



**2025 Calendar Year
in Review**



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Civil Service Commission

100 Cambridge Street, Suite 200

Boston, MA 02114

mass.gov/csc

January 2026

Greetings:

The Massachusetts Civil Service Commission (Commission) is an independent, neutral appellate tribunal that plays an important role in ensuring that decisions related to the appointment, promotion and retention of civil service employees and candidates are fair, impartial and merit based.

More than 20,000 police officers and firefighters, and candidates seeking to be appointed to those positions, have civil service protections in Massachusetts along with thousands of correction officers and labor service employees. Various other employees, including members of the State Police and certain housing and redevelopment authority employees across Massachusetts, are also provided with certain civil service protections — and all state employees and managers can contest their job classification with the Commission.

The Commission's primary goal is to process appeals in a highly efficient and effective manner. As noted in the statistics in the following sections, the Commission closed out all appeals pending for more than 12 months by the end of calendar year 2025, a milestone that has not been reached in well over two decades. The average age of a pending appeal now stands at 14 weeks, representing a 50% decrease from only a few short years ago. Processing appeals in a timely manner is beneficial to all stakeholders — and the Commission is committed to maintaining these high standards going forward.

In addition to timeliness, the Commission is committed to ensuring that all decisions issued are clear, understandable and consistent with the civil service law and rules. To gauge our success on that front, we look to the responses from anonymous customer service surveys and the affirmation rate regarding Commission decisions subject to judicial review.

Just under 90% of survey respondents, including the half who do not receive a decision in their favor, agree or strongly agree that the hearing officer was fair and impartial. Regarding those decisions subject to judicial review, the Commission has maintained a 100% affirmation rate for the past four years.

During Calendar Year 2025, the Commission also initiated several projects to improve the overall experience for our customers including:

- [A comprehensive guide for self-represented individuals.](#)
- A new recording system that allows for audio and video recordings of all Commission hearings, including those conducted in off-site locations such as Springfield, Lowell and Dartmouth.
- Enhancements to the Commission’s website ensuring that all content, including decisions, is easily searchable and accessible.
- With the support of the Executive Office for Administration and Finance, the Commission is partnering with other quasi-judicial agencies to replace our existing case tracking system with a cloud-based product that will greatly improve the functionality available to our customers.

Finally, I am grateful to our colleagues in the state’s Human Resources Division (HRD) for their ongoing efforts to implement the most far-reaching reforms to the civil service system in a generation. Those reforms, signed into law by Governor Healey in November 2024, provide appointing authorities with much needed flexibility to attract and retain public safety employees in Massachusetts while preserving and strengthening many of the guardrails to ensure that employment decisions are based on merit.

Behind all these milestones is a small, but dedicated team of professionals here at the Commission who are focused on providing our customers with the high level of quality service they deserve. It is a privilege to work beside them every day.

As always, feel free to contact me with any feedback or suggestions you may have via email at christopher.bowman@mass.gov.

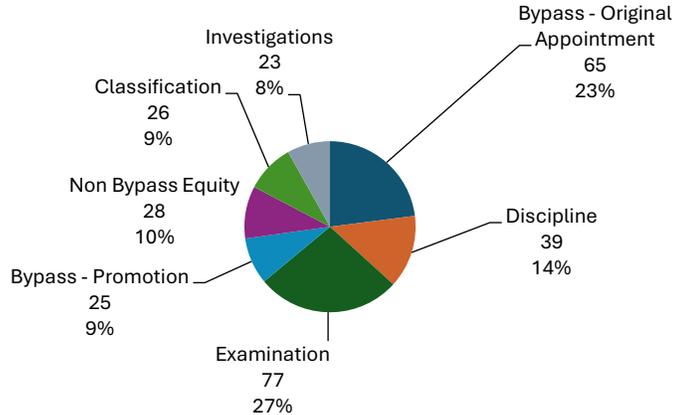
Sincerely,

Chris Bowman
Chair

CALENDAR YEAR 2025 STATISTICS

Appeals Received

Thanks in part to a late surge of appeals filed in December 2025, the Commission received and docketed 283 appeals in CY25, the highest number of appeals received in 13 years. Below is a breakdown of appeals received by type:



Appeals Closed

The Commission closed out 227 appeals in CY25, representing approximately the same amount of appeals received through November 2025, with the large influx of appeals received in December 2025 scheduled for January 2026 pre-hearings.

