City of Columbus

Legislation Report

Office of City Clerk
90 West Broad Street
Columbus OH 43215-9015
columbuscitycouncil.org

File Number: 2898-2025

30-Day

File ID: 2898-2025 **Type:** Ordinance **Status:** Passed

Version: 1 ***Committee:** Rules & Policy Committee

File Name: Pay Transparency Code Change **File Created:** 10/21/2025

Final Action: 11/05/2025

Auditor Cert #:

Auditor: When assigned an Auditor Certificate Number I , the City Auditor, hereby certify that there is in the treasury, or anticipate to come into the treasury, and not appropriated for any other purpose, the amount of money specified hereon, to pay the within Ordinance.

Contact Name/No.: K. Estose x5-2728

Floor Action (Clerk's Office Only)

Mayor's Action		**Council Action**	
Mayor	Date	Date Passed/ Adopted	President of Council
Veto	Date		City Clerk

Title:

To amend Chapter 2335 of the Columbus City Codes in order to require pay transparency in job postings; to repeal the existing Chapter 2335.

Sponsors: Lourdes Barroso De Padilla

Attachments: Chapter 2335 2025 Amendments, Code Change Fact Sheet_Pay Transparency

Related Files:

Approval History

Version	Seq #	Action Date	Approver	Action	Due Date
1	1	10/22/2025	ATTORNEY APPROVER	Approved	10/22/2025

Notes: lnb

History of Legislative File

Ver.	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
1	Columbus City Council	10/27/2025	Read for the First Time				
1	Columbus City Council	11/03/2025	Approved				Pass
1	COUNCIL PRESIDENT	11/03/2025	Signed				
1	MAYOR	11/04/2025	Signed				
1	CITY CLERK	11/05/2025	Attest				

ODI: Following the review and approval, when required, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion certifies compliance with Title 39 as of date listed.

City Attorney: Following review and approval, when required, this ordinance has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office as to its form and legality only.

Explanation

On March 13, 2023, Columbus City Council voted to prohibit the inquiry and use of salary history information in the job application and interview process through Chapter 2335 of the Columbus City Codes. Since then, City Council has continued to seek out policy solutions that promote economic mobility for families and reduce pay disparities.

This legislation seeks to amend Chapter 2335 to require pay transparency in job postings. Cleveland City Council passed similar legislation earlier this year. Cincinnati and Toledo also have pay transparency requirements. This legislation will increase uniformity in policies for employers in Ohio, promote best practices in human resources, support job seekers in their search and in pay negotiations, and ensure that Columbus employers are operating competitively in the market by implementing these best practices.

These amendments also include updated references to Chapter 2331, which was updated in 2024, triggering the need for changes to Chapter 2335.

Title

To amend Chapter 2335 of the Columbus City Codes in order to require pay transparency in job postings; to repeal the existing Chapter 2335.

Body

WHEREAS, in March 2023, Columbus City Council voted to prohibit the inquiry and use of salary history information in the job application and interview process through Chapter 2335 of the Columbus City Codes; and

WHEREAS, City Council continues to seek to identify policy solutions that promote economic mobility for families and reduce pay disparities; and

WHEREAS, multiple Ohio cities, including Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Toledo have implemented pay transparency requirements in job postings; and

WHEREAS, Council is proposing amendments to Chapter 2335 of the Columbus City Codes that will update references to Chapter 2331 which was amended in 2024 and to require pay transparency in job postings; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That Chapter 2335 of the Columbus City Codes is hereby amended per the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 2. That existing Chapter 2335 of the Columbus City Codes is hereby repealed.

SECTION 3. That Section 2335.03(C) of the Columbus City Codes, which requires pay transparency in job postings, shall not be enforced until January 1, 2027.

SECTION 4. That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

Chapter 2335 PROHIBITED SALARY HISTORY INQUIRY AND USE; PAY TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS

2335.01 Definitions.

(A) "Applicant" means any person applying for employment to be performed within the geographic boundaries of the City of Columbus, and whose application, in whole or in part, will be solicited, received, processed, or considered in the City of Columbus, regardless of whether the applicant is interviewed.

(B) "Employer" means an individual, firm, limited liability company, partnership, association, labor organization, corporation, or any other entity whether or not organized for profit, that employs fifteen (15) or more persons on a qualifying wage, commission, or other compensation basis within the City of Columbus. "Employer" includes job placement and referral agencies and other employment agencies when such agencies operate on behalf of an entity that otherwise meets the definition of "Employer".

"Employer" does not include any unit of local, state, or federal government, except the City of Columbus.

(C) "Employment" means any occupation, vocation, job, or work, including but not limited to, temporary and seasonal work, part-time work, contracted work, contingent work, work on commission, and work through the services of a temporary or other employment agency for which the applicant is to receive wages or a salary. Employment does not include work as an independent contractor.

