jan. 1985 – Nov. 1996
Howard A. King.....	Sep. 1984 – Feb. 1986
Seaton M. Daly, Jr.....	Feb. 1979 – Dec. 1986
Frances N. Scott.....	Jan. 1979 – Dec. 1991
Richard A. Moser .....	Feb. 1973 – Jan. 1985
Elmer L. Bierly .....	Apr. 1972 – Jan. 1973
Howard A. Anderson .....	Jan. 1971 – Dec. 1986
C. Grover Wilson.....	Dec. 1986 – Nov. 1978
Jerome C. Kopet.....	Nov. 1967 – Nov. 1978
James E. Borg .....	Jan. 1966 – Mar. 1972
John Edgar.....	Apr. 1965 – Dec. 1965
Arthur M. Hansen.....	Jan. 1965 – Aug. 1984
William S. J. May.....	Apr. 1964 – Dec. 1970
Robert M. Hardy.....	Sep. 1963 – Apr. 1965
Verne D. Warren .....	Jan. 1961 – Dec. 1964
George E. Robey.....	Jan. 1961 – Mar. 1967
Dr. Robert Southcombe .....	Jan. 1961 – Mar. 1964
Peter Piper .....	Jan. 1961 – Mar. 1963
Thomas F. Meagher.....	Jan. 1961 – Nov. 1967

## Classification Work

In accordance with the City Charter, the Spokane Civil Service Commission is charged with the responsibility to classify all positions of the City with the exception of elective, appointive, and temporary/seasonal positions. Selection to such classified positions is required to be in conformance with Civil Service Commission Rules and Charter provisions.

An equitable classification plan is imperative for all large, well-established organizations. Position classification looks at the position itself, not the individual employee currently doing the job. This approach helps to provide position comparisons within the organization, determine the skills, knowledge and abilities needed, determine the level of responsibilities, and relationships among different levels of work.

2022 saw an additional nine new classifications created and the deletion of five. We will continue to carefully evaluate the need for new classifications as we work to streamline and develop a more efficient classification plan.

A bright spot in the 2022 data is the hiring of an additional seventy-seven classified employees.

### Classification Actions

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Begin Year</b>	318	298	322	340	360	347	357	355	358	362
<b>Added</b>	11	30	26	41	22	12	5	13	8	9
<b>Deleted</b>	31	6	8	21	35	2	7	10	4	5
<b>Year End</b>	298	322	340	360	347	357	355	358	362	366

### Positions Filled

*(Permanent FTEs; totals at year end)*

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Classified</b>	1759	1766	1808	1864	1888	1942	1932	1910	1909	1986
<b>Non-Classified</b>	104	113	113	113	111	113	104	112	110	113
<b>Total</b>	1863	1879	1921	1977	1999	2055	2036	2022	2019	2099
<b>Percentage Non-Classified</b>	5.6%	6.0%	5.9%	5.7%	5.6%	5.5%	5.1%	5.5%	5.4%	5.4%

## Non-Classified Employees

As noted in the previous section, non-classified employees numbered 113 at the end of 2022. This includes elected officials. Library personnel, temporary/seasonal and project employees are excluded from this count. Distribution of these 113 non-classified positions follows:

### Non-Classified Employees

*Permanent employees; excludes Library*

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Mayor's Office	7	5	6	6	7	7	6	5	6	7
City Council	14	15	16	16	15	15	16	21	21	18
Division Directors	5	8	5	6	7	6	3	6	6	6
Dept. Heads	30	28	26	26	27	28	26	27	24	27
Asst/Deputy Dept. Heads	12	24	23	25	20	16	13	13	14	16
Legal Office	25	22	25	24	24	24	25	24	24	23
Police	4	3	4	3	6	7	6	7	6	6
Municipal Court	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	8
EMS/Fire	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	2	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>113</b>

The City also employs temporary/seasonal employees throughout the year. These employees are not classified employees. The concern of the Civil Service Commission is to ensure temporary employees are not being used in lieu of permanent employees for year-round work. It can be useful, then, to look at the fluctuation through the course of a whole year to assess the seasonality.

### Temp/Seasonal Employees

*Total, all departments except Library*

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Active at Month End	152	141	178	228	317	477	480	279	250	214	175	167

### Monthly Temp/Seasonal Headcount

*Year 2022. Select departments shown*

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Park & Recreation	94	87	98	142	215	369	363	169	148	128	113	107
Golf Fund	1	1	29	32	36	40	38	36	33	21	1	1
Police	15	15	15	14	14	15	16	15	15	16	16	17
Legal	5	5	5	4	6	4	5	6	6	6	6	6
Water	2	1	1	3	6	5	9	8	8	8	6	6
CD/HS Ops	5	3	3	5	6	6	6	5	4	4	3	3
Solid Waste Disposal	3	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5



## Turnover

Employment turnover rates for an organization can indicate the degree of health or efficiency of that organization. The turnover rate in the City has historically been relatively low, hovering around 6%, however the rate has been on the rise over the last 10 years. In 2022 the rate was a record high of 10.5%; the previous record was 10.1% in 2021. Some interesting data include:

- We hired more employees that we lost with 281 hires against 204 separations.
- Resignations are down 20% year over year.
- Retirements are up 21% year over year.
- Probation failures were up 56% in 2022, however we see this tracking closely with an overall increase in hiring (191 new hires in 2021 and 281 in 2022) –

The past several years have seen an increase in the turnover rate among all employees (classified and non-classified). The year of 2022 saw the highest total turnover, highest turnover rate, and highest 10-year trailing turnover rate in the data available (going back 28 years to 1994).

