

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

420



**FROM:** Executive Office

**SUBMITTAL DATE:**  
July 27, 2004

**SUBJECT:** Response to the Grand Jury Report: Riverside County Human Resources Department

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Approve with or without modifications, the attached response to the Grand Jury's recommendations regarding the Riverside County Human Resources Department.
- 2) Direct the Clerk of the Board to immediately forward the Board's finalized response to the Grand Jury, to the Presiding Judge, and the County Clerk-Recorder (for mandatory filing with the State).

**BACKGROUND:** On July 13, 2004, the Board directed staff to prepare a draft of the Board's response to the Grand Jury's report regarding the Riverside County Human Resources Department.

Section 933 (c) of the Penal Code requires that the Board of Supervisors comment on the Grand Jury's recommendations pertaining to the matters under the control of the Board, and that a response be provided to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court within 90 days.

*Gary M. Christmas*  
**GARY CHRISTMAS**  
Deputy County Executive Officer

Departmental Concurrence

<b>FINANCIAL DATA</b>	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$ N/A	In Current Year Budget:
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$	Budget Adjustment:
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$	For Fiscal Year:

<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b>	Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE.**

**County Executive Office Signature**

*[Handwritten Signature]*

Consent  
 Policy  
  
 Consent  
 Policy  
  
 Dep't Recomm.:  
 Per Exec. Ofc.:

**Prev. Agn. Ref.:**

**District:**

**Agenda Number:**

3.4

# Riverside County Human Resources Department Response to Findings and Recommendations

## FINDINGS

### Finding Number 1:

The Human Resources Senior Management did not follow those portions of the Workforce Plan that address workplace environment, communications and employee appraisals.

### Response:

#### **Respondent disagrees wholly with the finding. Explanation:**

The Workforce Plan is a "blueprint" for an emerging workforce which is being followed. For example, the County has established a countywide labor-management process and implemented a leading edge, award-winning website, "WorkForceExchange.net," to facilitate effective communication among levels of County employees. As of June 2004 there were over 100 intranet "hits" per day and over 89 "hits" per day on the Internet. The Human Resources Department has a program to automate employee performance evaluations and ensure 100% compliance with Policy C-21, also consistent with the Workforce Plan. Actions consistent with the Human Resources Master Plan for Workforce Planning – 2001 (Attachment 1) include:

- Supervisory and Management Academies
- Leadership and Organizational Development programs
- Floater program
- Automated "Exit Survey"
- TechAcademy
- Wellness Seminars
- Nursing Labor-Management Committee
- Department-specific labor-management committees
- Post Employment Program
- Information Technology Training
- TAP Program
- Reduced grievance backlog
- PeopleSoft HRMS System
- New bilingual testing and pay program
- Trauma Release Treatment Program
- Productivity enhancement program

- WorkForceExchange.net
- Voluntary Furlough Program
- Countywide Health Care Labor-Management Committee
- Mentoring Program
- Diversity Training
- Workers' Compensation/Return-to-Work Program
- Consortium recruitment for difficult-to-fill occupations

**Finding Number 2:**

The Human Resources Department lacks definitive training programs for employees below middle management levels, with the exception of Sheriff Department, Riverside County Regional Medical Center and the Department of Public Social Services.

**Response:**

**Respondent disagrees wholly with the finding. Explanation:**

The Human Resources Department sponsors an extensive array of training programs through its Career Development Division, Leadership Initiative and Safety Offices. As of 6-25-04 we have trained 2,886 individuals this year. As of 6-22-04 Career Development has 235 Supervisory Academy graduates and 70 Management graduates. Career Development offers a Professional Academy for those individuals who are not in management. A participant needs six (6) required courses and two (2) electives to receive a certificate in this academy.

**Required Courses**

Achieving Communication Effectiveness, Parts 1 and 2  
 Ethics  
 Professional Success  
 Diversity  
 Customer Service  
 Business Writing Basics

**Elective Courses**

Accepting Change (In Development)  
 Business Meeting Function (In Development)  
 Decision Making  
 Presentation Skills  
 Beyond Stress  
 Wonderful World of Grammar

In addition, Career Development offers a wide variety of courses from basic "Microsoft Word" to FMLA (see Attachment 2 "Summer Training Schedule").

**Finding Number 3:**

One of the Team Managers' primary functions is to meet with their assigned Administrative Managers on a regular basis. The Team Managers in Human Resources are not communicating and collaborating with the Administrative Managers on a regular basis regarding their need for resources and information.

