

1  
2 **BY AUTHORITY**

3 ORDINANCE NO.  
4 SERIES OF 2024

COUNCIL BILL NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
COMMITTEE OF REFERENCE:

5  
6  
7 **A BILL**

8  
9 **For an ordinance submitting to a vote of the qualified and registered electors of the**  
10 **City and County of Denver at the special municipal election on November 5, 2024,**  
11 **a proposed amendment to the Charter of the City and County of Denver to establish**  
12 **collective bargaining as the method for setting compensation and certain terms**  
13 **and conditions of employment for certain city employees including employees of**  
14 **Denver Water and the Denver Library while allowing a right to strike in the event of**  
15 **an impasse in bargaining negotiations only if such strike will not imminently and**  
16 **substantially threaten the public health, welfare, or safety and making conforming**  
17 **amendments.**

18  
19 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER:**

20  
21 **Section 1.** There is hereby submitted to the properly qualified and registered electors of the  
22 City and County of Denver for their approval or rejection at a special municipal election to be  
23 conducted at the same time and in conjunction with the statewide general election to be held in the  
24 City and County of Denver on November 5, 2024, a proposed amendment to the Charter of the City  
25 and County of Denver, as follows:

26 **§ 1.2.15 - Pay periods.**

27 All salaries and compensation of all officers and employees shall be payable at periods of time as  
28 may be provided by ordinance or in accordance with collective bargaining agreements. Any Charter  
29 or ordinance changes relating to pay schedules shall not affect any rights or benefits that have vested  
30 prior to the enactment of such changes, even if that should require the maintenance of dual payroll  
31 systems by the City.

32 **§ 4.3.2 - Appointment of officers and employees by Presiding Judge.**

33 The Presiding Judge shall appoint the necessary court officers and administrative employees of the  
34 court including the Chief Clerk, whose appointments shall be subject to Career Service regulations  
35 or in accordance with collective bargaining agreements. The Presiding Judge may appoint  
36 magistrates who shall hold such appointments so long as their services are satisfactory to the  
37 Presiding Judge.

1           **§ 9.1.1 - Career Service personnel system.**

2           A.(A) There shall be and is hereby created a Career Service personnel system, which shall  
3 be directed by a Career Service Board of five (5) members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed  
4 by the City Council for staggered terms fixed by ordinance. The Board shall, pursuant to its own  
5 rulemaking procedures, adopt, administer and enforce rules necessary to foster and maintain a  
6 merit-based personnel system according to the principles set forth in this Part 1, including but not  
7 limited to rules concerning the conduct of competitive examinations of competence, probationary  
8 periods, grievance procedures, and appeals from actions of appointing authorities to the Board and  
9 any hearing officers appointed by the Board. Provided, however, that in the event of any conflict  
10 between such rules and the terms and conditions negotiated in a collective bargaining agreement  
11 pursuant to Part 10 of this Article, the terms and conditions in the collective bargaining agreement  
12 shall control. The Board and any hearing officers appointed by the Board shall have the power to  
13 issue subpoenas. The Board shall perform such other duties in relation to the Career Service  
14 personnel system as may be assigned by ordinance consistent with this Charter.

15           B.(B) All appointments and promotions of employees in the Career Service shall be made  
16 solely on the basis of merit and ability, or pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement entered into  
17 pursuant to Part 10 of this Article. Dismissals, suspensions or disciplinary demotions of non-  
18 probationary employees in the Career Service shall be made only for cause, including the good of  
19 the service and subject to the right to strike provided in Part 10 of this Article. The Career Service  
20 personnel system shall provide for equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color,  
21 creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or political affiliation or any other  
22 status protected by federal, state or local laws.

