

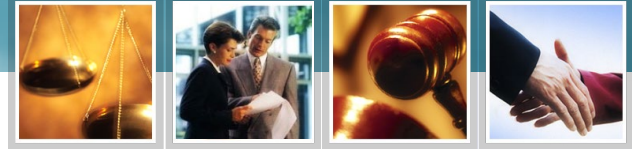


# **Ethics and Governance Committee Presentation**

**August 21, 2025**

**General Counsel Section  
City of Houston Legal Department**

# New Changes to Sec. 2-2, City Code

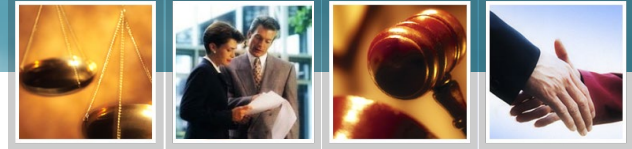


***Ordinance No. 2025-604 adds the following underlined language to the Council Rules of Procedure:***

***Rule 1. Meetings Generally.***

a. The city council shall conduct its regular weekly meeting in two daily sessions commencing at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday and at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, respectively, of each calendar week. Each session shall be conducted in the city council chamber unless another place in the City Hall is designated by the city council. The final Tuesday session of each month shall take place at 5:30 p.m. Meetings shall recess at the times provided in Rule 7 and shall be subject to recess at other times as provided in subsection c, below. No notice shall be required to be given to any member of any recessed meeting. In the event that Tuesday or Wednesday, or both, of any calendar week falls on a holiday observed by the closure of city offices, then the regular weekly meeting sessions shall be rescheduled or consolidated as determined by the city council. The city council may consolidate daily sessions or reschedule any weekly meeting or daily session thereof to other days and times in the same calendar week and may for valid reasons postpone any regular weekly meeting or daily session to another week.

# New Changes to Sec. 2-2, City Code

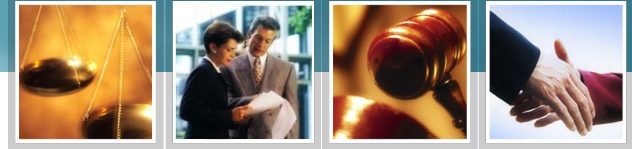


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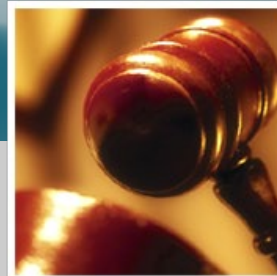
***Rule 8. Appearances by Members of the Public.***

Any citizen of the city shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at all regular and special meetings of the city council in regard to any and all matters to be considered at such meetings that are germane and relevant to any subject matter of city affairs or business that is within the scope of the authority and legislative functions of the city council. Such appearances by members of the public shall be scheduled to begin at 2:00 p.m. at the Tuesday session of the regular meetings of city council. The last Tuesday session of each month shall be scheduled for 6:00 p.m. The mayor, mayor pro tem, or other presiding officer shall at all times be responsible for conducting the meeting and maintaining proper order and decorum. Any council member shall have the privilege of raising a point of order as to whether the subject matter to be heard and considered as presented by a citizen is germane and relevant to any subject matter of city affairs or business that is to be considered by city council. Requests to appear shall be made to the office of the city secretary, and may be made in person or by mail, email, fax, or telephone, provided that the request is received before the scheduled time of commencement of the city council meeting session at which public appearances will be heard. Each speaker shall provide his or her name, street address, mailing address (if different), telephone number, and a brief description (not to exceed ten words) of the intended subject matter of the citizen's remarks. The speaker's street address, mailing address (if different), and telephone number is for internal, administrative use only by city council, the city secretary's office, and city departments, and shall not be disclosed publicly, except as required by law. Speakers who have not appeared at any of the four preceding regular city council meetings shall also state whether they wish to limit their remarks to one, two or three minutes.