Appeals Pending for more than 12 Months

For the first time in 20 years, **no** appeals were pending before the Commission for more than 12 months as of December 31, 2025.

The table below reflects the progress the Commission has made in this regard:

Year	2006	2009	2012	2015	2018	2021	2024	2025
Appeals Pending more than 12 months	550	98	46	27	60	33	4	0
Appeals Pending more than 12 months as a % of Total Appeals	68%	45%	26%	30%	34%	21%	6%	0%

Average Age of Pending Appeal

The average age of a pending appeal before the Commission as of December 31, 2025 was 14 weeks, representing a 50% reduction since 2021.

Cycle Time: Three-Year Rolling Average

As indicated in the chart below, the Commission is “on target” or “near target” regarding all cycle time goals that are tracked on a 3-year rolling basis.

Measure	Through CY25	Target	Status
% of appeals disposed of within 17 weeks	62%	25%	On Target
% of appeals disposed of within 26 weeks	71%	50%	On Target
% of appeals disposed of within 39 weeks	80%	75%	On Target
% of appeals disposed of within 52 weeks	88%	95%	Near Target
Average Cycle Time for All Appeals	23 weeks	26 weeks	On Target
Average Cycle Time for Appeals that require Full Hearing or Motion Hearing	48 weeks	52 weeks	On Target

Judicial Affirmation Rate

Approximately 10-15% of Commission decisions are appealed to Superior Court, with further review available via the Appeals Court and the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. As of December 31, 2025, no Commission decision had been overturned by the Courts for over five years. A full breakdown of the judicial affirmation rate of Commission decisions is below:

Calendar Year Commission Decision Issued	Total Substantive Commission Decisions Issued	Of those decisions issued, Number Appealed to and Decided by Court	Of those decisions appealed, Number / Percentage AFFIRMED	Of those decisions appealed, Number / Percentage OVERTURNED	Percentage of Total Substantive Decisions Issued that have "stood" (not appealed and/or not overturned after judicial review)
2006-2008	569	74	60 (81%)	14 (19%)	98%
2009-2011	400	67	49 (73%)	18 (27%)	96%
2012-2014	377	50	39 (68%)	11 (32%)	97%
2015-2017	325	34	27 (80%)	7 (21%)	98%
2018-2020	262	30	26 (87%)	4 (13%)	99%
2021-2023	279	12	12 (100%)	0 (0%)	100%
2024 - 2026	166	1	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	100%
2006-2026	2378	268	214 (80%)	54 (20%)	98%

Customer Service Survey Results

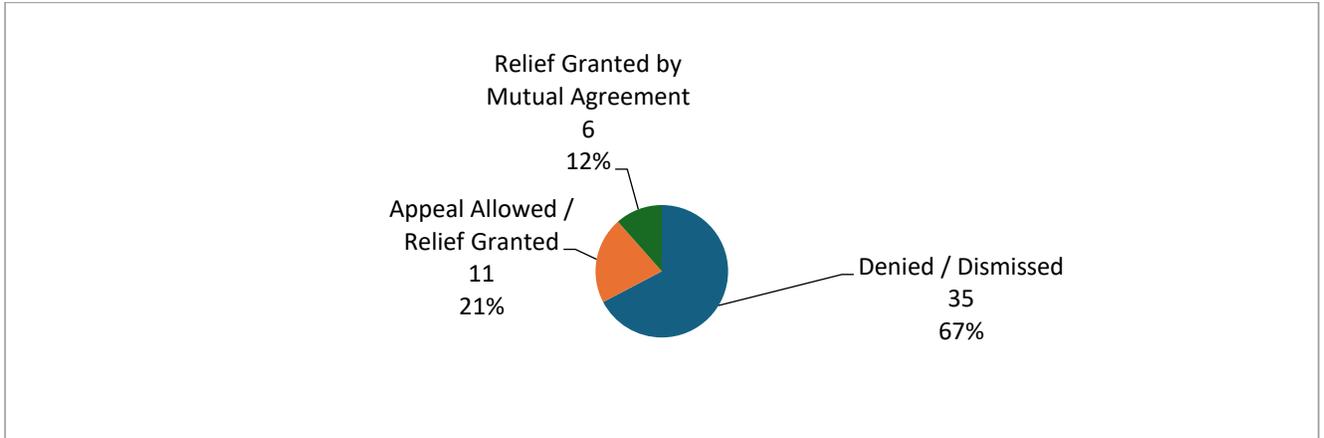
The Commission provides its customers with an opportunity to provide feedback through anonymous surveys that are sent to parties who proceed to a full hearing before the Commission. For surveys returned since 2015, the Commission is on target in all areas except for satisfaction related to receiving the final decision in a timely manner. Surveys in the most recent two years have shown an increase in this metric consistent with a corresponding decrease in cycle times over that same period.