23           C.(C) The City Council shall by ordinance enact a classification and pay plan and attendant  
24 pay rates for all classifications in the Career Service and all classifications not in the Career Service  
25 based upon the duties of the several classifications, except elected and appointed Charter officers,  
26 the ranks of the classified service in the Police and Fire Departments, Deputy Sheriffs, Deputy Sheriff  
27 Majors, Deputy Sheriff Division Chiefs, ~~and the Sheriff,~~ and other employees whose classification,  
28 pay plan, and attendant pay rates are set in accordance with collective bargaining agreements  
29 pursuant to Part 10 of this Article~~based upon the duties of the several classifications.~~ The pay rates  
30 as reflected in the pay plan shall provide like pay for like work within such classifications. The Council  
31 shall also by ordinance enact benefits for employees in such classifications. The Council shall enact  
32 such ordinances after recommendations are made as provided in subsection (D) of this section.  
33 Nothing in this section shall be deemed to prohibit the payment of incentives for outstanding

1 performance by employees within such classifications according to standards and procedures  
2 established by ordinance.

3 **§ 9.9.14 - Collective bargaining agreement; what constitutes.**

4 (A) The collective bargaining agreement between the City and the bargaining agent shall  
5 consist of any and all terms actually agreed to by the parties or awarded by the arbitrator. At the  
6 request of either the bargaining agent or the Corporate Authorities, the agreement shall contain a  
7 grievance procedure which culminates in final and binding arbitration by a neutral arbitrator. The  
8 grievance procedure may be established by voluntary agreement or by the arbitrator, provided such  
9 grievance procedure shall not conflict with any provisions of the Charter.

10 (B) Whenever there is a conflict between the terms of the ~~collective bargaining agreement and a~~  
11 rule, executive order, procedure, policy, or any ordinance of the City which is applicable only to  
12 employees of the City, the provisions of the agreement shall prevail ~~any provision of the Charter of~~  
13 ~~the City and County of Denver, applicable Career Service Rules, applicable City Ordinances or~~  
14 ~~Federal or State laws, or executive orders, the agreement shall be deemed to be subordinate unless~~  
15 ~~there is express violation of the terms of this Part 9.~~

16 **PART 10. - COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CERTAIN CITY EMPLOYEES**

17 **§ 9.10.1 - Statement of policy.**

18 It is the public policy of the people of the City and County of Denver to equalize the bargaining  
19 power of city employees and the elected and appointed officials of the City and County of Denver by  
20 providing for such employees the right to bargain collectively with the employer through an exclusive  
21 agent for certain terms and conditions of employment, the right to have such terms and conditions  
22 set by contract, and all other rights of labor, including the right to strike, organize in any work  
23 stoppage, slowdown, or mass absenteeism in the event of an impasse as provided in this Part 10.

24 **§ 9.10.2 - Definitions.**

25 As used in this Section, the following terms shall, unless the context requires a different  
26 interpretation, have the following meanings:

27 (A) “Bargaining agent” means an employee organization chosen by the bargaining unit  
28 pursuant to Section 9.10.5

29 (B) “Bargaining unit” means a group of two or more bargaining-eligible employees as  
30 determined pursuant to Section 9.10.4 for the purposes of representation by a bargaining agent.

31 (C) “Bargaining-eligible employees” means non-supervisory and non-confidential  
32 employees comprising of the Career Service as defined in Section 9.1.1 (E) and employees of the  
33 City Council, Library Commission, Civil Service Commission, Board of Adjustment, and Denver

1 Water, but excluding Deputy Sheriffs, Deputy Sheriff Majors, Deputy Sheriff Division Chiefs, and  
2 Career service employees of the Denver Health and Hospital Authority.

3 (D) “Confidential employee” means an employee who assists and acts in a confidential  
4 capacity to persons who formulate, determine, and effectuate management policies in the field of  
5 labor relations and shall have the same meaning and be interpreted in the same manner as that term  
6 is used in the National Labor Relation Act, 29 U.S.C. §§ 151-169, as amended.

7 (E) “Corporate Authority” means the Mayor and City Council for employees comprising the  
8 Career Service as defined in Section 9.1.1 (E), employees of the City Council, employees of the Civil  
9 Service Commission, and employees of the Board of Adjustment. The Library Commission and the  
10 Board of Water Commissioners shall be the Corporate Authority for their respective employees.