### Turnover Causes (Classified Employees)

Year	Retired	Deceased	Laid Off	Failed Probation	Discharged	Resigned	Leave of Absence to Exempt	TOTAL	Rate
2013	85	4	16	3	1	28	*	137	7.8 %
2014	74	3	11	3	2	32	6	131	7.4 %
2015	71	4	6	7	1	27	2	118	6.5 %
2016	81	3	1	8	2	36	2	133	7.1 %
2017	64	2	7	15	3	33	5	129	6.8 %
2018	73	1	7	16	2	31	2	132	6.8 %
2019	82	2	17	17	1	36	2	157	8.1 %
2020	82	4	6	13	3	12	6	126	6.6 %
2021	82	1	20	25	0	62	2	192	10.1 %
2022	99	2	9	39	1	49	5	204	10.5 %

\*Leave of Absence to Exempt was not tracked prior to 2014.

The following page provides some interesting figures showing turnover-related trends.

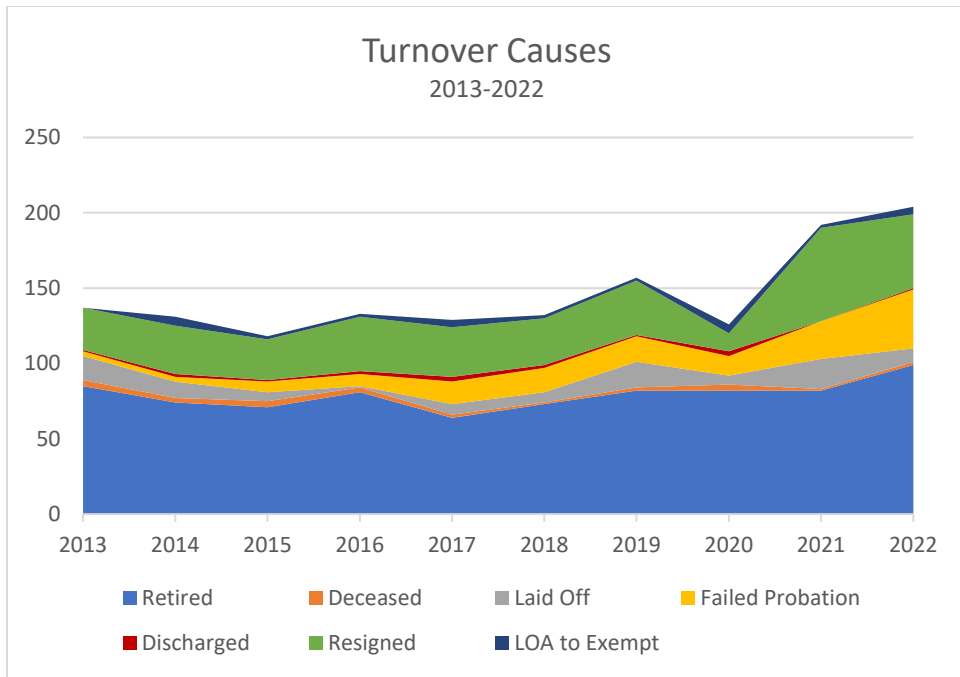


Chart 1

*The proportion of separations of any given separation reason fluctuates from year-to-year. This visualization shows the total separations and the proportion of that total each reason represents.*

