

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

719 A



FROM: Human Resources Department

SUBMITTAL DATE:
April 16, 2015

SUBJECT: CPS HR Consulting, Merit System Services Personnel Management Program Review Report of Findings [District- ALL] [Total Cost - N/A] [SOURCE OF FUNDS - N/A]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and file the Merit System Services Personnel Management Program Review Report of Findings.

BACKGROUND:

Summary

Under contract with the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR), Merit System Services (MSS) is charged with ensuring that the personnel systems of local agencies receiving federal and state funding for Social Services and Child Support Services programs are in conformance with the federal and state requirements. For counties operating an Approved Local Merit System, such as the County of Riverside, MSS periodically conducts a personnel program review comparing its operations with the six federal merit principles. The attached report formally approves the County of Riverside's Merit System, and summarizes the results of the personnel program review.

Departmental Concurrence

Michael T. Stock
Asst. County Executive Officer/
Human Resources Director

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost:	POLICY/CONSENT (per Exec. Office)
COST	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	Consent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/>
NET COUNTY COST	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	

SOURCE OF FUNDS: N/A	Budget Adjustment: No
	For Fiscal Year: 2014/15

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE

BY:
Lani Sioson

County Executive Office Signature

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

- Positions Added
- Change Order
- A-30
- 4/5 Vote

Prev. Agn. Ref.: | **District:** ALL | **Agenda Number:**

3-20

BACKGROUND:

Summary (continued)

Highlights of Major Findings

- Based on a thorough assessment of the County of Riverside's personnel system for both the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) and Department of Child Support Services (DCSS), MSS finds that the County is in full compliance with federal and state personnel requirements. Specifically, the County of Riverside meets the six federal merit principles:
 1. Recruitment and Selection: Employees are recruited, selected, and advanced on the basis of their relative ability, knowledge, and skills, including open consideration of qualified candidates for initial appointment.
 2. Compensation: Employees are paid equitable and adequate compensation.
 3. Training: Employees are trained as needed to assure high quality performance.
 4. Retention: Employees are retained on the basis of adequacy of their performance, inadequate performance is corrected, and when inadequate performance cannot be corrected, employees are separated.
 5. Fair Treatment: Applicants and employees are treated fairly in all aspects of personnel administration without regard to political affiliation, race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, age or handicap and with proper regard to their privacy and constitutional rights as citizens. This includes compliance with the Federal equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination laws.
 6. Political Rights and Prohibitions: Employees are protected against coercion for partisan political purposes and are prohibited from using their official authority for the purposes of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or a nomination for office.
- The report recommends that DPSS and DCSS fully comply with Board Policy C-21, Employee Performance Evaluation Reports. This may be achieved by DPSS updating its departmental policy for performance management and both departments consistently meeting timeliness standards. DPSS and DCSS concur with this recommendation and are working to improve timeliness.

We request the Board receive and file this report documenting our compliance with California Local Agency Personnel Standards.

Impact on Residents and Businesses

There is no impact on residents and businesses.

County of Riverside Personnel Management Program Review

Report of Findings

SUBMITTED BY:

CPS HR CONSULTING
MERIT SYSTEM SERVICES

241 Lathrop Way
Sacramento, CA 95815
t: 916-263-3614 f: 916-648-1211
www.mss.ca.gov

Team Members:

Lisa Conner
Judy Capaul
Mike DeSousa
Lori Jennings



Table of Contents

REPORT OF FINDINGS	1
MERIT PRINCIPLE 1 - RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION	4
MERIT PRINCIPLE 2 - COMPENSATION	11
MERIT PRINCIPLE 3 - TRAINING	13
MERIT PRINCIPLE 4 - RETENTION OF PERMANENT EMPLOYEES.....	15
MERIT PRINCIPLE 5 - FAIR TREATMENT	18
MERIT PRINCIPLE 6 - POLITICAL RIGHTS AND PROHIBITIONS	21
ADDENDUM	22

REPORT OF FINDINGS

Background

Under contract with the California Department of Human Resource (CalHR), Merit System Services (MSS) is charged with ensuring that the personnel systems of local agencies receiving federal and state funding for Social Services and Child Support Services programs are in conformance with the federal and state personnel requirements. For counties operating an Approved Local Merit System (ALMS), such as the County of Riverside, MSS periodically conducts a personnel program review comparing its operations with the six federal merit principles. This report summarizes the results of the personnel program review of the County of Riverside.