11 (F) “Employee organization” means an organization of any kind in which employees  
12 participate and which exists for the purpose, in whole or in part, of negotiating with the Corporate  
13 Authority on labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or other conditions of  
14 employment as provided in this Part 10. An employee organization shall not include an organization  
15 initiated, created, or dominated by the Corporate Authority or any organization acting on behalf of  
16 the Corporate Authority.

17 (G) “Supervisory employee” means any employee having authority, in the interest of the  
18 applicable Corporate Authority, to direct, hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge,  
19 assign, reward, or discipline other employees.

20 **§ 9.10.3 - Right to organize and bargain collectively; subjects of bargaining.**

21 (A) On or after May 1, 2025, bargaining-eligible employees shall have the right to bargain  
22 collectively with their respective Corporate Authority and to be represented by a bargaining agent in  
23 such negotiations as to wages and compensation, rates of pay, benefits, dependent benefits,  
24 promotions and demotions, hours, working conditions, employee facilities, paid time off, leave,  
25 grievance procedures, disciplinary procedures, and other terms and conditions of employment  
26 consistent with the provisions in this charter and state and federal law. Provided, however, that  
27 participation in the Denver Employees Retirement Plan, as defined by ordinance, shall not be a  
28 subject of negotiation.

29 (B) Nothing in this Part 10 shall affect the authority of the Mayor and the cabinet to  
30 formulate the general administrative policies of the City and County, to determine which services the  
31 City and County shall provide to the public, to take actions necessary to comply with federal or state  
32 law, or take any other actions necessary to comply with the requirements of this Charter.

33 **§ 9.10.4 - Determination of bargaining unit.**

1        (A) On or after May 1, 2025, an employee organization wishing to represent bargaining-  
2 eligible employees shall determine which employees share a substantial mutual interest in wages,  
3 hours, and other conditions of employment such that they share a community of interest as  
4 understood under the National Labor Relation Act, 29 U.S.C. §§ 151-169, as amended, provided,  
5 however, bargaining units for employees of the City Council, Library Commission, Civil Service  
6 Commission, Board of Adjustment, and Board of Water Commissioners may only include employees  
7 of their respective appointing authority.

8        (B) In the event that the respective Corporate Authority or another employee organization  
9 disputes the appropriateness of the bargaining unit, the matter shall be submitted to binding  
10 arbitration using standards and procedures established by ordinance, or in the case of disputes  
11 regarding bargaining units for employees of the Board of Water Commissioners, by rules and  
12 regulations or policies and procedures promulgated by the respective authority.

13        (C) The Council and the Board of Water Commissioners shall create a permanent panel  
14 of at least three (3) arbitrators to decide disputes regarding bargaining units pursuant to this Section.  
15 In order to be eligible to be on the permanent panel of arbitrators, a person must be impartial and  
16 disinterested and must be qualified by experience and training as a neutral hearing officer or  
17 arbitrator in labor or management disputes. The dispute experience shall be in impasse negotiations  
18 between labor and management, disputes over the meaning or application of contracts between  
19 labor and management, or discipline. Any person whose only experience is as a Hearings Officer for  
20 any Civil or Career Service System shall not be qualified. Persons who are members of the National  
21 Academy of Arbitrators or on the American Arbitration Association panel of labor arbitrators are  
22 presumptively qualified. The terms, procedure for removal, and method of selection shall be set forth  
23 by ordinance, or in the case of arbitrators for employees of the Board of Water Commissioners, by  
24 rules and regulations promulgated by the Board.

25        (D) The Council may establish by ordinance, and the Board of Water Commissioners may  
26 establish by rules and regulations, a process for bargaining-eligible employees to join a bargaining  
27 unit, or to clarify which employees are included in a bargaining unit, once formed.

28 **§ 9.10.5 - Selection and recognition of bargaining agent.**

29        (A) The bargaining agent shall be the sole and exclusive representative of all members of  
30 a bargaining unit if the majority of the members of the bargaining unit voting in an election vote for  
31 such bargaining agent.