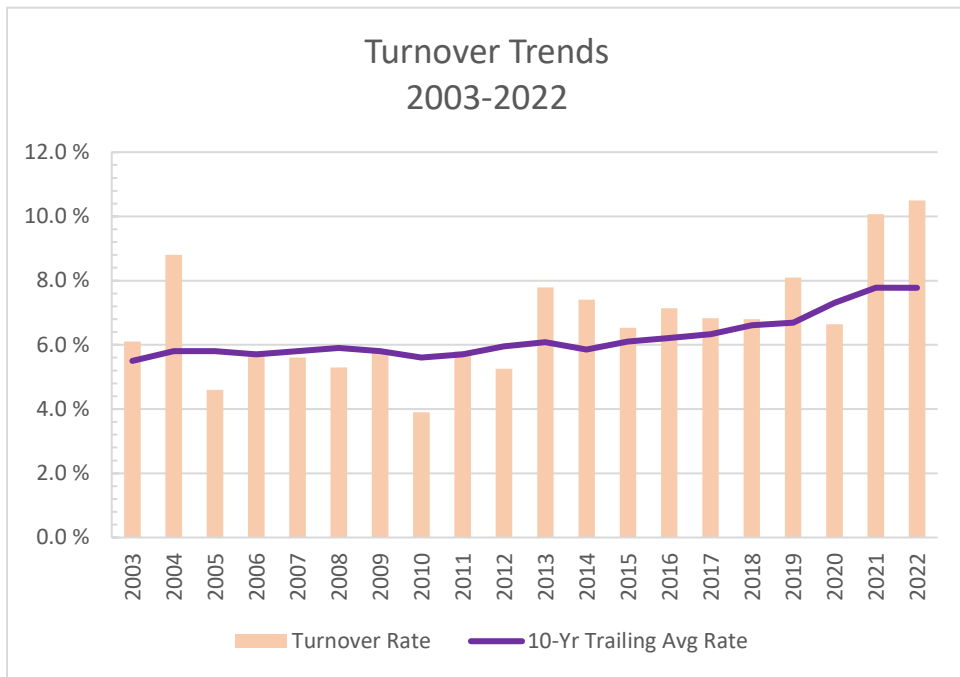


Table 2

*This chart shows the turnover rate for a given year (vertical bar) and tracks the 10-year trailing turnover rate (purple line). Historically, the 10-year trailing rate has hovered around 6%, but the last several years have seen this increase. For 2021 and 2022, the 10-year trailing average has been closer to 8%.*

## Recruiting Update

The Civil Service Commission is responsible for establishing and maintaining eligibility standards for all classified positions in the City work force and for recruiting qualified applicants to fill those positions. Fulfillment of the recruiting responsibility is accomplished using multiple channels and platforms. These include NEOGOV/governmentjobs.com, the City’s jobs website, Careers in Government, Indeed, local college and university student and alumni outreach, Spokane Worksource, social media profiles, various online job boards, professional organizations, and the City Gazette.

It has been a challenging recruiting time for the City with overall applicant numbers down and number of vacancies up. We worked in partnership with hiring departments to target advertising to specific professional organizations, created more appealing and understandable language to draw applicants in and spent more advertising money on larger online recruiting platforms like Indeed, Careers in Government, LinkedIn, and the like.

Recruiting will continue to evolve as we bring on a Marketing Coordinator and develop a more strategic plan for 2023 and beyond.

The number of recruitments in 2022 (see table below) represented a 29% increase over 2021 recruitments, and we set a record for the highest number of total recruitments since at least 2016 (the first year of NEOGOV data). Total recruitments will continue to rise into 2023 as many current employees retire and overall turnover rates are elevated.

### Recruitments

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Open-Entry Recruitments	58	42	69	50	50	86	88
Promotional Recruitments	44	35	30	32	35	40	75
Other (Transfer/demotion, layoff, etc.)	0	0	0	3	4	7	9
<b>Total Annual Recruitments</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>172</b>

### Applications

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Applications Received	4348	4742	5850	4486	3833	4621	5397
Unique Applicants/People	3390	3711	4397	3520	3173	3202	3925
Open-Entry Applications	3800	4335	5218	3848	2915	4018	4720
Average Applicants per Recruitment	52.8	76.1	80.3	65.2	62.0	56.6	47.2
Promotional Applications	522	406	448	504	449	550	572
Average Applicants per Recruitment	7.9	7.3	7.5	10.3	9.4	9.8	7.2

## Trends for Key Classifications

The below classifications are regularly recruited, are employed in large numbers across multiple departments in the City and have minimal entry qualifications. These jobs have historically been relatively easy to recruit for, and they all serve as important internal talent development pipelines for higher classifications.