	Strongly or Somewhat Agree	Target	Status
Hearing Officer Treated Me with Respect and Courtesy	93%	90%	On Target
Hearing Officer Was Fair and Impartial	90%	90%	On Target
Satisfied With the Overall Appeals Process	80%	75%	On Target
I Received the Decision in a Timely Manner	56%	75%	Below Target

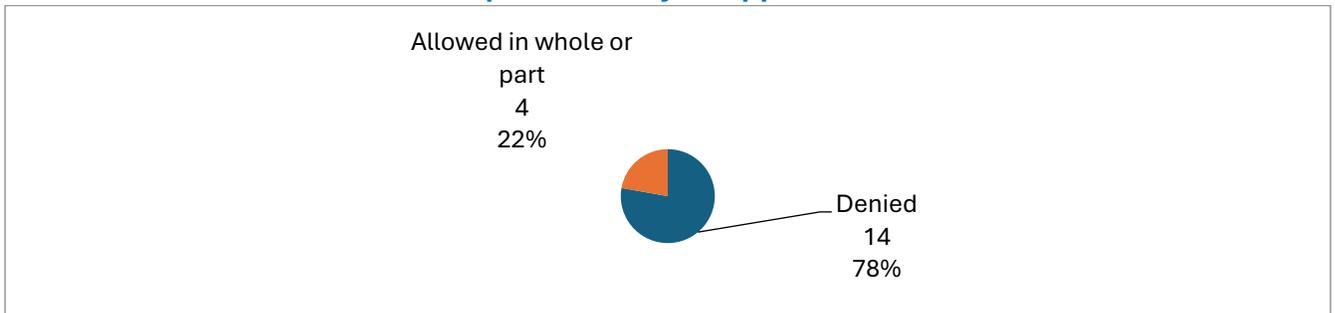
DECISION RESULTS

The Commission issued just under 100 formal decisions in CY25. Below is a breakdown showing the results of decisions by appeal type:

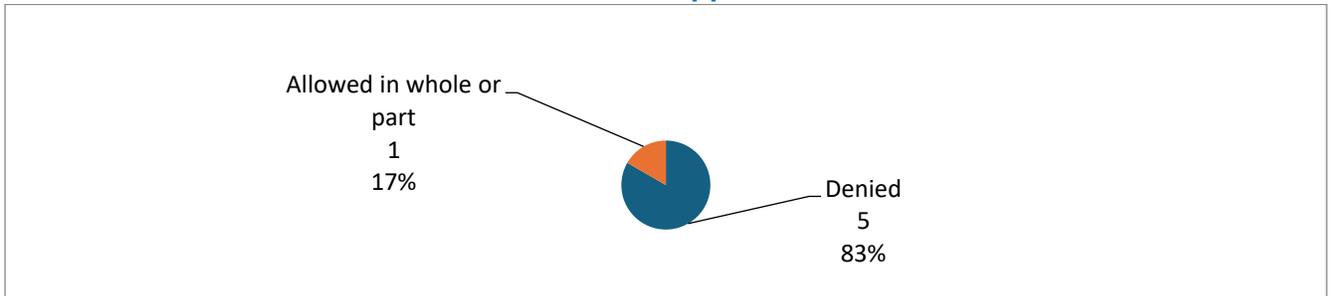
Bypass and Equity Appeals



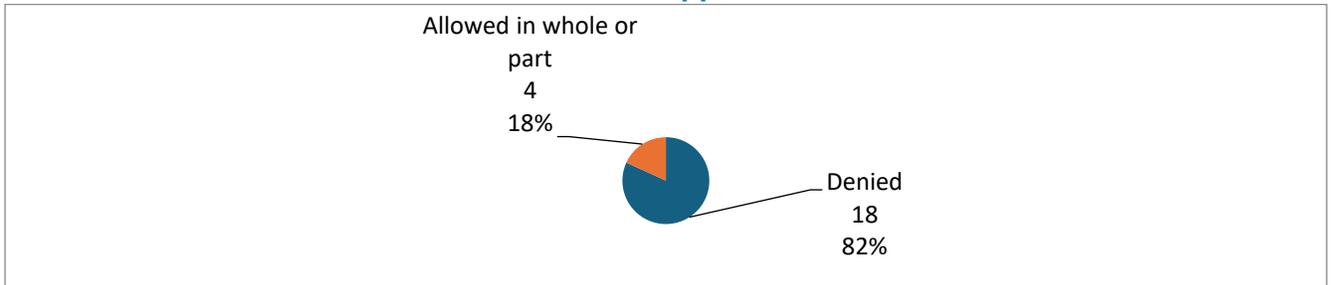
Discipline and Layoff Appeals



Classification Appeals



Examination Appeals



NOTEWORTHY 2025 CIVIL SERVICE ADJUDICATORY DECISIONS

[Brandao, Emanuel v. Boston Police Department - Appeals Court Decision 1/16/25](#)

105 Mass. App. Ct. 187

Brandao, a Boston Police officer for 200 days over a 21-month period, was discharged, without pretermination process, following an off-duty incident in which his department-issued firearm was stolen when it had not been properly secured and after he gave a civilian access to his vehicle. Through receipt of a BPD Rules compendium, Brandao was placed on notice that the statutory 12-month probationary period he would have to serve before gaining civil service tenure would not include the 13 (out of 21) months he spent on military leaves of absence. The Appeals Court and Superior Court both upheld a Commission decision that Brandao had not completed his probationary period at the time of his termination, thus divesting the Commission of jurisdiction to hear his appeal.

This judicial decision affirms a long line of decisions holding that police officers actually must perform the duties of their position for defined periods of time prior to attaining civil service tenure and all of the civil service protections that follow.

[Chuilli, Kelly v. Bridgewater Police Department 2/6/25](#)

The Commission vacated the promotional appointment of a Bridgewater Police Lieutenant and ordered a re-do of the process after concluding that there was no basis for the Department to overrule the rankings of an independent assessment center and an outside review panel, both of which ranked the Appellant first.

This decision illustrates that, when a local decision is inconsistent with a merit-based process, safeguards remain in place to ensure an appropriate remedy, including the extraordinary relief ordered here.

[Abasciano, Joseph v. Boston Police Department 12/19/24](#)

The Commission, affirming the initial findings of the Boston Police Department that tweets sent by a Boston police officer after attending the so-called "stop the steal" rally on January 6, 2021 did not violate any BPD rules, concluded at the end of 2024 that no just cause existed for his termination. However, in March 2025, the Commission denied Abasciano's request for monetary damages and attorneys' fees, finding that the circumstances presented warranted nothing further than restoration of civil service tenure status.

In November 2025, citing the CSC's decision, a U.S. District Court judge granted partial summary judgment in Abasciano's favor on a First Amendment retaliation claim.

Among other things, this was the first opportunity for the Commission to rule on its new authority to award attorneys' fees, as authorized by the new civil service reform law. Here, the Commission ruled that the Appellant failed to show the necessary "bad faith" on behalf of his employer to justify the awarding of attorneys' fees.

Sweet, Brian v. Department of State Police - Appeals Court Decision 3/7/25

105 Mass. App. Ct. 1117 (2025)

Permitting the Commission to exercise inherent authority to reconsider a decision that proved infeasible and improvident in light of subsequent events, the Appeals Court held that the Commission did not abuse its discretion in either reopening four years later a case it had resolved through a downward modification of discipline, or voting anew to affirm the original decision of the State Police to terminate a trooper whose misconduct had resulted in the long-term suspension of his license to bear firearms.