32        (B) On and after May 1, 2025, questions concerning the selection or removal of any  
33 bargaining agent may be raised by petition of any member of the bargaining unit if such petition is

1 signed by at least thirty-three (33) percent of the bargaining unit. Such a petition may be submitted  
2 to an arbitration association for the purposes of an election as provided in this Section.

3 (C) No petition for the selection or removal of a bargaining agent may be filed within twelve  
4 (12) months of the bargaining agent's certification after an election. Additionally, no petition may be  
5 filed during the term of any existing agreement between the City and the bargaining agent except  
6 during the period from November 1<sup>st</sup> to November 30<sup>th</sup> of the year preceding the final year of the  
7 agreement.

8 (D) When a petition is filed concerning the selection or removal of a bargaining agent, the  
9 arbitration association shall promptly send the petition to the Career Service Board for determination  
10 of whether it contains the requisite number of signatures. The Career Service Board shall promptly  
11 make that determination and notify the arbitration association of its conclusion. If the petition has the  
12 requisite number of signatures, the arbitration association shall determine the question of the  
13 selection or removal of any bargaining agent by taking a secret ballot of the employees in the  
14 bargaining unit and certifying in writing the results thereof to the applicable Corporate Authority and  
15 the person, persons, and employee organizations involved. In an election where none of the choices  
16 on the ballot receives a majority of the votes cast, the arbitration association shall conduct a runoff  
17 election with the names of the bargaining agents receiving the highest and the second highest  
18 number of ballots cast in the election appearing on the ballot.

19 (D) The secret ballot election and any required runoff shall be conducted as provided in  
20 ordinance, or in the case of secret ballot elections for employees of the Board of Water  
21 Commissioners, by rules and regulations promulgated by the Board. The cost of running the election  
22 shall be borne equally by each employee organization on the ballot.

23 **§ 9.10.6 - Procedures for collective bargaining; obligation to bargain in good faith.**

24 (A) Procedures to begin the bargaining process and the schedule for bargaining shall be  
25 as provided in ordinance, or in the case of the bargaining process for employees of the Library  
26 Commission or the Board of Water Commissioners, by rules and regulations or policies and  
27 procedures promulgated by the respective authority.

28 (B) On and after May 1, 2025, it shall be the obligation of the respective Corporate  
29 Authority and the bargaining agent to meet and bargain in good faith at all reasonable times and  
30 places. This obligation shall include the duty to cause any agreements to be reduced to a written  
31 contract and executed in a timely manner. Any such contract shall be for a term of not less than one  
32 (1) year nor more than three (3) years, notwithstanding the provisions of Article VII of this Charter  
33 relating to Budget and Finance. All collective bargaining agreements shall be effective on January

1 1<sup>st</sup> and shall terminate on December 31<sup>st</sup>.

2 **§ 9.10.7 - Unresolved issues submitted to mediation.**

3 (A) In the event that the bargaining agent and the applicable Corporate Authority are  
4 unable, within forty-five (45) days from and including the date of their first meeting, to reach an  
5 agreement on a collective bargaining agreement, the Corporate Authority and the bargaining agent  
6 shall engage in mediation, with the cost of mediation to be borne equally by the parties.

7 (B) The Council and the Board of Water Commissioners shall create a permanent panel  
8 of at least three (3) mediators to decide disputes pursuant to this Section, whose qualifications,  
9 terms, and method of selection shall be set forth by ordinance, or in the case of arbitrators for the  
10 Board of Water Commissioners, by rules and regulations or promulgated by the Board.

11 **§ 9.10.8 - Impasse; right to strike and lockout.**

12 (A) In the event that the bargaining agent and the applicable Corporate Authority are  
13 unable, within forty-five (45) days from the final date of mediation to reach an agreement on a  
14 collective bargaining agreement, the bargaining agent may submit notice of an intent to strike,  
15 organize in any work stoppage, slowdown, or mass absenteeism and the Mayor, the Council, the  
16 Clerk and Recorder, the Auditor, the Library Commission or Board of Water Commissioners may  
17 submit notice of an intent to lockout. Notice shall be submitted at least twenty-one (21) days prior to  
18 engaging in such action.