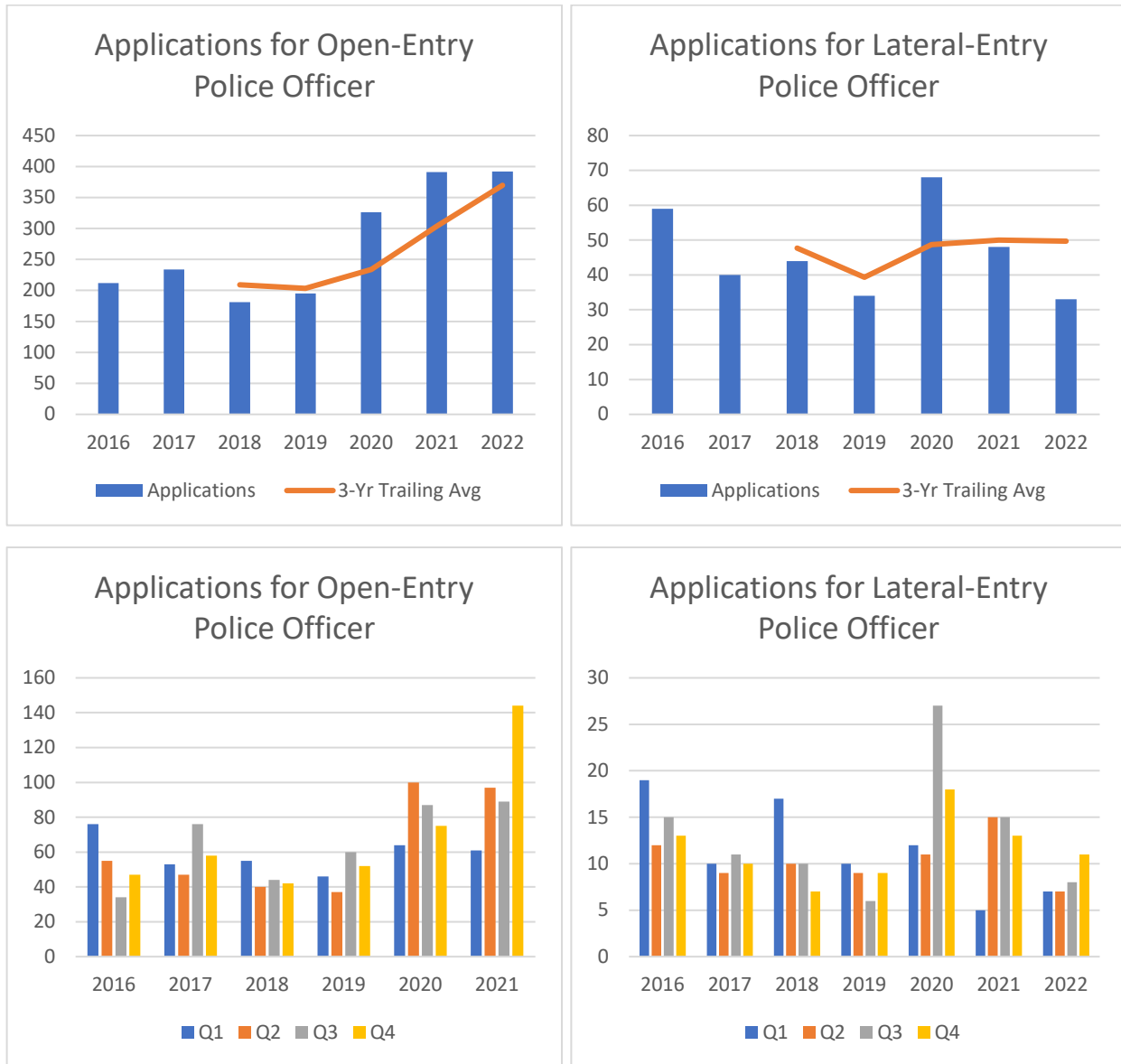
<b>Laborer I</b>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022 (Q2)</i>	<i>2022 (Q4)</i>
Recruitment Length (weeks)	2	2	4	5.5	4
Applications Received	293	219	111	52	106
Candidates on Eligible List	161	103	65	34	65
Candidates Hired	13	29	17	11	5*
<b>Clerk II</b>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2022</i>
Recruitment Length (weeks)	3	2	2	2	3
Applications Received	265	364	340	189	92
Candidates on Eligible List	88	91	113	91	47
Candidates Hired	14	15	2	11	7*
<b>Refuse Collector I</b>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>
Recruitment Length (weeks)	1	2	2	4	6
Applications Received	137	163	189	123	57
Candidates on Eligible List	106	110	119	73	33
Candidates Hired	22	14	26	23	8
<b>Custodian I</b>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>
Recruitment Length (weeks)	1	2	2	4	6
Applications Received	79	151	140	118	63
Candidates on Eligible List	51	69	78	61	34
Candidates Hired	2	5	6	11	3*

\* Asterisk indicates the eligible list is still active, and number hired may increase.

We are keeping recruitment periods open longer and seeing fewer total applicants. Fewer applicants mean fewer candidates on the eligible list; when these short eligible lists are exhausted, recruiting must begin again outside the typical 2-year cycle. Because these classifications are a key City entry point, vacancies in higher classifications are becoming increasingly difficult to fill.

## Trends in Police Officer Recruiting

Recruitment for open-entry and lateral-entry Police Officers has been nearly continuous over the past eight years as the City seeks to fill vacancies due to impending retirements and newly approved positions. The following charts show the trends in application numbers over this period.



Number of applicants has been on the rise over the last 3 years. Beginning in 2020, the City of Spokane saw a significant increase in open-entry applications. Lateral-entry applications have fluctuated following a spike in 2020; the trend line appears flat over the period, but expectations are for a slight decline in lateral applications.



## Examinations

Under the City Charter, the Civil Service Commission has the duty of providing for open, free, and competitive examinations to test the relative fitness of applicants for all classified positions. Of growing importance today is the concept of openness in government. This is reflected both in legislation and in the interest shown by private citizens in the way their government operates. Congress has expressed its concern that selection in government career service be based upon objective and equitable standards reflecting merit at all levels of government: local, state, and federal. The City of Spokane is subject to audit by a variety of federal and state compliance agencies to assure adherence to such standards, including the Uniform Guidelines for Employee Selection Procedures.