# Evening Public Session 2025



- **Ordinance No. 2025-604** expires on December 31, 2025, unless reenacted, extended or otherwise modified by ordinance adopted by City Council prior to that date.
- Evening session dates between now and the end of the year:
  - TUESDAY, AUGUST 26 - @ 5:30 PM**
  - TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 - @ 5:30 PM**
  - TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28 - @ 5:30 PM**
  - TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18 - @ 5:30 PM**
  - TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16 - @ 5:30 PM**
- The 5:30 PM start time is for presentations with the 6:00 PM start time for public speakers.
- Pursuant to Rule 1, the September, November and December sessions on the last Tuesday were consolidated or rescheduled by City ordinance due to City holidays.

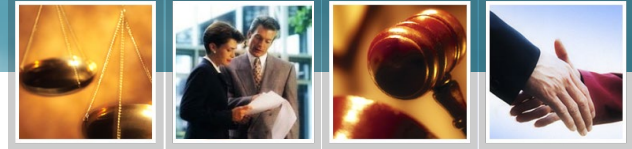


Campaign Finance, Personal Financial Statements, Candidate Applications

# **SUMMARY OF CITY PROCESSES REGARDING STATUTORY FILINGS**

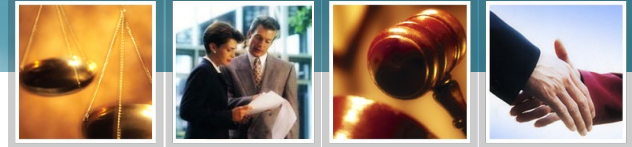


# Campaign Finance Reporting



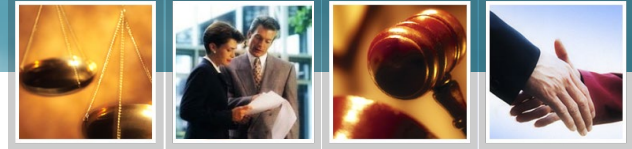
- Campaign Finance reporting is governed by state law under Title 15 of the Texas Election Code ("TEC").
- The Texas Ethics Commission is the enforcement body for violations.
- The City of Houston City Secretary's Office is the "local filing authority" for the City of Houston.
- In the Commission's Guide for Local Filing Authorities, they advise the following regarding enforcement: "As a local filing authority, you have no authority to penalize filers in any way for violations of Title 15. Any individual may file a criminal complaint regarding a violation of Title 15 with the appropriate county or district attorney. Also, anyone who lives in Texas or owns property in Texas may file a sworn complaint with the Ethics Commission alleging a violation of Title 15."
- City is in the process of updating its electronic filing system that will better assist in identifying and tracking the status of various filers.

# Personal Financial Statements



- Pursuant to Chapter 145 of the Local Government Code (where applicable) and Section 18-21 of the City Code, certain “covered city officials” must file either a Personal Financial Statement (PFS) or Financial Disclosure Statement (FDS) with the City Secretary’s Office before April 30 of each year.
- The City Secretary’s Office works in conjunction with the Legal Department to notify City officials/employees of their obligation to file and follow up with filers if the statements are not received.
- The City is in the process of converting to an electronic filing system that will better assist in identifying and possibly notifying late or missing filers.

# Candidate Applications



- In Texas, when an application for a place on the ballot is filed, Texas Election Code Section 141.032 provides that the authority with whom the application is filed (the Mayor's Office, for the City of Houston) must review the application to determine whether it complies with the requirements as to form, content, and procedure only.
- The Legal Department and City Secretary's Office assist by checking that the application was filed correctly and in a timely manner and that all required information is completed and attested to. In terms of residency, the residence address listed on application is sent to the Planning and Development Department to confirm that the address is located in the full-purpose limits of the City of Houston and the appropriate Council District, if applicable.
- Pursuant to Texas Election Code Section 145.003, the Mayor's Office may not declare a candidate ineligible unless: (1) the information on the candidate's application for a place on the ballot indicates that the candidate is ineligible for the office; or (2) facts indicating that the candidate is ineligible are conclusively established by another public record.
  - The Elections Division of the Secretary of State has advised, based on relevant case law, that no public record can conclusively establish residency. Only a court of law may make a ruling on a person's residency.