This decision illustrates the interconnection between disciplinary proceedings against a public safety officer and the officer's ability to maintain a license to carry a firearm.

Barsalou, Andrew v. Holyoke Fire Commission 4/3/25

The Commission affirmed the decision of the Holyoke Fire Commission to demote and suspend a Fire Captain based on inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature that he had directed toward a probationary firefighter whom he had been assigned to train and supervise.

This decision is consistent with a long line of Commission decisions affirming that sexual harassment in the workplace is grounds for discipline.

Darmofal and Sniezek v. Town of Fairhaven & HRD 12/18/25

Darmofal and Sniezek v. Town of Fairhaven & HRD 5/15/25

The Commission, after a thorough review of legislative history and actions of the Town of Fairhaven, concluded that, based on the factual record, a Town Meeting vote was not sufficient to remove the Town from civil service as the Town originally adopted civil service through a ballot question. The Commission subsequently ordered the Town of Fairhaven to rectify its failure to comply with civil service law as it made numerous appointments and promotions within the town's police and fire departments over a two-year period.

This decision reinforces the need for cities and towns to carefully review the manner in which their community opted into civil service prior to taking steps to remove itself from civil service.

Emond, Adam v. Department of State Police 11/13/25

The Commission allowed the appeal of a Trooper and overturned his termination as the State Police was unable to show that the Trooper engaged in the alleged unlawful conduct of sexual harassment and indecent assault and battery while attending an off-duty social event.

This decision reinforces that appointing authorities, regardless of the nature of the charges, must be able to show, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the employee actually engaged in the alleged misconduct.

MacLean, Evan v. Department of State Police 12/4/25

The Commission affirmed the decision of the Department of State Police to suspend a Trooper for 50 days for acting unprofessionally toward a member of the public and unnecessarily escalating a call to perform a well-being check on a stranded motorist.

This decision reinforces that public safety officers are required to abide by a higher standard, including de-escalation – and empathy – when dealing with members of the public.

Leeper, Mark v. Department of Correction 12/18/25

In light of protections afforded by the Massachusetts whistleblower statute, the Commission overturned the decision of the Department of Correction to suspend the Appellant, a lieutenant, for one day due to alleged violations of the agency's data security policy. But issuance of a written reprimand for breach of confidentiality remained within the agency's prerogative.

This decision reinforces that appointing authorities should take care to consider whether discipline of an employee violates the whistleblower statute.

Phaneuf, Angela v. Department of Correction 4/3/25

The Commission affirmed the decision of the Department of Correction to terminate a Correction Officer / Head Cook who failed to maintain professional boundaries with inmates and conspired with an inmate and his relative to bring synthetic cannabinoids into the facility.

This decision affirms that the high standard expected of public safety officers applies to correction officers as well.

Botelho, Matthew v. Town of Fairhaven 5/15/25

The Commission affirmed the decision of the Town of Fairhaven to bypass a candidate for Police Chief based on the selected candidate's superior performance during a well-designed, structured interview process, which demonstrated that the selected candidate was the better choice to lead the Police Department.

This decision demonstrates the value of minimizing the inherent subjectivity of promotional interviews and ensuring some degree of objectivity that can be evaluated by the Commission upon review.

Schlieman, William v. Human Resources Division 6/12/25

Schlieman, William v. Human Resources Division 11/13/25 (declining reconsideration)

A majority of the Commission allowed the examination appeal of a Brockton Police Lieutenant, concluding that, under the specific facts of this case, the Appellant's time in the late 1990's as a UMass Lowell police officer properly should be credited toward determining his eligibility for a two-point, 25-year-service preference.

On the broader issue of whether time served as a UMass campus police officer should be treated the same as time served as a civil service police officer in a city or town, the full Commission signaled that it is time to evaluate whether appropriate updates are needed to ensure that such time is indeed credited.

Perron, Jason v. Westfield Police Commission 6/12/25

The Commission affirmed a first decision of the Westfield Police Commission, in determining which officer to promote to sergeant, to bypass the Appellant in favor of another candidate with more impressive work experience; but overturned a second bypass in favor of a different, younger, less-experienced candidate due to procedural flaws and indicia of impermissible bias.