The information included in this report is based on:

- County Salary Ordinance (Ordinance 440)
- County Ordinances and Board of Supervisor Policies, and Procedures
- Employer-Employee Relations Rules and Regulations
- County Memoranda of Understanding
- Internal Human Resources Department manual for recruitment and selection policies and procedures
- Interviews with Human Resources Director and staff, the Director of Public Social Services, and the Director of Child Support Services
- Responses to questions answered in advance of the onsite review
- Various personnel related files (recruitment, performance evaluation, discipline, appeals) and documents
- Prior final audit report for County of Riverside, issued in October 2007

Outline of Audit Process

1. On October 20, 2014, pre-audit materials were sent via email to the HR Director. Materials included the questions for advance response, a copy of the pertinent sections of the Code of Federal Regulations, and a cover memo outlining the audit process.
2. On November 19, 2014, the County emailed MSS the staff responses to the questions for advance response.
3. On December 2, 2014, MSS had a pre-audit phone call with the HR Director, HR Managers, and HR analysts to address questions, clarify the audit process, materials needed, and logistics.
4. On December 3, 2014, MSS sent the Requested Documents and Statistics document via email to the HR Director and HR Manager to ensure files and statistics were available for the audit team once onsite.
5. On December 10, 2014, MSS had a follow-up call with a HR Manager to clarify the recruitment and selection process.

6. On December 17-18, 2014, four audit team members conducted an onsite review of the County's personnel system.
7. On January 23, 2015, the Draft Report of Findings was submitted to the HR Director and HR Division Manager via email.
8. On February 17, 2015, MSS received a response from the HR Division Manager with regard to the Draft Report of Findings. Edits from HR review included minor wording changes or corrections and formerly missing data on the timeliness of performance evaluations in DPSS and DCSS.
9. On February 27, 2015, a second draft report was submitted to the HR Division Manager for review of edited language related to the timeliness of performance evaluations in DPSS and DCSS. The HR Division Manager submitted corrected data on March 5, 2015.
10. On March 12, 2015, MSS submitted a Final Report of Findings to the HR Director, the HR Division Manager, the Director of Public and Social Services, the Director of Child Support Services, the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, the County Executive Officer, California Department of Human Resources, California Department of Health Services, California Department of Social Services, and California Department of Child Support Services.

Overview of Riverside County

Riverside County is a general law County with approximately 26,000 approved positions. County Ordinance establishes the number of positions allowed to be filled in each department by job class and employment type. For the 2014/15 budget year, the Department of Child Support Services and Department of Public Social Services have 319 and 4,443 authorized positions respectively.

The County Executive Officer reports to and is responsible to the Board of Supervisors for the proper and efficient administration of all county departments, agencies and special districts under the jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors.

The Assistant County Executive Officer/ Human Resources Director is responsible for managing and directing the County's Human Resources Department. This position is an exempt position and is accountable for accomplishing department goals and objectives and for furthering County general policy goals and objectives within general policy guidelines. County Ordinance establishes that its human resource administration is designated a local merit system and gives the Human Resources Director responsibility for evaluating the merit and ability of employees.

The HR Department is responsible for the functions of employee relations, risk management, compensation and benefits, talent acquisition/management, and leadership and organizational development, among others. The EEO function is managed within the employee relations unit. Eight HR Service Teams are assigned to specific departments to provide day to day HR support, including talent acquisition, employee relations investigations, and other services. To increase responsiveness and service, many of the teams are stationed at departmental locations but are HR Department employees.

The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) provides social services programs, such as Adult and Children's Services, Self Sufficiency and First 5. DPSS has an HR function within its Administrative

Services unit that supports some of the department's internal human resources needs and day to day employee relations. The department staffs over a dozen branch offices in outlying areas of the county for Adult Services, Child Services and Self Sufficiency programs.

The Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) establishes and enforces California child support orders and services. It staffs four branch offices throughout the county.

Highlights of Major Findings

Based upon a thorough assessment of the County's personnel system for both Departments of Public Social Services and Child Support Services in relationship to the six federal merit standards, the County is in full compliance. However, the departments of DPSS and DCSS are not consistently following County policy relating to performance management (see Merit Principle 4), even though adequate policies, systems and training are in place. It is recommended that those departments comply with County policy.

MERIT PRINCIPLE 1 - RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Recruitment and Selection

Employees are recruited, selected, and advanced on the basis of their relative ability, knowledge, and skills, including open consideration of qualified applicants for initial appointment.

Discussion

Recruitment

Related Rules, Policies, and Procedures

The County's Salary Ordinance 440 specifies the authority granted to the Human Resources Department related to recruitment and selection activities. The Ordinance states the following: "Appointments and promotions shall be made on the basis of merit and ability. The Human Resources Director shall determine the methods of evaluating the qualifications of applicants."

In addition to the Ordinance, the County has a JobMatch Recruitment Manual that details recruitment and selection processes, procedures and operating policies. The processes and procedures as noted in the Manual were developed to support the JobMatch resume search system the County has been using since 1998. Procedural guidelines, as well as step-by-step instructions and screen shots for the use of the system (Resumix) are provided within the Manual. The Manual serves as a set of standard operating procedures, including directives, guidelines, and internal policies that guide professional and management decisions.

Overview of Practices

As stated in the JobMatch Manual, the system utilizes an electronic resume scanning system, which enables applicants to submit one resume to be included in the database for all County positions. Currently, for DPSS and CSS, resumes are submitted into the JobMatch system on a flow basis and announcements are posted for specified positions. However, in the early part of last year (2014), the County started a conversion process to a software system, customized from its existing PeopleSoft HRIS (referred to as Job Gateway) to support its recruitment and selection processes. While some County departments had already converted at the time of the onsite review of the County's personnel system, both DPSS and CSS had not yet converted. The audit team did, however, receive an overview of the new Job Gateway system, in consideration of the federal merit principles. Under Job Gateway, vacancies will be posted and interested applicants will submit an online application for a specific posting, as opposed to submitting a resume for any position in which an applicant may be qualified through the resume search process.

The audit team reviewed a total of 17 recruitment and examination referral files. The sampling of files included both open competitive, as well as promotional recruitments within both DPSS and CSS. All included a listing of names referred to the department. The files reviewed onsite numbered:

- 5 classifications specific to DPSS
- 3 classifications specific to DCSS
- 6 county-wide classifications within DPSS
- 3 county-wide classifications within DCSS

Human Resources recruiters and CSS and DPSS department heads confirmed SME involvement at the onset of a recruitment, prior to the announcement being posted and before a skill search is conducted. HR Recruiters meet with the Departments to review the class specification and discuss the recruitment plan, with consideration of the Department's needs.

Since the County does not have one set of rules to specifically note posting or other recruitment related requirements, the audit team placed heavy emphasis on the HR Department's practices and procedural manuals to determine whether the spirit of the federal merit principles are met in their options.

For example, while not required by County policy, announcements are typically posted for specified positions. Through discussions with HR staff, and as documented in the files reviewed by the audit team, it is noted that DPSS and CSS post most vacancies. Announcements are typically posted a minimum of 5 working days for any announcements posted within DPSS and CSS. The departmental HR Recruiters stated this is a routine practice in DPSS and CSS in order to enhance communication and transparency.

The audit team examined both hard copy recruitment/exam files and also received an online overview of the Resumix system to assist the audit team in better understanding the process from start to finish. Files included the following:

- Job announcements (includes a filing period, statement that the County is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE), deadline for completing the online assessment, additional language regarding the viability of scores for the online assessment within a six month timeframe);
- A content coversheet to include the requisition numbers for approved filling of vacant positions, recruiter's name, contact information, etc., as well as a checklist of the process (layoff search, accommodation search, veteran's preference search, copies of resumes tracked to the requisition, etc.);
- Classification specification;
- Position Evaluation Form (includes listing of the essential and critical tasks and knowledge, skills, and abilities, taken from the class specification);
- Candidate evaluation matrices, to document the search(es) criteria (required and desired skills);
- Copy of oral exam questions and/or T & E questions and associated rating scales (if selection plan included these additional assessments);
- Names and skill scores in rank order that resulted from the search(es) and were referred to the hiring department;
- Hiring interview questions and/or writing exercises, if submitted by the department;
- Documentation of final action from the hiring department.