Cooperation with departments is essential in determining the elements of a given job to be tested for, and in assessing the important duties and areas which may have an impact on those duties. Civil Service can be of assistance to departments in identifying possible areas of concern. The departments, from their knowledge, may assist us in locating sources of reference materials upon which to base examinations and whether the examination is of written, oral, training and experience evaluations, or performance. To a large extent, their cooperation is attributable to the department's awareness of the needs fulfilled and benefits derived from a high-quality examination process. This cooperation also adds an accountability element to the process which is critical.

Applications Received	5397
Candidates Eligible	2669

## Requisitions

Requisitions are the method that departments use to notify Civil Service of a vacancy with the intent to fill.

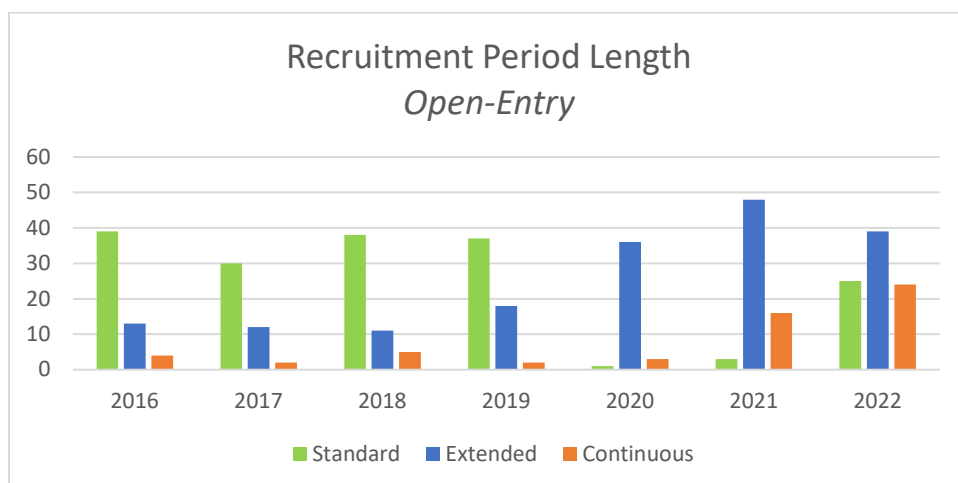
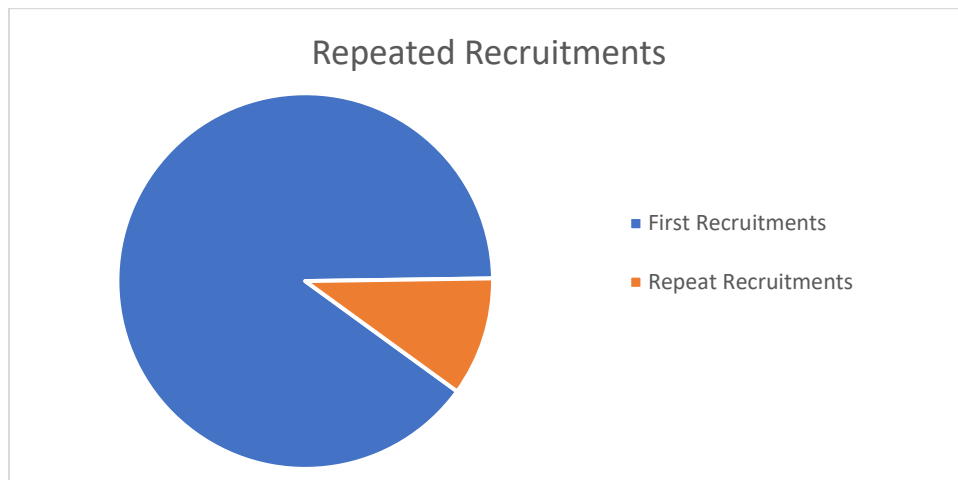
- There was a 16.8% increase in approved requisitions in 2022.
- There was a 17.4% increase in completed or filled requisitions in 2022.

Requisition Approved	703
Requisitions Completed	689

## Eligible Lists & Timelines

Civil Service has established a goal to ensure that 100% of eligible lists to be maintained have a new eligible list ready to take effect as an existing list expires. This goal is not easily realized.

Eligible lists are exhausted at a much higher rate than in years past and we expect this trend to continue for the foreseeable future. Many times, we need to either recruit on a continual basis or re-open the same recruitment multiple times during the year. This change decreases the number of regular, cyclic recruitments that we can do. As a result, it is not currently realistic to ensure 100% of expiring lists have a new list ready. Many of our promotional, internal eligible lists are also being exhausted quickly as we do not have current employees who yet meet promotional minimum qualifications to test. We are mitigating these issues by re-testing more often, keeping recruitments open continuously and offering shortage recruitments with alternative minimum qualifications.