(D) "Employment posting" means any solicitation intended to recruit applicants for a specific available position, and includes any postings done electronically, or with a printed hard copy, that includes a description of the position and/or qualifications for desired applicants. "Employment posting" does not include a solicitation for recruiting applicants that is replicated and published without an employer's consent.

~~(D)~~(E) "Inquire" means to communicate any question or statement to an applicant, an applicant's current or prior employers, or a current or former employee or agent of the applicant's current or prior employers, in writing or otherwise, for the purpose of obtaining an applicant's salary history, or to conduct a search of publicly available records or reports for the purpose of obtaining an applicant's salary history, but does not include informing the applicant in writing or otherwise about the position's proposed or anticipated salary or salary range.

(F) "Salary" means a person's financial compensation in exchange for labor, including but not limited to wages, commissions, hourly earnings, and other monetary earnings.

~~(E)~~(G) "Salary history" includes the applicant's current or prior wage, benefits, or other compensation. "Salary history" does not include any objective measure of the applicant's productivity such as revenue, sales, or other production reports.

2335.02 Purpose.

The purpose and intent of this chapter is to elevate the best practices for hiring that promote pay equity. The practices addressed in this chapter can, if used, perpetuate issues of systemic discrimination related to the wage gap and wealth gap for women, especially women of color. To promote pay equity across the workforce in the City of Columbus, the following prohibitions are established.

2335.03 Unlawful discriminatory practices regarding the use of salary history; Salary transparency requirements in job postings.

(A) Except as otherwise provided in division (B) of this section, an employer shall not do any of the following:

(1) Inquire about the salary history of an applicant for employment;

(2) Screen job applicants based on their current or prior wages, benefits, other compensation, or salary histories, including requiring that an applicant's prior wages, benefits, other compensation or salary history satisfy minimum or maximum criteria;

(3) Rely solely on the salary history of an applicant, except as provided in division (C) of this section, in deciding whether to offer employment to an applicant, or in determining the salary, benefits, or other compensation for such applicant during the hiring process, including the negotiation of an employment contract;

(4) Refuse to hire or otherwise disfavor, injure, or retaliate against an applicant for not disclosing salary history to an employer.

(B) Notwithstanding division (A) of this section, an employer may, without inquiring about salary history, engage in discussion with the applicant about their expectations with respect to salary, benefits, and other compensation, including but not limited to unvested equity or deferred compensation that an applicant would forfeit by resigning from their current employer.

(C) Employers shall provide a reasonable salary range or scale for potential employment in employment postings. The reasonableness of a salary range or scale shall be based on factors specific to the available position including, but not limited to:

(1) The flexibility of the employer's budget;

(2) The anticipated range of experience job applicants may have;

(3) The potential variation in the responsibilities of the position;

(4) The opportunities for growth in and beyond the position;

(5) The cost of living for the various locations in which an applicant may work; and

(6) Market research on comparable positions and salaries.

~~(C)~~(D) The prohibitions and requirements contained in this section shall not apply to any of the following:

(1) Any actions taken by an employer pursuant to any federal, state, or local law that specifically authorizes the reliance on salary history to determine an employee's compensation;

(2) Applicants or employment postings for positions that involve internal transfer or promotion within an organization;

(3) A voluntary and unprompted disclosure of salary history information by an Applicant;

(4) Any attempt by an employer to verify an applicant's disclosure of non-salary related information or conduct a background check, provided that if such verification or background check discloses the applicant's salary history, such disclosure shall not be solely relied upon for purposes of determining the salary, benefits, or other compensation of such applicant during the hiring process, including the negotiation of a contract;

(5) Applicants who are re-hired by the employer within three years of the Applicant's most recent date of termination of employment by the Employer, provided that the employer already has past salary history data regarding the Applicant from the previous employment of Applicant;

(6) Employee positions for which salary, benefits, or other compensation are determined pursuant to procedures established by collective bargaining~~;~~.

2335.04 Complaint procedure.

An applicant may file a complaint with the Community Relations Commission ~~under Section 2331.05(A)~~ alleging that an employer has engaged in or is now engaging in any violations of section 2335.03, pursuant to Section 2331.05 of the Columbus City Codes.

2335.05 Civil penalties.

Upon an administrative finding of violation of this Section pursuant to the process provided for in Section 2331.05 of the Columbus City Codes, ~~by the commission,~~ an employer may be subject to civil penalties as outlined in Section 2331.05~~(B)~~ of the Columbus City Codes.

2335.06 Severability.

If any provision or section of this chapter or the enforcement of any such provision or section is held to be invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unenforceability shall not affect or render invalid or unenforceable any other provision or section of this chapter. To this end, each of the provisions and sections of this chapter are severable.

2335.07 ~~Effective Date~~ [Reserved]