Posting decisions, advertising, and recruiting strategies are made by the assigned recruiter and hiring manager based upon the specific requirements of the position or positions to be filled. Advertisements may be placed on the HR Department's website, which may result in the announcement being posted on other online sites, such as CareerBuilder, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.

Examination

Related Rules, Policies, and Procedures

The County's Salary Ordinance 440 states that the HR Director shall determine the methods of evaluating the qualifications of applicants. The methods shall be practical in nature and may involve any combination of written test; oral test; performance test, rating of education, training and experience; and shall take into consideration a system of veterans' preference as may be adopted by the Board of Supervisors by resolution.

Additionally, within the County's JobMatch Recruitment Manual, procedures and guidelines are provided to include steps to searching resumes to determine skills scores used to identify the best qualified candidates.

Overview of Practices

Selection Plan:

As noted in HR's responses to the questions for advance review, examinations used in the selection process vary across the different positions. It may be determined that testing beyond qualification screening is not appropriate for some classifications, with consideration of various factors, such as high volumes of applicants or classifications where there is high turnover.

When testing in addition to qualification screening is determined to be appropriate, the HR Recruiter explores various options for testing, to include, but not limited to online personality assessments, skill-based exams, online written examinations to assess cognitive ability, oral examinations, and/or performance tests. The audit team received a listing of classifications within DPSS and CSS that consistently use testing beyond the qualification screen. Within CSS, there are four classifications that include a computerized written examination (e.g., Child Support Interviewer, Child Support Specialist, Office Assistant II, and Office Assistant III). Within DPSS, a listing of 15 classifications included either a computerized written examination (proctored and/or unproctored), a qualifications appraisal panel (QAP), or a combination of both a written examination and QAP.

Job Analysis:

The audit team reviewed job analyses completed by human resources staff in DPSS. Specifically, the Eligibility Technician (ET) III Computerized Assessment Validation Study was completed in December of 2008. Incorporated within this study included an Executive Summary to validate the use of a computerized assessment to include both Technical skills and soft-skills, based upon competencies deemed relevant to successfully perform the job of ET III. The job analysis was conducted with the objective of developing a content-related computerized selection instruction, which included observations and surveys. The surveys included items to note an importance rating of the KSAOs. A linkage of KSAOs to the ET III assessments is included in the report, as well as information regarding the focus groups conducted, a listing of the top tasks for an ET III, identified from SMEs, the top KSAOs identified from SMEs, and Assessments capability to Capture Relevant Ability and/or Skill for the ET III, identified from SMEs (i.e., Ability to Lead, Ability to Multi-Task, etc.). The ET I/II job analysis was completed in 2013. The Welfare Fraud Investigator Job Analysis was completed in 2012. The County's efforts in continuing to conduct job analyses, both content and criterion validation studies are encouraged, as this serves as the foundation for the recruitment and examination efforts.

Skill Searches (Resumix):

If an entry level position, HR staff work with the hiring department to complete a position evaluation, which is documented on a form and describes the position, needed KSAs, etc. The job is then posted on the County's website for 5 business days. Once the posting has closed, the HR recruiter reviews to determine if there are any layoff candidates or employees needing ADA accommodations. If there are no viable eligibles for these two categories, the HR Recruiter enters into the JobMatch system and may conduct multiple searches, based upon the determined required and/or desired skills. The HR Recruiter reviews and determines the best qualified 10 names, plus ties found at any score.

