

May 20, 2026

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

202601630

From: Sheryl M.M. Long, City Manager

Subject: **Deputy Clerk of Council Salary Range Market Analysis**

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**REFERENCE DOCUMENT # 202600220**

On January 22, 2026, the Budget, Finance, and Governance Committee referred the following for a report:

**MOTION**, submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney. We move that the administration prepare a report within 30 days: Indicating findings of a market analysis to increase the salary range of the deputy clerk position for the City of Cincinnati. (BALANCE OF MOTION ON FILE IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE).

The following report summarizes the findings of the Administration's market analysis of the salary range for the Deputy Clerk of Council position for the City of Cincinnati.

**BACKGROUND**

The Deputy Clerk of Council classification supports the legislative functions of the Clerk of Council's Office, including preparation of council materials, records management, legislative processing, and public records administration. The role requires strong knowledge of municipal legislative procedures, records retention requirements, and administrative operations.

As part of the Administration's response to Council's motion, the Department of Human Resources conducted a review of salary ranges for comparable positions in peer municipal governments. The objective of the review was to assess how the City of Cincinnati's Deputy Clerk salary range compares with those in similarly sized cities and to determine whether the current range remains competitive in the municipal labor market.

The analysis focused on positions with titles such as Deputy Clerk, Deputy City Clerk, Assistant City Clerk, or similar legislative support roles within municipal legislative bodies.

**MARKET COMPARISON**

The Department of Human Resources reviewed publicly available compensation data from comparable cities with similar governmental structures and legislative functions. While titles vary across jurisdictions, the positions reviewed generally perform comparable duties supporting city councils or legislative bodies.

A summary of representative salary ranges from peer cities is provided below.

<u>City</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Salary Range (Annual)<sup>1</sup></u>
Cincinnati, OH	Deputy Clerk	\$47,567 – \$71,256
Cleveland, OH	Deputy Clerk (Council)	\$22,880 – \$89,440
Columbus, OH	Deputy City Clerk	\$100,360 – \$150,613
Des Moines, IA	Deputy City Clerk	\$69,805 – \$88,442
Detroit, MI	Assistant City Council Committee Clerk	\$52,458 – \$67,199
Indianapolis, IN	Council Relations Liaison	\$47,736
Kansas City, MO	Administrative Secretary to the City Council	\$55,428 – \$83,136
Louisville, KY	Metro Council Assistant Clerk	\$65,000
Madison, WI	Deputy City Clerk	\$85,983 – \$103,336
Minneapolis, MN	Council Information Specialist	\$62,454 – \$75,918
Omaha, NE	Deputy City Clerk	\$75,046 – \$100,443
Pittsburgh, PA	Assistant City Clerk	\$83,302 – \$101,320
Sioux Falls, SD	Assistant City Clerk	\$59,301 – \$81,286
Wichita, KS	Deputy City Clerk	\$59,696 – \$84,344

## ANALYSIS

The broader market review of legislative support and deputy clerk–type positions across peer jurisdictions demonstrates that salary ranges vary widely based on organizational size, reporting structure, and scope of responsibilities. The initial comparison included cities across multiple states and showed compensation ranges extending significantly higher than the City of Cincinnati’s current range.

While this broader comparison provides helpful context regarding the national municipal labor market, several of the jurisdictions reviewed represent larger municipal governments or organizational structures where legislative staff positions may carry additional responsibilities or supervisory authority. As a result, salary ranges in some of those jurisdictions are significantly higher than those typically observed in Ohio municipalities.

To provide a more comparable benchmark, the Administration conducted a second review focused specifically on Ohio cities, examining both salary ranges and minimum qualification requirements for positions performing similar legislative support functions.

This Ohio-focused review provides a clearer comparison of compensation structures within the same regional labor market and governmental framework.

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<sup>1</sup> Hourly salary ranges were converted to annual rates using 2,080 hours per year. Titles vary across jurisdictions (Deputy Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Council Liaison, etc.), but the positions perform comparable legislative support and records management functions for municipal legislative bodies.

<u>City</u>	<u>Minimum Salary</u>	<u>Maximum Salary</u>	<u>Minimum Qualifications</u>
Cincinnati	\$47,567	\$71,256	2 years advanced clerical or administrative assistant experience
Cleveland	\$60,000	\$89,440	Associate degree preferred; 3-5 years administrative or legislative support experience
Columbus	\$100,360	\$150,613	Bachelor's degree preferred; 4-6 years legislative or government administrative experience
Dayton	\$57,000	\$82,000	High school diploma; 3-4 years administrative or municipal clerical experience
Toledo	\$58,500	\$83,000	Associate degree or equivalent; 3-5 years administrative or records management experience

Among the Ohio cities reviewed, Cincinnati currently has both the lowest minimum and lowest maximum salary range for comparable legislative support positions.