**Response:**

**Respondent disagrees partially with the finding. Explanation:**

In the Human Resources Department Customer Satisfaction Survey for 2003, one of the survey questions was "How responsive are we to your human resources needs?" The rating of the Human Resources Services Teams' responsiveness was 93.3% favorable. The Human Resources Services Managers have ongoing communication with the Administrative Managers who are designated by a Department Head as the Human Resources contact for their Department. Communication with some Department Heads has not always been consistent or timely with regard to Employee Relations matters. In the survey the rating of the responsiveness of Employee Relations was 69.2% favorable. In April of 2004 the Human Resources Department streamlined many of the Employee Relations processes and has made changes to the way information is disseminated to increase the effectiveness of communication to departments.

**Finding Number 4:**

There is evidence to show that many County employees have not received evaluations and/or their evaluations were not written in the prescribed manner. This is in direct violation of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors (BOS) Policy C-21, and has been identified in several previous Riverside County Grand Jury Reports.

**Response:**

**Respondent disagrees partially with the finding. Explanation:**

Ensuring that all employees receive required probationary, semi-annual and annual evaluations is troublesome – but the majority of departments comply with Policy C-21. Human Resources has developed an automated performance evaluation system for the hospital and is in the process of "rolling out" this program, countywide, to further ensure compliance.

**Finding Number 5:**

County employees subject to disciplinary actions are referred to the Employee Relations Unit, except the Sheriff's Department. There is a continuing backlog of cases that often take six (6) months or longer to be resolved. There are over two hundred cases pending resolution.

**Response:**

**Respondent disagrees wholly with the finding. Explanation:**

Although there is a continuing inventory of disciplinary cases, there is no "backlog". The average time to complete a case and issue discipline is currently 2.4 months; down 23% from the 2003 average of 3.1 months. By their nature, some cases are more complex than others and take longer to complete. However, in the last quarter 93.5% of the cases were completed and discipline issued within four months, as opposed to the six months alleged in the report. In that time frame only one case took longer than six months to complete.

The HR Department handles a high volume of discipline cases and there is a continual intake of new cases as employee misconduct occurs. There have been 148 new cases opened since April 1, 2004 and the total number of cases as of June 18, 2004 was 176. We are proud of the timeliness and the quality of our work and are continuously seeking to improve our processes.

When County employees engage in misconduct their behavior is investigated at the Human Resources Service Team level. Informal discipline and written reprimands are reviewed and issued at the Human Resources Service Team level without the formal involvement of the Employee Relations Division. Any formal disciplinary actions involving the deprivation of a property right (i.e. suspension, demotion, pay reduction, or termination) require prior review and approval by the Employee Relations Division.

**Finding Number 6:**

In 2002, a manager was promoted by the Human Resources Director without posting and/or announcement to allow other qualified candidates to apply. This is contrary to Article V, General Provisions, Section 505, Merit Systems and the County of Riverside New Employee Handbook, reference "Merit System."

**Response:**

**Respondent disagrees partially with the finding. Explanation:**

The promotion referenced by the Grand Jury was limited to individuals with chief negotiation (collective bargaining) experience with Riverside County, and there was only one such candidate available. Thus no posting was appropriate or necessary.

**Finding Number 7:**

Allegations have been made within the Human Resources Department by some employees interviewed by the Grand Jury regarding harassment and intimidation by upper management that include:

- Chastising employees requested to appear before the Grand Jury for not revealing what they told the Grand Jury
- Publicly criticizing employees' work product and inability to produce an acceptable work product
- Denying employee requests to have access to the Senior Management to air grievances, complaints and other job-related concerns

**Response:**

**Respondent agrees wholly with the finding.**

An upper level management employee did harass and intimidate a subordinate employee regarding her Grand Jury testimony. The subject employee was immediately placed on administrative leave and is currently the subject of proposed disciplinary action.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation Number 1:**

Human Resources Director ensure that all County departments follow the existing Master Plan for Workforce Planning - 2001

(Attachment 1) "issues and strategies" (Section D) addressing the concerns raised by County employees in the areas of:

- Intimidating work environment
- Removal of employees who demonstrate a negative attitude
- Issuing timely performance evaluations
- Promotion open to all qualified candidates based upon merit

**Response**

**The recommendation has been implemented.**

**Recommendation Number 2:**

Enforce Board of Supervisors' Policy C-27, addressing harassment and workplace violence.

**Response**

**The recommendation has been implemented.**

Employees guilty of harassment and workplace violence are routinely disciplined.

**Recommendation Number 3:**

Employees disciplined for harassment and intimidation that is documented in their personnel file and not dismissed shall not be considered for a supervisory position until a comprehensive employee appraisal has been completed and documented in their personnel file.

**Response:**

**The recommendation requires further analysis.**

This change in policy is subject to union negotiations.

**Recommendation Number 4:**

Human Resources Director enforce existing Board of Supervisor's Policy C-21 countywide, giving all employees the opportunity to receive:

- Documentation of their job performance
- Recognition of work ethic
- Suggestions for improving job performance
- Required periodic performance evaluations

**Response:**

**The recommendation has been implemented; however, full compliance requires constant monitoring and system programming, which is underway.**