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**BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF CHICAGO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

POSITION SPECIFICATIONS

CLIENT

The **Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago** (the “Board”) was born out of a time in the late 1880’s when election reform movements were sweeping through major urban centers across the country. The reforms focused on keeping elected officials from having control over the electoral franchise and placing election management and administration under independent election professionals. In the 1880’s in Chicago, civic leaders led the campaign for these reforms. Among the leaders of the electoral-reform movement was Chicago Tribune Editor-in-Chief Joseph Medill, who also had served as the mayor of the City immediately after the Chicago Fire.

The most common election reform model involved the creation of an independent Board of Election Commissioners, whose members could neither be elected officials nor participate in political campaigns. Under this system of election administration, a Board of Election Commissioners may serve as an extension of the Judicial Branch of the government – the same branch of government also involved in deciding other election matters, such as whether candidates qualify for the ballot and post-election recounts.

At the urging of civic leaders, Illinois lawmakers in the State Capital, Springfield, approved a law in 1885 that gave the voters in any Illinois municipality the power to form a local Board of Election Commissioners. As the City of Chicago was comprised of townships, separate referenda were conducted in each township. Overwhelming majorities of voters in every Chicago township voted to create one Board of Election Commissioners for the entire City.

The three members of the **Board of Election Commissioners** for the City of Chicago are appointed by the Cook County Circuit Court to three-year terms. In a three-year cycle, one Commissioner’s term expires each year. By law, the **Board** membership must include at least one member from each of the State’s two leading political parties. Based

upon ballots cast in primary elections, those parties are the Democratic and Republican parties. A prospective Commissioner's political affiliation is determined by his or her record for selecting ballots at Primary Elections.

The **Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago** sets policies for the agency and manages the activities of the **Executive Director** related to voter registration programs and election management, equipment, budgeting, purchasing and human resources. Serving also as the **Electoral Board**, the Commissioners also decide matters related to which candidates qualify for the ballot for all City offices. The **Electoral Board** also determines ballot access in state legislative and Congressional districts that are entirely within Cook County if any portion of the districts are in Chicago. **Electoral Board** decisions can be appealed in the court system.

In most years, the **Board** administers two city-wide elections. Oversight includes one of the largest election operations in the United States with approximately 1.5 million registered voters in 2,069 precincts, more precincts than in the entire State of Iowa.

The **Board** staff of approximately 130 full-time employees maintain the records, program equipment and make preparations throughout the years. Central to the **Board** activities are year-round preparations so that the agency can train and deploy 15,000 temporary poll workers to serve in the polling places on Election Day and report election results after the polls close. Under the direction of the **Board** and its **Executive Director**, the full-time staff oversee: the management of voter registration systems; mapping systems for precincts and districts; preparation of the ballots; designation and renting of polling places; hiring and training of judges of elections, poll workers and investigators; management of the warehouse, programming, testing and shipping of election equipment to and from the polling places; and reporting, canvassing and archiving all election results and related data from each election.

The **Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago** is funded by the City of Chicago and Cook County. The **Board** maintains offices in downtown Chicago and a separate warehouse location.

For more detailed information about the **Board**, please visit the website at www.chicagoelections.gov.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Executive Director** serves as the chief administrator, providing leadership and implementing policies and programs to carry out the work of the **Board**. The **Executive Director** directs an annual operating budget of approximately \$34M and leads a staff of 130 full-time employees broken into 7 Divisions comprised of: Registration; Information Technology; Human Resources; Finance; Community Services/Poll Workers; Pre-Election Voting & Logistics; and, Warehouse Operations. All full-time employees, including the Assistant Executive Director, are compensated through the City of Chicago and subject to the benefits offered to City employees, although they are employees of the Board and not the City. Although an employee of the Board, the **Executive Director** is compensated through Cook County and receives employee compensation and benefits in line with County policies. By statute, the **Executive Director** must take an oath of office before the Cook County Circuit Court.

Essential Functions include:

- Reports to and attends all meetings with the **Board** maintaining open communication and disclosure of the conditions, operations and needs of the agency.
- Supports and directs the Assistant Executive Director in the management of the day-to-day operations of the **Board** and its staff
- Oversees preparation of the annual budget
- Presents and recommends organizational policies and programs to the **Board**
- Serves as the public “face” of the **Board** to City and County elected officials, citizen groups and community organizations
- Serves as a member of the International Association of Government Officials (IGO) and the Association of Election Commission Officials of Illinois and attends conferences
- Executes other duties as requested by the **Board**

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor’s degree in a related field is preferred; other relevant work experience may be substituted
- Substantial (ideally 10 or more years) of work experience in state or local government ideally to include election administration experience
- Demonstrated experience in all aspects of the election process including, but not limited to, pre-election voting, registration, poll worker recruitment and training, Election Day and post-Election functions.
- Prior experience and a strong knowledge of Federal and State of Illinois election laws, processes and procedures, is highly preferred
- Demonstrated experience directing and overseeing a sizeable workforce and budget with a strong working knowledge of public finance
- A strong background in the use of electronic voting systems and knowledge of prevailing cyber security procedures and systems as it relates to election integrity is desired
- Experience working closely with a board of commissioners, trustees or the like, and in a public-facing role is strongly preferred
- Proven team leadership, mentoring, motivating and staff management experience
- Demonstrated ability to identify, formulate and implement process improvement measures; examples will be sought
- Ability to work long hours, including holidays and weekends during peak election periods

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Uncompromising ethical standards and demonstrated commitment to integrity, transparency, fairness, impartiality and accountability
- Forward thinking, visionary with demonstrated ability to develop and execute strategic initiatives
- Demonstrated leadership and administrative management capabilities including the ability to accomplish agency goals through influence and leadership of others

- Instills and maintains a culture of personal and professional accountability; implements appropriate corrective actions when necessary
- Effective and persuasive oral and written communication, presentation, reasoning and negotiation skills
- Credible, relatable and trust-worthy; possesses the ability to build and maintain meaningful relationships with City and County elected officials, citizen groups, and other key stakeholders
- Skills to make rational, intelligent, thoughtful and often difficult decisions on a timely basis exercising independent judgment and discretion
- A driver that possesses a strong work ethic and dedication to excellence
- Unwavering commitment to the integrity of the election process in the City of Chicago
- Social and emotional intelligence; demonstrates flexibility and adaptability, as needed, in interpersonal interactions and decision-making
- High degree of organizational skills with ability to manage resources and multiple priorities while demonstrating attention to detail and accuracy

COMPENSATION

Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications and market factors. The total compensation package includes base salary and Cook County's employee benefits package. Benefits include membership in the County's defined benefit retirement and 457 plans, medical, dental and vision insurance coverage, and a generous paid time off policy.

APPLICATION PROCESS

EFL Associates, an executive search firm, is assisting the **Board** with this important search. All calls and inquiries should be made through the search firm. Referrals and applications will be held in confidence. Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the position is filled.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago and EFL Associates firmly support the principle and philosophy of equal opportunity for all individuals, regardless of age, race, gender, creed, national origin, disability, veteran status or any other protected category pursuant to applicable federal, state or local law.

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