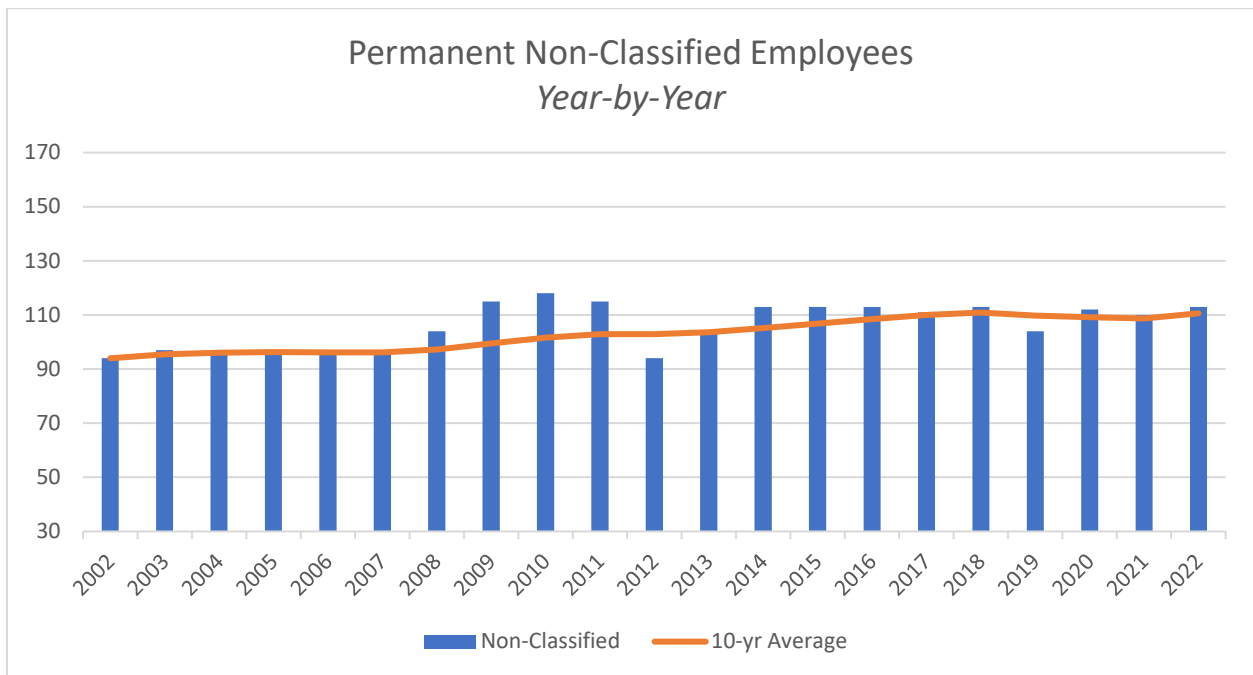
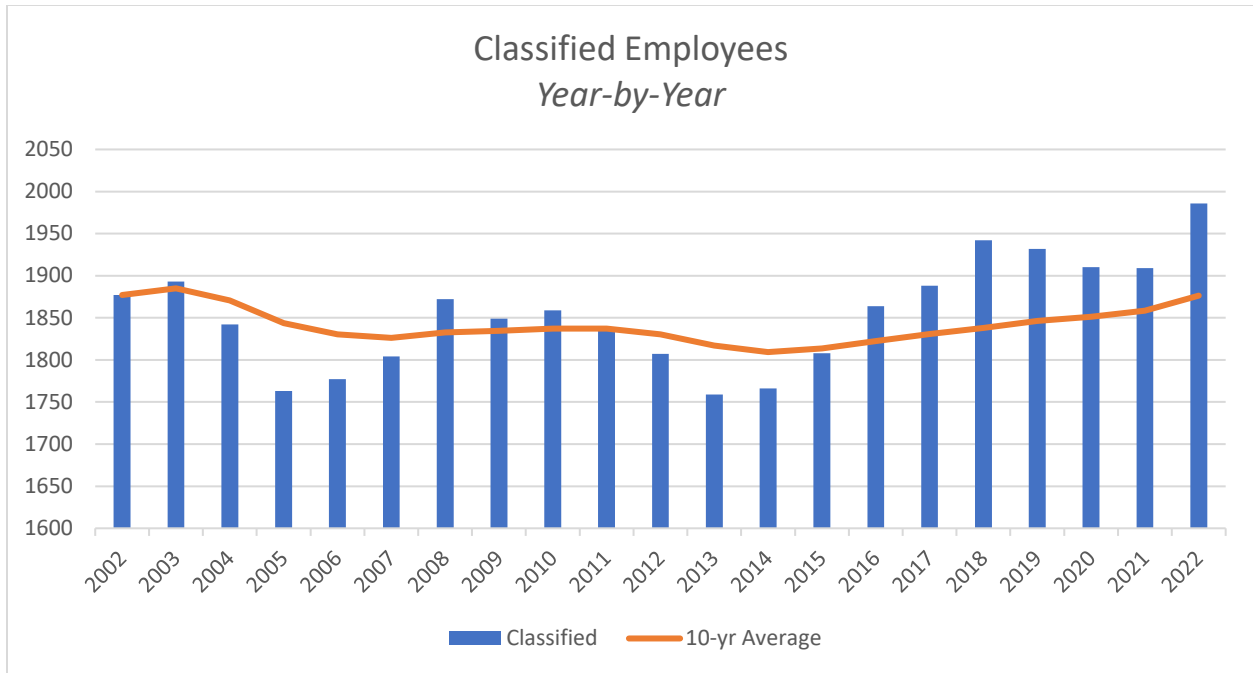
Standard	= 2 weeks or less
Extended	= More than 2 weeks, but less than 6 weeks
Continuous	= 6 weeks or more