Written Examinations:

The County of Riverside either develops their own written examinations or contracts with testing vendor CEB/SHL Talent Measurement for computerized examinations that are administered in both proctored and unproctored environments. Exam content is based on SHL subject matter content domains, which are customized and validated for Riverside County. If unproctored, a link to the online proctored test is included on the job announcement, with a deadline for completing the exam. An applicant is not considered for the posted position until completing the exam. If proctored, applicants are invited to a County computer lab at a particular date and time. Both Accounting Assistant and Office Assistant classes have unproctored written examinations as part of their exam plan. Additionally, the Eligibility Technician class includes an unproctored online written examination. Unproctored tests include a confirmatory analysis or convergence test before referral for hire. A pass point of 50% was recommended by the test vendor, based upon national norms. However, as verified in the audit team's review of files, the pass point may not always be set at 50%, in consideration of the performance of the specific candidate pool.

Training and Experience Evaluations (T&E):

If additional criteria is needed to be captured after a skill search in Resumix, a training and experience evaluation or supplemental questions customized to the vacancy may be created. The T&E evaluations are created based upon the position evaluation information, captured when the HR Recruiter discusses the position with the hiring department. Pre-determined criteria for evaluating the responses are developed in collaboration with the hiring department to determine the most highly qualified candidates for the specified position(s).

Oral Examinations:

Oral examinations may be used for some classifications. The audit team confirmed in the review of files that oral exams include questions, rating dimensions and rating guidelines customized for the position by the HR Recruiter and SME's. There is typically a 5-point scale utilized, with specific anchors to distinguish the most highly qualified responses. Oral exam panels typically consist of two or three raters. Panelists are provided with an orientation by HR to ensure an objective and reliable exam process occurs. Pass points are set, in consideration of the candidate group's performance.

Selection, Certification, and Appointments

Related Rules, Policies, and Procedures

Riverside County does not have an eligibility list or certification rule that specifies a certain number of candidates are referred to a hiring authority. The County Ordinance states¹:

The human resources administration under this chapter is designated a local merit system. Appointments and promotions shall be made on the basis of merit and ability. Each officer shall appoint all necessary employees allowed for his or her agency/department by this ordinance only from among persons certified to him/her by the human resources director as eligible for the respective positions. The human resources director shall determine the methods of evaluating the qualifications of applicants

Recruitments are initiated to fill a vacant position, not to establish an eligible list for future use. While multiple vacancies may be filled from one recruitment process, only occasionally is a list used to fill a vacancy that arises after the list was initially used. If a hiring manager does not feel that any of the candidates meet the organization's needs, he/she may request a new certification. This involves talking with the recruiter again about the criteria for the position and going back to the position evaluation review.

In compliance with ordinance, all managers except those in DPSS and DCSS have the flexibility to advise the HR recruiters on the number of candidates he/she would like referred based on organizational need at the time of certification. In DPSS and DCSS, however, certifications are limited to the top ten (plus the number of vacant positions). More individuals are certified if there are tied scores at any score within the top ten scores. When interviewed by the MSS audit team, DPSS and DCSS department heads stated that the top ten practice limits their ability to quickly fill positions, especially for vacancies in outlying branches where candidates are more likely to waive interviews.

Overview of Practices

As described in the Examination section of this report, HR recruiters identify the best qualified candidates to certify to hiring managers based on their performance on various types of assessments and/or resume review. Depending upon the selection plan for the vacant position, best qualified candidates may be determined based solely on a resume skill score or by a combination of skill score plus some additional assessment. Additional assessments may include proctored or unproctored written examinations, training and experience assessments, supplemental questions, structured oral examinations, and/or performance examinations. The top ten best qualified candidates (plus ties as described in the previous paragraph) are certified to hiring managers in DPSS and DCSS.

Under the new JobGateway procedures, this final step in the referral process will be essentially the same. Applications will be scored based on additional screening questions customized for the vacant position. Depending upon the selection plan, appropriate assessments will continue to be used to identify a group of candidates with the best skills. The best qualified will finally be certified to hiring managers based on the HR recruiter's review of assessment scores (if used) and resume/application much like they are now.

