

METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT OF GREATER CHICAGO

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

CIVIL SERVICE BOARD

The Civil Service Board ("Board") held twelve regular meetings and no special meetings during 2025. Three members served on the Board. John S. Kendall served as Chair from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. John S. Kendall's term expires January 31, 2032. Karina Ayala-Bermejo served as Vice Chair from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. Karina Ayala-Bermejo's term expires January 31, 2028. Donald J. Storino served as Secretary from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. Donald J. Storino's term expires January 31, 2030.

At its regular meetings, the Board ratified 352 requests for leaves of absence.

During 2025, the District filed termination charges against 20 employees. Of those 20 discharge actions, three employees entered into Stipulations with the District, seven employees resigned, the Board discharged four employees and reinstated one employee, and five employees remain on suspension with their cases pending before the Board. Details of these cases are as follows:

- The District suspended five employees pending discharge in December 2024 as a result of investigations by the Office of the Independent Inspector General (OIIG) determining the employees engaged in fraud in obtaining federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans. The District filed charges against the employees in January 2025. Four of the employees resigned shortly after the charges were filed. After a hearing, the Board issued a written decision on August 20, 2025 discharging the fifth employee.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in January 2025 for violating District safety rules and procedures. Charges were filed in February 2025. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. This case remains pending before the Board to monitor the employee's compliance with the Stipulation.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in January 2025 for failing to maintain the minimum standard of performance. Charges were filed in February 2025. This case is currently pending and tentatively set for hearing on March 18, 2026.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in February 2025 as a result of an OIIG investigation determining the employee used insider knowledge and resources to make an iBid purchase. Charges were filed in March 2025. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. This case remains pending before the Board to monitor the employee's compliance with the Stipulation.
- The District suspended three employees pending discharge in April 2025 as a result of OIIG investigations determining the employees engaged in fraud in obtaining federal PPP loans. The District filed charges against two of the employees in April 2025 and the other in May 2025. The case against one of the employees is currently pending before the Board, while one employee resigned effective April 29, 2025 and the other resigned effective May 22, 2025.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in April 2025 for violating the District's clock in procedures. Charges were filed in May 2025. The employee resigned effective August 20, 2025.

- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in April 2025 as a result of an OIIG investigation determining the employee misused voting time. Charges were filed in May 2025. This case proceeded to hearing before the Board. The Board issued a written decision on October 15, 2025 reinstating the employee.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in May 2025 as a result of an OIIG investigation determining the employee engaged in fraud in obtaining a federal PPP loan. Charges were filed in June 2025. This case is currently pending before the Board.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in June 2025 for gross insubordination and failing to promptly report an accident involving their assigned District vehicle. Charges were filed in July 2025. This case proceeded to hearing before the Board. The Board issued a written decision on November 19, 2025 discharging the employee. The employee filed a petition for rehearing which is pending before the Board.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in June 2025 for using a District vehicle for personal use and leaving work assignments without authorization. Charges were filed in July 2025. This case is currently pending and scheduled for hearing on February 11, 2026.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in June 2025 for gross insubordination and violating District safety rules regarding the use of chemicals. Charges were filed in July 2025. This case proceeded to hearing before the Board. The Board issued a written decision on December 3, 2025 discharging the employee.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in July 2025 for not possessing a valid Illinois commercial driver's license as required for the Hoisting Engineer classification. Charges were filed in August 2025. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. This case remains pending before the Board to monitor the employee's compliance with the Stipulation.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in September 2025 for violating clock-in procedures and taking extended lunch breaks on multiple occasions. Charges were filed in October 2025. This case proceeded to hearing, which the employee failed to attend. The Board entered an order discharging the employee on December 3, 2025.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in October 2025 for tardiness, multiple days of absence without leave (AWOL), and failure to clock out on several occasions. Charges were filed in November 2025. This case is currently pending before the Board.

One discharge case was carried over from 2020, and seven discharge cases were carried over from 2024. In the 2020 case, the employee returned to work pursuant to a Stipulation, was subsequently out on ordinary disability, and resigned in 2025. In the 2024 cases, two employees entered into Stipulations with the District, one employee resigned, one employee retired, two employees were discharged, and one employee remains on suspension with their case pending before the Board. Details of these cases are as follows:

2020 Discharge Case

- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in November 2020 for being absent without leave. Charges were filed in December 2020. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. The employee was subsequently out on ordinary disability. The employee resigned effective July 1, 2025.

2024 Discharge Cases

- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in March 2024 for not possessing a valid Illinois driver's license as required for the Maintenance Laborer Class B classification. Charges were filed in April 2024. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. The employee satisfied the terms of the Stipulation.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in March 2024 for leaving the plant without authorization on multiple occasions. Charges were filed in April 2024. This case proceeded to hearing before the Board. The employee retired on January 15, 2025 prior to a decision being rendered by the Board.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in August 2024 for failing to maintain the minimum standard of performance. Charges were filed in September 2024. This case is currently pending and scheduled for hearing on January 21, 2026.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in August 2024 as a result of an OIIG investigation determining the employee engaged in fraud in obtaining a federal PPP loan. Charges were filed in September 2024. This case proceeded to hearing. The Board issued a written decision on March 19, 2025 discharging the employee.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in September 2024 for being absent without leave (AWOL) and failing to attend investigatory and pre-disciplinary meetings. Charges were filed in October 2024. The employee resigned effective April 4, 2025.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in September 2024 for not possessing a valid Illinois driver's license as required for the Maintenance Laborer Class A classification. Charges were filed in October 2024. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. The employee satisfied the terms of the Stipulation.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in December 2024 for being absent without leave (AWOL) and failing to attend investigatory and pre-disciplinary meetings. Charges were filed in December 2024. This case proceeded to hearing, which the employee failed to attend. The Board entered an order discharging the employee on March 19, 2025.

In 2025, six employees filed a total of seven appeals with the Board in which they challenged some action regarding their employment. Four of these appeals are currently pending. The details of these cases are as follows:

- One employee appealed a 30-day suspension. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed a performance review. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed a 30-day suspension. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. This case is currently pending before the Board to monitor the employee's compliance with the Stipulation.
- One employee appealed a 30-day suspension. This case proceeded to hearing before the Board. The Board issued a written decision on October 15, 2025 reinstating the employee.

- One employee appealed a 30-day suspension. The Board issued a written decision on November 19, 2025 discharging the employee. The employee filed a petition for rehearing which is pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed an exam score. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed promotional appointments. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.

One appeal to the Board was carried over from 2023. Details of this appeal are as follows:

- One employee appealed a performance review. This appeal proceeded to hearing before the Board. On February 19, 2025, the Board rendered a decision denying the appeal. The employee filed a petition for rehearing, which is pending before the Board.

Six appeals to the Board filed by five employees were carried over from 2024. Four of these appeals are still pending. Details of these appeals are as follows:

- One employee appealed a performance review. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed a performance review. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed a 30-day suspension. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed a written warning. This employee withdrew the appeal.
- One employee appealed a performance review. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed a 30-day suspension. This case proceeded to hearing, and the Board issued a written decision on August 20, 2025 discharging the employee.

The District presented and requested the Board's approval of seven Amendments to the District's Classification Plan and Lines of Promotion. The Board approved these proposed Amendments. There were no Amendments to the Personnel Rules.

John S. Kendall

John S. Kendall
Chair of the Civil Service Board