Across the Ohio jurisdictions examined, minimum salaries generally begin between \$57,000 and \$60,000, while maximum salaries typically extend into the low- to mid \$80,000 range, with some cities exceeding those levels depending on organizational structure.

The review also identified differences in minimum qualification requirements. Comparable cities generally require three to five years of administrative or legislative support experience, and several jurisdictions also indicate a preference for an associate or bachelor's degree in a related field.

By comparison, the City of Cincinnati currently requires two years of advanced-level clerical or administrative assistant experience for the Deputy Clerk classification. While the duties performed by the position are comparable to those in peer jurisdictions, the experience requirement is somewhat lower than those observed among comparable Ohio municipalities.

In addition to market competitiveness, compensation adjustments must also consider internal equity within the City's compensation structure. The salary range for the Clerk of Council classification currently ranges from \$97,112.58 to \$128,732.71 annually and maintaining appropriate separation between supervisory and subordinate classifications is necessary to avoid wage compression, which can occur when subordinate classifications approach or exceed the minimum salary of a higher-level position.

### **RECOMMENDED SALARY RANGE**

Based on both the broader municipal comparison and the Ohio-focused market review, the Administration recommends consideration of establishing the following salary range for the Deputy Clerk of Council classification:

**Recommended Salary Range: \$58,500 – \$84,500 annually**

This range would:

- Align Cincinnati more closely with the compensation ranges observed among comparable Ohio municipalities

- Improve the City’s competitiveness in recruiting and retaining qualified candidates for legislative support roles
- Maintain appropriate separation from the salary range for the Clerk of Council classification
- Provide a reasonable range of progression for recruitment, retention, and career advancement within the classification

### **ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT**

The Office of Budget and Evaluation estimates that the budgetary impact associated with increasing the minimum salary for the Deputy Clerk of Council classification to \$58,500 would be approximately \$33,000 annually. This estimate reflects the cost of adjusting the three currently filled Deputy Clerk positions to the new minimum of the recommended salary range.

This calculation assumes that each of the three incumbents would be moved to a salary of \$58,500. The Office of Budget and Evaluation notes that this estimate does not include any additional costs that may be associated with the currently vacant Deputy Clerk positions, as those impacts would depend on future hiring decisions and starting salary placements.

Any funding required to support adjustments to the Deputy Clerk of Council salary range would need to be accommodated within the existing budget of the Office of the Clerk of Council or identified through a reallocation of resources within that office, unless additional appropriations are authorized by Council.

### **SUMMARY**

In summary, the broader review of municipal compensation data showed that salary ranges for similar positions vary widely across the country. Because several of those jurisdictions reflect larger municipal structures or expanded position responsibilities, the Administration conducted a second analysis focused specifically on Ohio municipalities, which provides a more comparable benchmark for evaluating Cincinnati’s compensation structure.

The Ohio comparison indicates that the City of Cincinnati’s current Deputy Clerk salary range of \$47,567 – \$71,256 is below the range observed among comparable Ohio cities, particularly at both the minimum and maximum levels.

Based on this analysis, the Administration recommends consideration of adjusting the salary range for the Deputy Clerk classification to \$58,500 – \$84,500 annually, which would more closely align the City with comparable municipalities while maintaining appropriate separation from the salary range for the Clerk of Council classification.

Positions within the Office of the Clerk of Council are under City Council’s appointing authority. As such, any modification to the salary range for the Deputy Clerk classification would be subject to Council’s discretion. In doing so, Council should also consider the associated fiscal impacts described in the preceding section, including the estimated annual cost of adjusting incumbent salaries and any additional budgetary implications for the Office of the Clerk of Council. Council may choose to enact a budget ordinance to fund these adjustments or direct the Administration to prepare and submit legislation modifying the salary range for the classification.

If Council elects to increase the salary range for the Deputy Clerk classification, the Administration would also recommend reviewing and updating the class specification minimum qualifications to better align with those observed among comparable Ohio municipalities. Specifically, the Administration would recommend increasing the experience requirement to three years of progressively responsible clerical, administrative assistant, or legislative support experience, with an associate degree in a related field preferred.

Aligning the minimum qualifications with comparable cities would help ensure that the classification appropriately reflects the experience and skill level expected for legislative support roles within municipal government.

cc: Latisha Hazell, Director, Department of Human Resources