All certification for approved hires and tracking of appointments are centrally performed and controlled in the HR Department. HR also ensures the referral of candidates eligible for reinstatement from layoff and/or ADA accommodation. The MSS on-site review team examined

¹ Riverside County Ordinance 440, §3.04.050

a sample of 17 recruitments, some of which were used to fill multiple positions in several locations. All files reviewed included lists of certified candidates for the position(s).

After hire, regular positions in Riverside County serve a probationary period of a duration defined by the MOU associated with the classification (generally six or 12 months). Extensions may be approved by the HR Director but are discouraged. Probationary employees may be removed from employment for unsatisfactory performance without using the discipline process.

Non-Status Appointments

Related Rules, Policies, and Procedures

The County employs non-status temporary employees through its Temporary Assignment Program (TAP), which operates like a temporary staffing firm managed by the HR Department. TAP employees have no property rights and are hired by the HR Department. They are then assigned to fill limited term, emergency and temporary assignments in all County departments. There are additional designations of non-regular employees defined in county ordinance (e.g., per diem medical professionals and seasonal workers) but all but the TAP employees have some status rights and/or benefits.²

There is no County policy that limits the duration of TAP assignments but the HR Department initially approves them for six months or less duration. Extensions are sometimes granted based on business needs such as when a temporary is filling in for an employee on leave of absence, or when there is a project of defined duration to complete.

Some departments also have temporary staff not placed by TAP. These temporaries are allowed by Salary Ordinance 440, however are limited in use. DPSS has 22 temporary staff in the job classification of Student Intern who are not employed by TAP. CSS has one temporary, also classified as a Student Intern. Temporary staff employed by departments must be approved by the Board of Supervisors if they extend over 1000 hours in a year.

The County has no policy defining at-will appointments but they are used sparingly. The Board of Supervisors must approve any designation of an at-will position.

Overview of Practices

Candidates for the TAP are recruited, screened, and tested in the same manner as regular employees for that classification but scored pools are not established or certified. Candidates who pass the screening and testing are immediately available for any temporary assignment and/or location they are willing to consider.

As of the date of the MSS on-site review, DCSS had no temporary employees from the TAP program. DPSS had over 300 TAP assignments – mostly Office Assistants and Eligibility Service Clerks. This equates to approximately 10% of the department's allocated positions. According to the HR Division Manager, this is an unusually high number of TAP assignments in DPSS. The community's economic condition plus the implementation of the Affordable Care Act has caused large increases in caseload and customer service needs. DPSS is in the process of increasing permanent staff but has also needed additional TAP assignments. Neither DPSS nor DCSS have seasonal or per diem workers.

² County of Riverside Ordinance No. 440

As stated above, Riverside County Board of Supervisors rarely approves at-will appointments. The only at-will appointments in DPSS and DCSS are:

- Director of Child Support Services
- Director of Public Social Services
- Assistant Director of Public Social Services, Child Welfare
- Assistant Director of Public Social Services, Self Sufficiency
- Assistant Director of Public Social Services, Administration

Findings

Meets the federal standards as related to Recruitment and Selection.

MERIT PRINCIPLE 2 - COMPENSATION

Employees are paid equitable and adequate compensation.

Discussion

Related Rules, Policies, and Procedures

The County of Riverside's compensation plan is codified in Ordinance No. 440³ by the Board of Supervisors with the Human Resources Director having the delegated authority to administer and implement its provisions. The ordinance specifies the establishment of base pay and salary range for each job classification, including job classes with salary grades, salary placement for difficult to recruit positions, salary changes based on reallocation of position, special salary adjustments, and salary assignment upon reemployment.

The County Executive Officer is the authority to effect salary changes for employees employed under the Executive Salary Plan, as prescribed under Ordinance No. 440.

A resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors establishes the terms and conditions of designated exempt management, management, and confidential and unrepresented staff.

Collective Bargaining

The Human Resources Employee Relations Division negotiates wages, hours and benefits and other terms and conditions of employment within the scope of representation as required by the State Law (Myers/Milias Brown Act). The County has adopted an Employee Relations Resolution, which further provides rules and direction governing relationships with employee associations and unions involved in the collective bargaining processes.

