

Legislation Text

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Authorizing the City Council Committee on Labor and Civil Service to hold public hearings on the Administration's proposed Return to Office Policy, and the impact on the City's workforce.

WHEREAS, For decades, there have been productive conversations and negotiations between the City of Philadelphia and its employees regarding the exploration of alternative and flexible work schedules, which may improve the delivery of public services, attract new and diverse candidates to City employment opportunities, and improve the morale and productivity of City workers; and

WHEREAS, During the COVID-19 Pandemic, many City employees that work tirelessly day and in and day out to provide public services were ordered to work-from-home, to the extent possible. For the City's represented workers, this arrangement was made pursuant to Agreements between the City and their respective Unions; and

WHEREAS, During that period, Philadelphia's operations were successfully and substantially adapted to ensure that City services were still delivered efficiently and effectively, while simultaneously ensuring that the City's workers were protected from the dangers of COVID-19, and not contributing to its transmission. That successful process has meant that many of the City's departments have become well-equipped to successfully serve the public and deliver services in a remote work environment; and

WHEREAS, On May 20, 2024, Mayor Parker announced that her Administration was requiring all City employees to transition to full-time, in-office work effective July 15, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Parker's Administration has highlighted that in-person work "allows for more personal and productive interactions, facilitates communication, and promotes social connections," and that a "more consistent in-office presence will result in work environments where equal employment opportunity and diversity, equity and inclusion are truly realized." The benefits of in-person work be balanced against the positive impacts that remote work has had on the efficient delivery of public services, on the motivation and performance of City workers, and on the accessibility that remote and hybrid work offers to City employees, especially those who live with disabilities, who may be more readily accommodated in a remote work environment.

WHEREAS, One in five City jobs remain unfilled, meaning there are approximately 4,600 vacancies in City employment positions, and the impact of the Return to Office Policy must be balanced against the backdrop of the City's employment vacancy crisis; and

WHEREAS, To fully understand and appreciate the perspectives of City workers regarding the Return to Office Policy, it is imperative for the Administration and City Council to have good faith discussions with City workers to understand the costs and benefits of the Return to Office Policy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That City Council hereby authorizes the Committee on Labor and Civil Service to hold public hearings on the City of Philadelphia's Return to

Office Policy, and the impact of its implementation on the recruitment, retention, and stability of the City's workforce.