



ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL

News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Council Communications  
Atlanta City Hall  
[55 Trinity Ave. SW](#)  
Atlanta, GA 30303

September 11, 2023

**City of Atlanta Office of the Municipal Clerk Issues Statement on the Submission of Petitions Regarding Atlanta's Public Safety Training Center**

**ATLANTA** — Clerk Emeritus of the City of Atlanta Foris Webb III issued the following statement regarding today's submission of petitions regarding Atlanta's Public Safety Training Center upon receiving the advice of counsel:

"This morning, we received petitions from those seeking a referendum on the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center and have locked them away in a secure location until we receive further rulings from the 11th Circuit Court. State law and the City's code have a clear and strict 60-day deadline for petition circulation. Specifically, the law commands that a 'petition ... shall not be accepted by the council for verification if more than 60 days have elapsed since the date the sponsor of the petition first obtained copies of the petition from the municipal clerk.' The original petition was issued on June 21, making August 21 the original 60-day deadline for petition submission. The petitioners could have turned their petition in, on, or before, August 21, and indeed several times said they were going to do so but opted instead to take an additional three weeks to circulate their petition for signature," said Webb.

Webb added, "Today, September 11, is 81 days after the date the sponsor of the petition first obtained copies of the petition from the municipal clerk, so the City is prohibited by state law from accepting the petition for verification, absent further guidance from the 11th Circuit. However, the City is willing to receive the signed petition pages into its custody, subject to the express understanding that such receipt does not constitute acceptance for verification, pending further rulings and guidance from the 11th Circuit. If and when the City receives guidance from the 11th Circuit to proceed with verifying the petitions, the Office of the Municipal Clerk will begin the process that was previously outlined. The City of Atlanta is committed to an open and transparent process that follows the letter of the law."

**For background:** State law - O.C.G.A. § 36-35-3(b)(2)(C) – "A petition ... shall not be accepted by the governing authority for verification if more than 60 days have elapsed since the date the sponsor of the petition first obtained copies of the petition from the clerk of the governing authority."

City Code - Section 66-37(b) – "A petition authorized by this section shall not be accepted by the council for verification if more than 60 days have elapsed since the date the sponsor of the petition first obtained copies of the petition from the municipal clerk."

**Office of Municipal Clerk Contact:**

[municipalclerk@atlantaga.gov](mailto:municipalclerk@atlantaga.gov)

404-330-6032