

No. 17-26-OR

AN ORDINANCE

An ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, directing that a referendum question regarding the repeal of Article III, §7(c) of the Home Rule Charter of Allegheny County, which prohibits only County Council members from receiving County funding for personal staff, district offices, and fringe benefits, be placed on the November 3, 2026 General Election ballot; and further amending Article III, §7, contingent upon the passage of the referendum question.

Whereas, Article III, §7(c) of the Home Rule Charter of Allegheny County applies only to Allegheny County Council members, and not to any other elected County official; and

Whereas, the prohibitions in Article III, §7(c) forbid members of Council from receiving County funding for “personal staff, local district offices or fringe benefits including, but not limited to, health and life insurance, pensions and personal motor vehicles”; and

Whereas, these benefits are available to the Chief Executive and the four County row officers; and

Whereas, it is the judgment of Council that these prohibitions ultimately restrict the Council members’ ability to function independently; and

Whereas, it is further the judgment of Council that the restrictions contained in §7(c) limit the field of individuals who are willing to seek to serve as members of Council by precluding fringe benefits that may to some extent offset the statutorily mandated low pay that they receive for their service; and

Whereas, the importance of a vital and inclusive legislative branch is further demonstrated by the Charter preamble: “[a] home rule government that separates the legislative and executive functions previously vested solely in the Board of County Commissioners will provide checks and balances on the powers of government and protect the rights, privileges and powers reserved or guaranteed to the people by the Constitutions of the United States of American and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.”; and

Whereas, it is the desire of Council to encourage more individuals to seek the office of Council member by eliminating the restrictions of §7(c), subject to the approval of the voters of Allegheny County, while not yet enacting any actual changes to the Council’s access to County funded benefits;

The Council of the County of Allegheny hereby enacts as follows:

SECTION 1. Incorporation of the Preamble.

The provisions set forth in the preamble to this Ordinance are incorporated by reference in their entirety herein.

SECTION 2. Ballot Question.

Pursuant to the Second Class County Charter Law and the Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Law, the Allegheny County Board of Elections is hereby directed to place the following question on the November 3, 2026 General Election Ballot for consideration and approval by the registered electors of the County:

Shall Article III, Subsection 7(c) of Allegheny County's Home Rule Charter be repealed in order to remove restrictions on County Council members' ability to receive County funding for personal staff, district offices, and fringe benefits?

SECTION 3. Contingent amendment of Article III of the Home Rule Charter of Allegheny County; First Question.

Immediately upon certification by the Board of Elections that the Charter amendment delineated within Section 2 of this Ordinance has been approved by the voters of Allegheny County, Article III of the Home Rule Charter of Allegheny County shall be amended as follows:

Section 7 Compensation, Staff and Expenses

- a) County Council Members shall not receive a salary but may receive per-meeting stipends not to exceed in the aggregate \$9,000 annually per Member. The aggregate stipend may by ordinance be increased by up to five percent every five years.
- b) County Council may hire Council staff as provided in Article IV, Section 2(n).
- e) ~~County Council Members shall not be entitled to receive any County funding for personal staff, local district offices or fringe benefits including, but not limited to, health and life insurance, pensions and personal motor vehicles.~~

- Ⓒ) c) The Chief Executive's annual salary shall be \$90,000 which may be adjusted annually as provided in the Administrative Code.
- Ⓓ) d) Elected officers may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties in accordance with procedures established in the Administrative Code. The reimbursement of the expenses of County Council Members shall not exceed \$3,000 per County Council Member per year. The expense limit may by ordinance be increased by up to five percent every five years.
- Ⓔ) e) The appropriation in each annual operating budget for County Council's per-meeting stipends, expenses, total staff compensation and office expenses shall not exceed four-tenths of one percent of the County's annual locally levied tax revenues as detailed in the most recent audited financial report of the County.
- Ⓕ) f) The appropriation in each annual operating budget for the Chief Executive's compensation, expenses, total staff compensation and office expenses shall not exceed two-tenths of one percent of the County's annual locally levied tax revenues as detailed in the most recent audited financial report of the County.

SECTION 4. Effective Date.

The provisions of this Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon final approval.

SECTION 5. Severability.

If any provision of this Ordinance shall be determined to be unlawful, invalid, void or unenforceable, then that provision shall be considered severable from the remaining provisions of this Ordinance which shall be in full force and effect.

SECTION 6. Repealer.

Any Resolution or Ordinance or part thereof conflicting with the provisions of this Ordinance is hereby repealed so far as the same affects this Ordinance.

PRIMARY SPONSOR: COUNCIL MEMBER HALLAM

**CO-SPONSORS: COUNCIL MEMBERS BOTTA, MADONNA-EMMERLING,
ROSE and GRZYBEK**

Enacted in Council, this 23rd day of June, 2026

Council Agenda No. 13553-26

Michelle Naccarati-Chapkin
~~Patrick Catena~~ Michelle Naccarati-Chapkin
President of Council

Attest: JEB
Jared E. Barker
Chief Clerk of Council

Chief Executive Office _____, 2026

Approved: _____
Sara Innamorato
Chief Executive

Attest: _____