This decision illustrates that, if a city or town is able to show sound and sufficient reasons for a bypass, it will be affirmed by the Commission. If not, appropriate relief will be ordered as a remedy to the aggrieved candidate who was erroneously bypassed.

Mullane, Neal v. Boston Fire Department 6/26/25

The Commission affirmed the decision of the Boston Fire Department to suspend a District Fire Chief for four tours of duty based on his off-duty misconduct, including violation of the Department's social media policy.

This decision reaffirms that public safety employees may be disciplined for off-duty misconduct, particularly when, as here, there was a clear nexus between the employee's misconduct and their job as a firefighter.

ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS NOW AVAILABLE FOR A CAREER IN PUBLIC SAFETY

As a result of historic reforms signed into law by Governor Healey in November 2024, over 60 civil service police or fire departments across Massachusetts now offer candidates an alternative pathway to appointment.

Cities and towns may enter into an agreement with the Human Resources Division (HRD) to appoint entry-level regular full-time Police and Fire forces through a Local Register. Appointing Authorities, upon executing a Memorandum of Agreement with HRD's Civil Service Unit, may appoint a maximum of 50% hires from their Local Register. Employees appointed through this process are granted civil service status. This hiring process is subject to specific procedures and restrictions under civil service law, rule, and policy to ensure that proper merit-based safeguards remain in place.

A Regional Eligible List is another alternative pathway to hiring for civil service municipalities allowed by the reforms. Municipalities with a population under 75,000 may request a Regional Eligible List which is composed of all candidates that meet residency preference criteria on all municipal eligible lists that fall within a 10-mile radius of the perimeter (or border) of the requesting municipality. Statutory preferences still apply (e.g., veteran's status). Municipalities with a population over 75,000 may jointly petition HRD to create a Regional List.

More information regarding these reforms and a list of participating police and fire departments can be found on HRD's website at: [Alternative Pathways to Hiring | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/alternative-pathways-to-hiring).



Members of the Civil Service Commission and HRD presented with a Carballo Award by Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll and A&F Secretary Matthew Gorzkowicz for their efforts to reform the civil service system in Massachusetts. (November 2025)

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION TEAM

Christopher Bowman, Chair

Chris Bowman is the Governor's designee to serve as Chair of the Civil Service Commission. He was appointed to the Commission in 2006 and was most recently re-appointed to a 5-year term in 2021.

He began his career in state government working for the Department of Revenue's Child Support Enforcement Division in 1991. He then joined the Division of Employment of Training where he eventually served as Chief of Staff. Bowman then served as the Chief of Staff for the state's Executive Office of Economic Development until he was appointed to the Commission.

Bowman was a member of the Town of Yarmouth's Select Board for six years. He served as the Board's Chair for two years and as Chair of the Licensing Authority for two years. He also chaired the town's Scholarship Fund Committee for several years. He received a Bachelors in Business Administration from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, a Masters in Public Administration from Suffolk University, and has been trained as a mediator.

Paul Stein, Commissioner

Paul Stein was appointed as a Commissioner to the Civil Service Commission in 2008 and was most recently re-appointed to a 5-year term in 2023.

Commissioner Stein is a graduate of Trinity College (Conn.) and Vanderbilt Law School. His prior public service includes active duty as a commissioned officer with the United States Air Force, Senior Counsel of the State Rating Bureau in the Massachusetts Division of Insurance and Deputy Chief of the Insurance Division in the Office of the Attorney General.

He has practiced law with firms in New York, Boston and Framingham, where he concentrated in labor and employment, employee benefits, insurance, health care and consumer law. He is a member of the Massachusetts and New York State Bars.

Angela McConney, Commissioner

Angela C. McConney was appointed as a Commissioner to the Civil Service Commission in 2022 and re-appointed in 2025.

McConney last served as an Administrative Magistrate for the Division of Administrative Law Appeals (DALA) after her service as the Commission's General Counsel from 2008-2012. McConney has been a Suffolk County prosecutor and the Chief Legal Counsel of the Massachusetts House of Representatives Criminal Justice Committee.