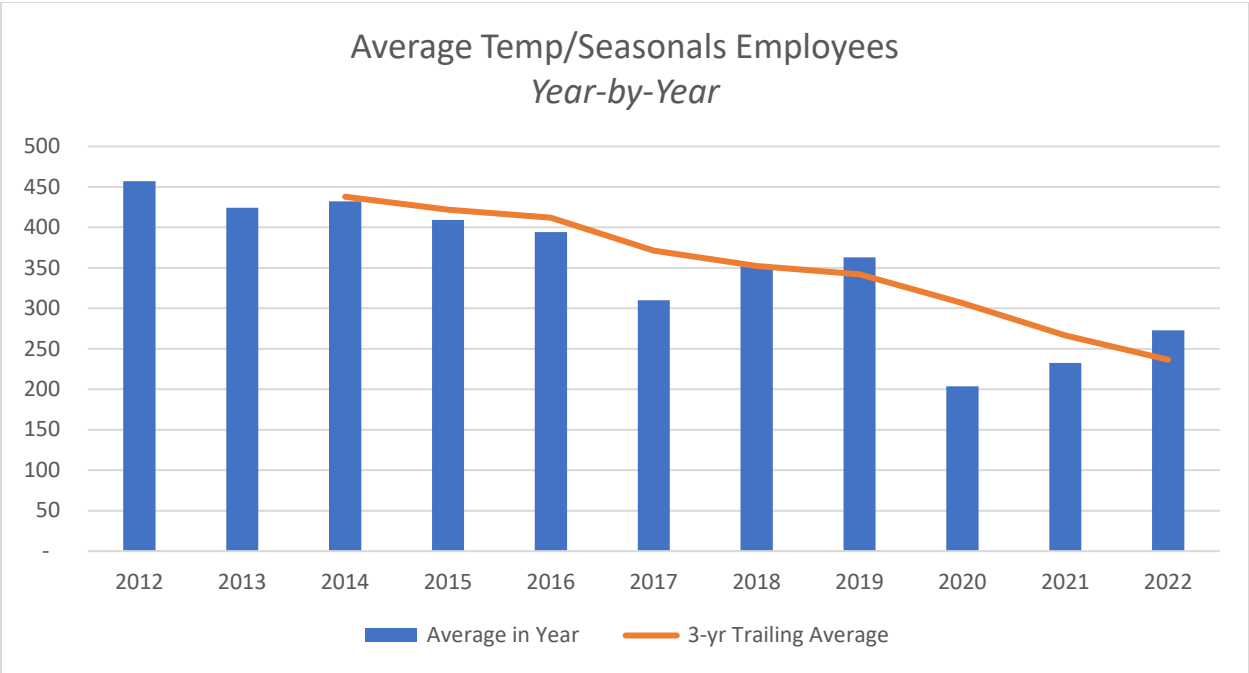
## Progress Report

Much of what was happening in 2021 continued into 2022. Lower number of candidates, increased recruitments, higher turnover, and changing needs of departments are all growing concerns for 2022 and beyond. However, there are some positives for Civil Service as we continue to work towards more efficient and effective processes, policies, and strategies to ensure a Civil Service system that meets the needs of this organization and supports employees throughout their careers:

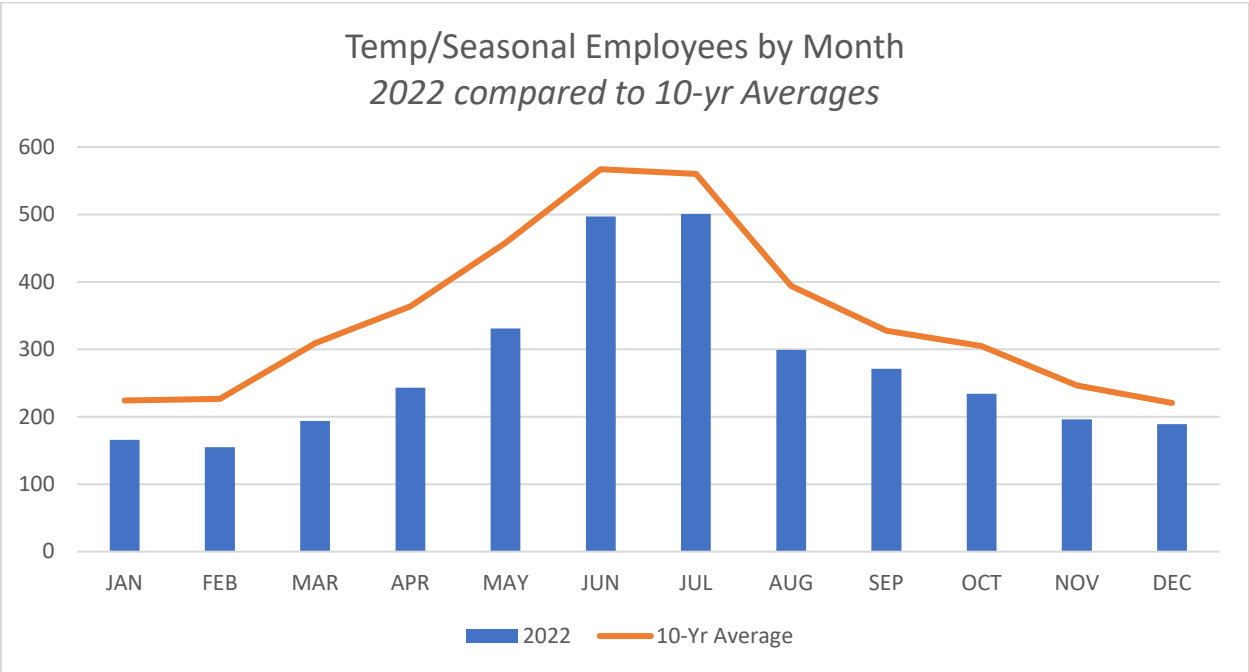
- Rule Review: The Rule Review Committee began work on reviewing and updating all the Civil Service Rules in January. The twelve-person committee made up of six members of labor and six members of management have been meeting every three weeks to review, discuss, brainstorm, and update the current rules. This work continues into 2023 before presentation before the Commission.
- Emergencies: 2022 has seen an unprecedented number of unplanned, emergency work for Civil Service. Departments across the organization are seeing many retirements and unexpected resignations. Eligible lists are being exhausted at high rates, and recruitments are not bringing enough candidates to fill the increasing number of vacancies. Civil Service has addressed these issues by using a queue system for requests and categorizing emergencies, increasing the workload on Civil Service Analysts, and prioritizing test development and eligible list creation over all other work.
- New Software: We purchased Test Genius in late summer. This new system will replace our current FastTest product. It will allow for a more dynamic item bank and database for test questions, offers strong online testing options that allows for safe and secure testing of many types, and is completely integrated with our current NEOGOV, governmentjobs.com product. We will see increased efficiency and ease of use in test development, test assembly, and online testing. We have a go live plan for summer of 2023.
- New staff: We hired three new Personnel Analyst I's, an Administrative Specialist and one Clerk III in 2022. This brings our total current staff to eleven and provides much needed support to both the Analyst and Administrative teams.
- Classification and Test Plan: We continue to work to refine a true classification and test plan to create consistent and reliable processes and policies to ensure fair and equitable results.
- Marketing Plan: We revised job specifications for a marketing position, prepared test development and recruitment and began creating a description for a new marketing role in Civil Service to begin in 2023.

## City Staffing Patterns





We are trending down with less use of temp/seasonals than in previous years. This trend was already observable before the drop-off due to COVID seen in 2020. The year-by-year chart shows a 3-year trailing average compared to each year’s average. The monthly chart shows the 10-year average is much higher than 2022’s figures for each month.





## Appeals & Complaints

It is the responsibility of the Spokane Civil Service Commission to investigate and pass upon any and all matters relating to the conditions of Civil Service employment with the City of Spokane. The Commission is also responsible for investigation and determination of any claim by employees, on eligibility lists or in classified positions, who feel that they have been deprived of, or separated from, a position to which they are entitled under the provisions of the City Charter and the Rules of the Commission.

The Commission must also hear claims and complaints against certain types of administrative actions which are non-disciplinary in nature.

The following tables provide a summary of disciplinary actions and complaints/appeals to the Commission.

### Disciplinary Actions

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Discharged</b>	1	2	1	0	3	7	5	3	0	1
<b>Suspended</b>	14	4	0	6	4	14	13	9	4	2
<b>Demoted</b>	0	2	34	0	0	1	1	0	1*	4**
<b>Total</b>	15	8	35	6	7	22	19	12	5	7

\*The demotion in 2021 was due to failure of probation.

\*\*The demotions in 2022 were due to failure of probation (2), loss of certification (1), and disciplinary (1)

### Formal Appeals, Claims, and Administrative Complaints

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Filed</b>	2	4	6	4	7	3	1	0	2	1
<b>Withdrawn</b>	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Denied</b>	1	3	4	2	4	0	1	0	2	0
<b>Dismissed</b>	**	**	**	**	1	2	0	0	0	1

\*\*Appeals dismissed were not tracked separately prior to 2017, and were generally recorded as "Denied"