



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

**RESOLUTION NO. 260094
(As Amended in Committee, 5/27/26)**

Introduced February 5, 2026

Councilmember Ahmad

**Referred to the
Committee on Law and Government**

RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter providing for the creation of the Philadelphia Child Welfare Commission; and providing for the submission of the proposed amendment to the electors of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, Families, caregivers, and youth who interact with the City's child welfare system and related services for children and families require transparent, community-grounded accountability that reflects their lived experiences; and

WHEREAS, An independent body empowered to advise both City agencies and City Council will bridge the gap between administrative policy and the realities faced by children and families in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, The creation of a permanent, community-grounded commission will strengthen accountability and transparency, amplify family voices, and support continual improvement of Philadelphia's services for children and families; and

WHEREAS, Under Section 6 of the First-Class City Home Rule Act (53 P.S. §13106), an amendment to the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter may be proposed by a resolution of the Council of the City of Philadelphia adopted with the concurrence of two-thirds of its elected members; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA:

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 260094, as amended continued

SECTION 1. That the following amendment to The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter is hereby proposed and shall be submitted to the electors of the City of Philadelphia on an election date designated by ordinance:

ARTICLE III EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE BRANCH – ORGANIZATION

CHAPTER 1 OFFICERS, DEPARTMENTS, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND OTHER AGENCIES

§ 3-100. Executive and Administrative Officers, Departments, Boards, Commissions and Agencies Designated.

The executive and administrative work of the City shall be performed by:

* * *

(e) The following independent boards and commissions, which, except for the Board of Trustees of the Free Library of Philadelphia, are hereby created:

* * *

Philadelphia Prison Community Oversight Board[.];
Philadelphia Child Welfare Commission.

* * *

CHAPTER 8 INDEPENDENT BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

* * *

§ 3-815. *Philadelphia Child Welfare Commission.*

(a) *There shall be a permanent body to be known as the Philadelphia Child Welfare Commission (the “Commission”), which shall serve as an independent, standing advisory entity responsible for providing analysis and recommendations regarding the City’s child welfare system and related services to children and families.*

(b) *Composition. The Commission shall consist of sixteen (16) members, who have not been named parties in a personal capacity in litigation against the City’s Department of Human Services (DHS). The composition is as follows:*

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 260094, as amended continued

1. Six (6) representatives from the Impacted Community, including but not limited to parents, caregivers, or adults with lived experience in the child welfare system;
2. Five (5) members from the Advocacy and Expert Community, including but not limited to individuals with demonstrated and effective experience in child welfare advocacy, research and praxis, or legal/community; and
3. Five (5) ex officio members: the Youth Ombudsperson or their designee, an appointee from the Philadelphia School District, an appointee from DHS, an appointee from the City agency responsible for mental health issues, and an appointee from the Department of Public Health (DPH).
4. No current employees or direct contractors from the represented City Agencies, other than the ex officio representatives, shall serve as Commissioners.

(c) Leadership. The Commission shall elect a Chair of the Commission from among its voting members, by a majority vote. The Chair of the Commission shall:

1. *Preside over all public meetings and hearings;*
2. *Serve as the official point of contact for the Commission; and*
3. *Serve unlimited one-year terms as Chair of the Commission upon re-election by the Commission.*

(d) Terms and Appointments. All initial appointments to the Commission shall be made within sixty (60) days after the Commission is first created.

1. *Members from the Advocacy and Expert Community shall serve **two-year terms.***
2. *Members from the Impacted Community shall serve two-year terms.*
3. *Members shall be appointed as follows:*
 - i. *The six (6) Impacted Community members shall be appointed by the Council President, after consultation with the Chair of the Public Health and Human Services Committee;*
 - ii. *The five (5) Advocacy and Expert Community members shall be appointed by City Council; and*
 - iii. *The five (5) ex officio members shall be designated by their respective appointing authorities.*

(e) Procedures and Operations.

1. *The Commission shall adopt by-laws within sixty (60) days of its formation.*
2. *Commissioners shall receive training on DHS operations, confidentiality, and trauma-informed practice within ninety (90) days of appointment.*
3. *The Commission shall hold quarterly meetings and may convene additional sessions as needed.*

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 260094, as amended continued

4. *The ex officio members shall have no voting rights on the Commission, and no ex officio member shall serve as an officer or any other position of authority established by the by-laws.*

(f) Removal and Vacancies. Commissioners may be removed for misconduct, absence, or actions that undermine the work of the Commission.

1. *Any non-ex officio Commissioner may make a motion for removal of another member, which must be seconded by another non-ex officio Commissioner and voted on within seventy-two (72) hours.*
2. *A vote of at least six (6) Commissioners shall be required for removal.*
3. *Within seven (7) days following a removal, a written report summarizing the rationale, process, and recommendations shall be submitted to City Council.*
4. *A vacancy on the Commission shall be filled for the balance of the unexpired term in the same manner as an original appointment.*

(g) Compensation. Council shall set compensation for the members of the Commission by ordinance.

(h) Executive Director. The Commission shall appoint an executive director. Council shall set compensation for the Executive Director by ordinance. The appointment of an executive director shall require a vote of at least six (6) members of the Commission. The powers and duties of the executive director shall be defined in writing by the Commission.

ARTICLE IV

EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE BRANCH – POWERS AND DUTIES

The Mayor, The City Representative and Departments, Boards, Commissions and Offices under the Mayor

* * *

CHAPTER 30

Philadelphia Child Welfare Commission

§ 4-3000. *Purpose and Duties.*

The Philadelphia Child Welfare Commission shall:

1. *Provide independent, community-grounded advisement on the City's child welfare programs, policies, and practices as well as related services to children and families;*
2. *Hold quarterly public meetings and community hearings to collect qualitative and quantitative feedback from residents, parents, caregivers, youth, and the Department of Human Services, with the goal of fostering greater departmental accountability and transparency;*
3. *Publish an annual "State of Child Welfare in Philadelphia" report summarizing community experiences and trends;*

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 260094, as amended continued

4. *Issue annual Legislative Recommendations to City Council and Policy Recommendations to City Agencies based on feedback and findings;*
5. *Serve as a formal point of engagement between City agencies, Council, and the public regarding child welfare operations and outcomes;*
6. *Operate transparently, maintaining publicly accessible records of meetings, transcripts, and reports; and*
7. *Be advisory in nature and shall not possess investigative or enforcement authority. DHS information may be shared with the Commission, unless it is confidential in nature.*

* * *

APPENDIX

* * *

CHAPTER A-2

§ A-200. Schedule.

This Charter shall become effective on the first Monday of January, 1952, except in the following particulars:

* * *

(30) *The amendments to this Charter relating to the Philadelphia Child Welfare Commission shall take effect upon certification of the election at which the amendments were approved.*

Italics indicates matter added to the Charter by these amendments.

City of Philadelphia

RESOLUTION NO. 260094, as amended continued