McConney is the President of the Massachusetts Bar Foundation, serves by appointment of the Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) on the Massachusetts IOLTA Committee, and has

volunteered as a trained mediator in the Small Claims sessions of the Boston Municipal Court (Central and Dorchester Divisions). Ms. McConney is a past president and treasurer of the Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association.

McConney received the Massachusetts Black Women Attorneys 2021 Public Interest Award in recognition of her outstanding accomplishments and contributions to public interest law. Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly honored Ms. McConney with its Award for Excellence in Diversity in 2012 and its Top Women in the Law Award in 2016.

McConney is a graduate of Dartmouth College and the University of Iowa College of Law. She also studied at the American University in Cairo and the London Law Consortium.

Shawn Dooley, Commissioner

Shawn Dooley was appointed as a Commissioner to the Civil Service Commission in 2022.

Prior to joining the Commission, he served as the State Representative for the 9th Norfolk District representing the communities of Medfield, Millis, Norfolk, Plainville, Walpole, and Wrentham. He was first elected to the House in a Special Election in January 2014 and was subsequently elected to four additional terms. Dooley served on a wide variety of committees during his tenure including Ways and Means, Revenue, Election Laws, and Financial Services.

Before being elected to state government, Dooley served as the Elected Town Clerk for the Town of Norfolk as well as the Chair of the School Committee. He also served on the Zoning Board of Appeals and the School Building Committee for the town as well. In addition, he has served as an on-call firefighter/EMT for the Towns of Norfolk and Plainville for a period spanning 12 years.

Dooley received his BA from Auburn University and his MPA from Anna Maria College. He is currently a resident of Wrentham.

Joseph Markey, Commissioner

Joseph Markey was appointed to a five-year term as a Commissioner to the Civil Service Commission in 2024. Commissioner Markey is a graduate of Merrimack College, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Finance and Management, and Massachusetts School of Law.

He worked at a leading Boston litigation firm for four years before founding his own firm. Before entering private practice, Joe served as a 3:03 Prosecutor with the Middlesex District Attorney's Office. He also served as the Chair of the Middlesex Sheriff's Association Advisory Board and as General Counsel for the Lynnfield Housing Authority. Joe recently served multiple terms as an elected Town Moderator in Lynnfield and is active in many civic organizations.

Robert Quinan, General Counsel

Rob Quinan was appointed as the Civil Service Commission's General Counsel in April 2021. For nearly 25 years (1996-2021), Rob served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Government Bureau, where he represented state agencies in court proceedings at both the trial and appellate court level (in both state and federal courts). From 2008 to 2021, Mr. Quinan served as Managing Attorney and then Deputy Chief of the Administrative Law Division.

Over his years in the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, and before, Mr. Quinan developed an expertise in labor & employment law and the laws governing human services agencies. Previously, he was employed as a management-level attorney at the Massachusetts Department of Children & Families and, before that, as an associate at the Boston firm of Bingham McCutchen LLP. Attorney Quinan is a graduate of the College of William & Mary, the Georgetown University Law Center, and he also holds a master's degree in international relations from Georgetown University.

Caroline De Luca, Deputy General Counsel and Clerk of the Commission

Caroline De Luca began serving as the Deputy General Counsel and Clerk to the Civil Service Commission in December 2023. Prior to that, she served in several government legal positions, including the roles of Assistant Clerk Magistrate in the Boston Municipal Court and Assistant District Attorney in the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office.

She also has extensive experience outside of government. She served as the Managing Attorney of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program of a not-for-profit organization in Washington, D.C., and was Of Counsel to a prominent, nationally recognized employment law firm. Attorney De Luca obtained her law degree from Boston University School of Law and her undergraduate degree from McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

Medes Diaz, Office Manager

Medes Diaz has served the Commission for over two decades, performing the role of Office Manager for approximately half of that time. She is regularly recognized for her superior customer service and leadership skills that enable the Commission to meet its goals and objectives. Ms. Diaz is one of two fluent Spanish speakers employed by the Commission.

RESOURCES

1. [Comprehensive 2025 Calendar Year Statistics.](#)
2. [Full List of Commission Decisions.](#)
3. [How to file an appeal with the Commission.](#)
4. [A Guide for Self-Represented Individuals.](#)
5. [Access to the civil service law.](#)