



July 25, 2022

To the Honorable City Council President, Nick Mosby,  
and Members of the Baltimore City Council  
City Hall, 100 N. Holliday Street, Room 409  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

**Re: CC Bill 22-0104R Informational Hearing – Degree Requirements for City Positions**

The Department of Human Resources (“DHR”) has reviewed City Council Bill 22-0104R Informational Hearing – Degree Requirements for City Positions. For the purpose of inviting the City Solicitor, the City Administrator, the Director of the Baltimore City Department of Human Resources, the Baltimore City Labor Commissioner, and the Director of the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development to brief the City Council regarding the practice of requiring certain degrees for certain City positions and to discuss if eliminating such a degree requirement would be detrimental or beneficial to the recruitment and retention of quality City employees.

DHR has reviewed the above-referenced bill and eliminating degree requirements for positions that are not highly specialized may be beneficial to the recruitment and retention of quality employees. Although formal education gives employees knowledge that may benefit employees, formal education is not an indication of successful job performance. Additionally, a recent ManpowerGroup survey of 2,000 employers found that over 50% of organizations listed problem-solving, collaboration, customer service, and communication as the most-valued skills they seek in employees, over formal education<sup>1</sup>. The Office of Classification and Compensation in DHR is responsible for establishing the minimum qualifications for all City positions. The minimum qualifications are set based on market research for comparable positions. Once the minimum qualifications are established for a particular classification, they are not changed unless an agency within the City requests an update or a state mandate takes effect that requires the change. Between April and May 2022, Classification and Compensation updated classification specifications for Environmental Sanitarian, Police Information Technician, and Loan Processor.

Anecdotally, positions in Accounting, Arboriculture, Horticulture, and Forestry, are areas where difficulty in recruitment has resulted from degree requirements. Positions within these fields require at least a bachelor’s degree and 2-5 years of experience in order to advance beyond an assistant level position, however, in most of these positions there are equivalencies for the

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<sup>1</sup> Chamorro-Premuzic, T., & Frankiewicz, B. (2019, August 2). *Does Higher Education still prepare people for jobs?* Harvard Business Review. Retrieved July 12, 2022, from <https://hbr.org/2019/01/does-higher-education-still-prepare-people-for-jobs>

required education. A candidate would need at least an additional four (4) years of experience to be eligible for positions at the lead, supervisory, or managerial level, despite having significant work history and demonstrated capacity.

Requiring individuals to have a bachelor's or even master's degree to qualify for or advance in a given field is a widely and historically recognized best practice, to ensure that individuals have the knowledge required to successfully perform their jobs. More recently, however, it has been recognized that requiring degrees for fields that are not highly specialized or fields in which experience is more valuable and practical than education, may hinder a candidate's ability to advance within the field. The practice of requiring a degree for advancement is especially impactful for long-time employees who have experience but not formal education. Although education is not always an indication of true ability to perform the job duties at a competent level, it may be necessary for highly specialized or technical positions in certain professional fields. Moreover, there are some classifications where education is required to obtain certifications required by law.

The Department of Human Resources supports best practices that attract and retain quality candidates for employment within the City of Baltimore. To that end, continually analyzing hiring practices and qualification requirements is a step toward innovating, and providing more opportunities for a greater and more effective workforce.

We have performed an anecdotal analysis to compare the City's degree requirements to other municipalities in the state. Please see the below analysis for a brief comparison of the city to our local comparators. For additional questions or concerns, contact me at [Quinton.Herbert@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Quinton.Herbert@baltimorecity.gov) or by phone at (410) 396-1563.

Sincerely,

Quinton Herbert, JD

## DHR Anecdotal Analysis – Posted Vacancies and Degree Requirements – Maryland Municipalities

Currently, there are a total of 2,415 Civil Service vacancies within the City of Baltimore. Of those vacancies, 766 (32%) require a degree, with the following distributions among the types of degrees (*Chart 1*):

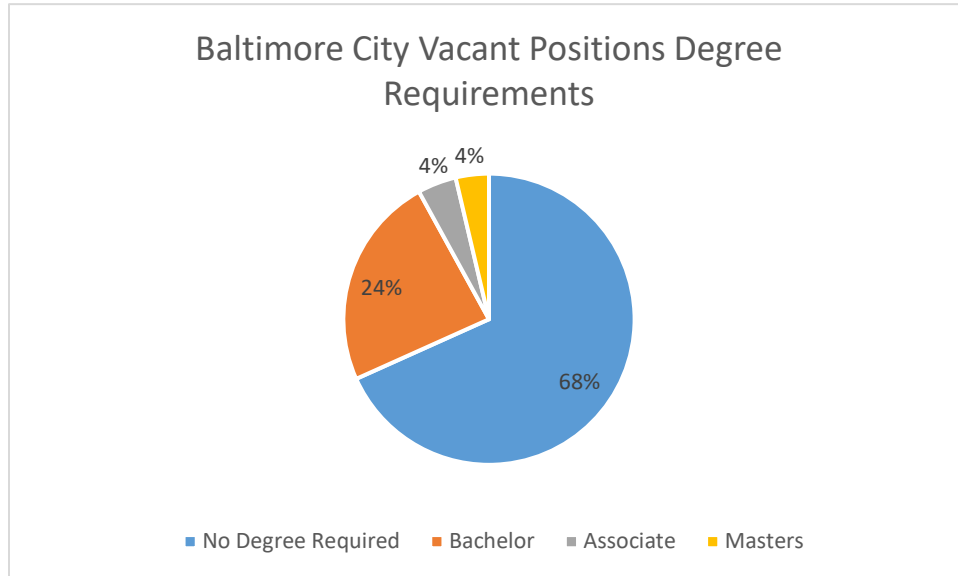


Chart 1 – Bachelor’s degrees account for the majority of degrees needed for the City of Baltimore’s currently vacant positions.