19 (B) Within fourteen (14) days of receipt of the notice of an intent to strike, organize in any  
20 work stoppage, slowdown or mass absenteeism, the Mayor, the City Council, the Clerk and  
21 Recorder, the Auditor, the Library Commission or Board of Water Commissioners, shall determine  
22 whether the interruption of service resulting from the strike, work stoppage, slowdown, or mass  
23 absenteeism from their respective employees will imminently and substantially threaten the public  
24 health, welfare, or safety. For purposes of this subsection, the Mayor shall also make such  
25 determination for employees of the Civil Service Commission and the Board of Adjustment. Such  
26 determination shall identify which employees are prohibited from engaging in a strike, work  
27 stoppage, slowdown, or mass absenteeism. Except as otherwise provided in subsection (D), such  
28 determination shall be a final decision which the bargaining agent may appeal to County Court, using  
29 standards and procedures as provided in ordinance.

30 (C) Upon a finding that the interruption of service resulting from the strike, work stoppage,  
31 slowdown, or mass absenteeism will imminently and substantially threaten the public health, welfare,  
32 or safety, or upon the exhaustion of judicial review or failure to seek judicial review of such a  
33 determination as provided in ordinance, the parties shall submit to binding arbitration using the panel

1 created by the Council or the Board of Water Commissioners, pursuant to Section 9.10.4, as  
2 applicable. The arbitrator may apply the standards commonly used in interest disputes but shall rely  
3 predominantly on the following in arriving at a decision:

4 (i) The interests and welfare of the public and the financial ability of the City to bear the  
5 costs involved;

6 (ii) Comparison of the compensation, benefits, hours, and other terms and conditions of  
7 employees in the bargaining unit with other public employees with substantially similar job duties in  
8 comparable communities nationally and locally. However, while the arbitrator may consider such  
9 comparisons in making a decision, in no event shall the arbitrator make an award that is indexed or  
10 otherwise expressed as a relationship to the terms and conditions of employees who are not  
11 members of the bargaining unit; and

12 (iii) The cost of living.

13 The award of the arbitrator on each issue shall be the final offer of the Corporate Authorities or the  
14 final offer of the bargaining agent and the arbitrator shall state the reasons for the award in writing.

15 (D) The timeline and procedure for final offers and arbitration under this Section shall be  
16 set forth by ordinance, or in the case of arbitration for employees of the Board of Water  
17 Commissioners, by rules and regulations promulgated by the Board.

18 (E) Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section, upon receipt of a complaint filed by the  
19 City and County of Denver or the City and County of Denver, acting by and through its Board of  
20 Water Commissioners, at any time, the County Court may issue an order requiring employees back  
21 to work upon a finding that the interruption of service resulting from the strike, work stoppage,  
22 slowdown, or mass absenteeism will imminently and substantially threaten the public health, welfare,  
23 or safety, using standards and procedures as provided in ordinance. Such determination shall  
24 identify which employees are prohibited from engaging in a strike, work stoppage, slowdown, or  
25 mass absenteeism.

26 (F) Nothing in this Part 10 shall prohibit the applicable Corporate Authority and the bargaining  
27 agent from negotiating and voluntarily accepting terms of an agreement prior to or during the period  
28 of any strike, work stoppage, slowdown, mass absenteeism, or lockout.

