

CITY HALL

As Philadelphia continued to grapple with the pandemic, both City Council and the Kenney administration implemented policies and ordinances that will impact several industries. Below is a summary of the major policy changes that will alter the way businesses operate.

Public Health Regulations

February 2021: City Council passed a bill that required businesses with 50 or more employees to provide paid leave for employees who contract or care for someone who has COVID-19. It expired with the end of Governor Wolf's pandemic emergency mandate and is no longer in effect.

December 2021: Vaccine mandate for indoor dining was announced and it began on January 3, 2022.

Labor Standards

May 2021: Councilmember Johnson introduced legislation that allowed certain contract workers at the Philadelphia International Airport to receive up to \$15.06 an hour, a \$4.54 hourly wage supplement that enables workers to obtain health insurance and up to 56 hours of annual paid sick leave. The bill passed in July.

Business Operations

September 2021: Council Majority Leader Parker introduced legislation that would make a 15 percent cap on delivery fees enacted earlier in the pandemic a permanent feature of Philadelphia law. It was passed by City Council in December.

December 2021: City Council approved permanent outdoor dining for select areas of Philadelphia.

Real Estate

May 2021: City Council approved issuing \$400 million in bonds for the Neighborhood Preservation Initiative, which is intended to support more affordable housing, restore commercial corridors, and assist homeowners.

June 2021: Councilmembers Quiñones Sánchez and Gauthier introduced legislation that would require 20 percent affordable housing in any new development with 10 or more units within the legislation's overlay boundaries in the third and seventh council districts. The final bill was approved in December by the full council.

June 2021: Council passed legislation that requires landlords to use more transparent tenant screening methods and curtail landlords' ability to use some eviction records in tenant screenings.

September 2021: Councilmember Gilmore Richardson introduced legislation to require disclosure between funeral homes, the Department of Records, and Register of Wills over probating estates, aimed at resolving "tangled titles," or when the ownership of a property is unclear. It was passed later in the legislative session.

Taxation, Budget, and Zoning

April 2021: Councilmember Domb proposed three major reductions to the wage and business taxes. All three were held in committee, but it helped spark a conversation about tax reform.



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April 2021: Mayor Kenney introduced his proposed budget, which reduced wage taxes and invested millions in infrastructure and education.

June 2021: Mayor Kenney and City Council compromised on a budget, with a smaller wage tax reduction and increased spending for gun violence prevention and poverty reduction. It went into effect July 1, 2021.

July 2021: Mayor Kenney and Council President Clarke created a working group to evaluate and make recommendations to change the city's tax structure. The group is still convening and its findings will be considered during the next budget cycle.

December 2021: City Council approves Council President Clarke's proposal to change the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Public Safety

May 2021: City Council passed Councilmember Jones' legislation that created the Citizens Police Oversight Commission. Mayor Kenney signed this into law in June.

October 2021: City Council passed Councilmember Thomas's driving equality bill, which prohibits Philadelphia police from stopping vehicles for certain low-level driving code infractions.

Throughout the year, City Council repeatedly held hearings to discuss the gun violence crisis that is impacting Philadelphians. During budget negotiations, City Council and Mayor Kenney agreed to investing millions of dollars into violence prevention programming. Several councilmembers have indicated that addressing gun violence will continue being a top priority in 2022.