As total vacancy information is not available for similar jurisdictions, an anecdotal review of currently posted positions within Baltimore City and similar jurisdictions revealed similar degree requirements for jobs currently posted in various Maryland municipalities. Within Baltimore City, there are currently 179 of 211 posted positions (85%) that require a degree, with the following distributions among the types of degrees (*Table 1*):

Baltimore City Degree Requirement	Count	Percentage
Bachelors	137	65%
No Degree Required	32	15%
Masters	26	12%
Associates	15	7%
Doctorate	1	0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1 – Bachelor’s degrees are needed for the majority of Baltimore City’s positions.

Baltimore County currently has 122 of 161 posted positions (76%) that require a degree, with the following distributions among the types of degrees (*Table 2*):

Baltimore County Degree Requirement	Count	Percentage
Bachelors	81	50%
No Degree Required	39	24%
Associates	29	18%
Masters	11	7%
Doctorate	1	1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2 – Similar to Baltimore City’s requirements, Bachelor’s degrees are needed for half of Baltimore County’s positions.

Anne Arundel County currently has 48 of 100 posted positions (48%) that require a degree with the following distributions (*Table 3*):

Anne Arundel County Degree Requirement	Count	Percentage
No Degree Required	52	52%
Bachelors	37	37%
Masters	7	7%
Associates	4	4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3 – The majority of Anne Arundel County’s positions do not have a degree requirement; however, more than a third require a Bachelor’s degree.

Montgomery County has 104 of 121 posted positions (86%) that require a degree with the following distributions (*Table 4*):

Montgomery County Degree Requirement	Count	Percentage
Bachelors	88	73%
No Degree Required	17	14%
Masters	10	8%
Associates	6	5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 – Nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Montgomery County’s positions require a Bachelor’s degree. They are the most stringent in terms of requiring degrees for their positions.

Prince George’s County has 32 of 59 positions (54%) that require a degree with the following distributions (*Table 5*):

Prince Georges County Degree Requirement	Count	Percentage
No Degree Required	27	46%
Bachelors	25	42%
Masters	7	12%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 5 – The positions that require a Bachelors degree and those which require no degree are nearly equal within Prince Georges County.

Comparatively, Baltimore City is third among its similar jurisdictions in both the percentage of open positions which require any level of degree and those that specifically require a bachelor’s degree, which indicates that Baltimore City’s requirements are in line with the requirements of similar jurisdictions. However, Baltimore City is second to last among these same jurisdictions in relation to positions that have no degree requirements at 15% (*Chart 2*):

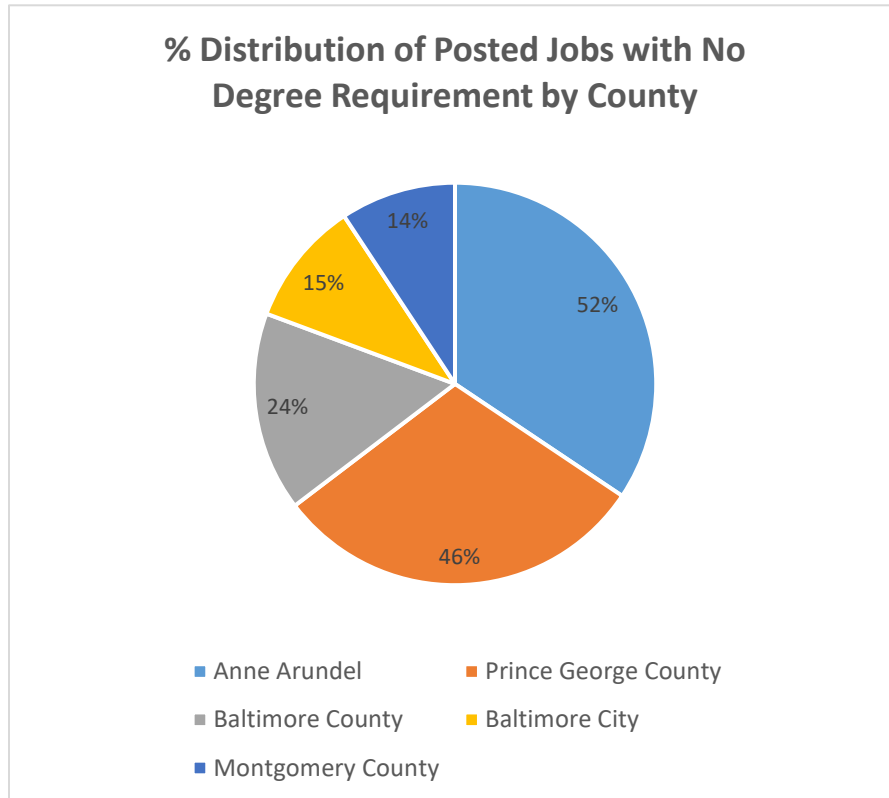


Chart 2 – Baltimore City has the second lowest percentage of positions for which there are no degree requirements.