29 **§ 10.1.6 - Manager and personnel.**

30 The property and personnel under control of the Board shall be referred to generally as Denver  
31 Water. The Board shall designate a Manager, who shall cause the Board's policies and orders to be  
32 executed and shall bring to the Board's attention matters appropriate for its action. The Board shall  
33 have power to employ such personnel, including legal staff, and ~~fix the classifications thereof as it~~



1 may deem necessary. The classifications of all such employees shall be fixed by the Board or in  
2 accordance with collective bargaining agreements. All such personnel shall be hired and dismissed  
3 on the basis of merit or in accordance with collective bargaining agreements and subject to the right  
4 to strike set forth in Section 9.10.8. The Board shall define the duties of each of its employees and  
5 fix the amount of their compensation except employees whose duties and compensation are set in  
6 accordance with collective bargaining agreements. It shall be the duty of the Board to carry out the  
7 intent and requirements of Article XX of the Constitution of the State of Colorado with respect to civil  
8 service for public utilities and works and to perform the customary functions of a Civil Service  
9 Commission with respect to its employees. In performing the functions of a Civil Service  
10 Commission, the Board or its designee shall have the power to conduct hearings, administer oaths  
11 and issue subpoenas enforceable in the County Court of the City and County of Denver. The Board  
12 may establish classifications of employment for persons outside the civil service system who serve  
13 solely at the pleasure of the Board except as otherwise provided in a collective bargaining agreement  
14 and subject to the right to strike set forth in Section 9.10.8. Such employees shall include the number  
15 of temporary employees the Board deems necessary and not more than 2 percent of all  
16 regular employees of the Board.

17  
18 **Effective upon publication and filing with the Secretary of State in accordance with the**  
19 **Constitution and laws of the State of Colorado, the following sections of the Charter of**  
20 **the City and County of Denver are amended to read as follows:**

21  
22  
23 **Section 2.** The ballot shall contain the following title and submission clause:

24  
25 **REFERRED QUESTION** \_\_\_\_\_

26  
27  
28 **Section 3.** The proper officials of the City and County of Denver as are charged with duties  
29 relating to the election shall, before the election, issue such calls, make such certifications and  
30 publications, give such notices, make such appointments, and do all such other acts and things in  
31 connection with the submission of this Charter amendment to the registered electors of the City and  
32 County of Denver at the election as are required by the Constitution and laws of the State of Colorado  
33 and the Charter and ordinances of the City and County of Denver.

1           **Section 4.** Pursuant to Section 31-2-210(4) of the Colorado Revised Statutes, the Clerk  
2 and Recorder is directed to publish a notice of the City’s special election and to include in that  
3 notice the full text of the proposed amendments as stated in this Ordinance. Such notice is to be  
4 published within thirty (30) days of the adoption of this Ordinance and not less than sixty (60) days  
5 nor more than one hundred twenty (120) days before said election.

6           **Section 5.** The ballots cast at such election shall be canvassed and the results ascertained,  
7 determined, and certified in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution and laws of the  
8 State of Colorado and the Charter and ordinances of the City and County of Denver.

9           **Section 6.** If any section, paragraph, clause, or other portion of this ordinance is held to be  
10 invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance shall  
11 not be affected.

12  
13 COMMITTEE APPROVAL DATE: \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.  
14 MAYOR-COUNCIL DATE: \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.  
15 PASSED BY THE COUNCIL \_\_\_\_\_ 2024

16 \_\_\_\_\_ - PRESIDENT  
17 APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ - MAYOR \_\_\_\_\_ 2024  
18 ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_ - CLERK AND RECORDER,  
19 EX-OFFICIO CLERK OF THE  
20 CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER  
21

22 NOTICE PUBLISHED IN THE DAILY JOURNAL \_\_\_\_\_ 2024; \_\_\_\_\_ 2024

23  
24 PREPARED BY: \_\_\_\_\_; DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
25

26 Pursuant to section 13-9, D.R.M.C., this proposed ordinance has been reviewed by the office of the  
27 City Attorney. We find no irregularity as to form and have no legal objection to the proposed  
28 ordinance. The proposed ordinance is not submitted to the City Council for approval pursuant to §  
29 3.2.6 of the Charter.  
30

31 Kerry Tipper, City Attorney  
32 BY: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ City Attorney  
33 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
34  
35

DRAFT