The County distributes its employees over 12 bargaining units represented by 5 recognized employee unions. Memoranda of Understanding for represented employees within the scope of this review include Service Employees International Union, Local 721 and unrepresented employees.

Compensation Surveys

The County uses market salary surveys to gauge and analyze comparable wage data to develop salaries for county employees. Surveys are designed using key class benchmarks and obtain the total compensation and full range salaries (bottom to top) from comparable county agencies. Those agencies have been identified as: Los Angeles, San Bernardino, San Diego, Orange and Ventura. The same agencies are typically included in any market surveys for management and unrepresented classifications. Other factors taken into consideration may include internal salary relationships, compactions (if any), difficulties in recruiting/retaining, and skills in high demands, which may affect salary-setting placements.

During an annual window period of January through August, the Class and Compensation Unit conduct annual studies, market analyses, internal parity reviews, confirms career ladder classifications, and performs desk audits. The Human Resources Services Manager and staff uses the "EMSI Analyst", a market analysis electronic tool, to obtain benchmark salary and

³ Riverside County Ordinance No. 440

benefit data mostly for the purpose of specific job classifications when conducting reclassification requests and studies, and when establishing new classifications, etc.

Upon completion of all studies and analyses, including negotiated salary and benefit employee MOU agreements and/or county or department head requests, recommendations for salary changes and updates to each respective salary resolution are taken to the Board of Supervisors for approval. Upon adoption, the Human Resources staff effects the changes of the Board.

In 2008, the Class and Compensation unit was dissolved as a result of losing approximately 25% of the human resources staff due to budget constraints. Prior to the loss of the unit, the last occupational group study was completed in 2006. In July 2014, the County redesigned and rebuilt its Human Resources Class and Compensation Unit. The newly, reformed unit is focusing its resources and efforts to align with the overall County's strategic plan. The unit will be managing its work in phases to review the County class and pay structures. As part of this process, classifications utilized across the County as well as in the Department of Public Social Services and Department of Child Support Services will be reviewed and where appropriate, redesigned to minimize the use of specialty, department-specific classifications.

The Human Resources Department noted they are examining parity for the classification of Social Workers. This study will also be scheduled as part of the work plan for the Class and Compensation Unit.

Findings

Meets the federal standards as related to Compensation

MERIT PRINCIPLE 3 - TRAINING

Employees are trained as needed to assure high quality performance

Discussion

Related Rules, Policies, and Procedures

The County of Riverside does not have a comprehensive training and education policy. The County does, however, have an established Board policy (C-7)⁴ to support employee training and education programs through tuition reimbursement. The purpose of Board Policy C-7 is two-fold in assisting employees with the financial burden associated with training and educational costs: 1) to improve their effectiveness in performing their currently assigned duties; and/or 2) to facilitate career growth by completing classes that are offered through an accredited educational institution for the completion of a higher educational degree or certification program.

DPSS has a staff development policy, #14-001, which guides the department in developing and conducting department-specific mandated training. DCSS provides training but is not driven by an internal policy.

Overview of Processes and Practices

The County's Human Resources Department has a training unit that is lead by the Director of Leadership and Organization Development. The vast majority of county-sponsored training and educational offerings are featured and accessible 24/7 to county employees via the COR Learning Center website. This robust website provides employees detailed login instructions, registration for classes, and access to participate in on-line classes. Training materials are also available to review and download to assist in their training and educational efforts.

Mandated training is coordinated by HR staff on topics, such as, employee harassment prevention; disability awareness; workplace violence; repetitive motion; HIPAA and confidentiality; to list a few. For the covered departments under this audit, The Center offers skills development (customer service, project management, or other technical skills) and other topics to staff, supervisors and managers to assure high quality performance.

The county's central HR training unit manages the Leadership Initiative training program. The course topics are designed to strengthen department heads and executives skill levels to direct and manage the organization.

DPSS provides formal program-specific training to its staff, to include technical program induction courses for program staff, training for clerical staff, and leadership development academies. DPSS also sponsors a wide array of other training topics that are directly related to program regulations and effectiveness. General countywide policies and procedures are included in DPSS' new employee orientation. DPSS may send its staff to attend general county-sponsored training courses as well.

DPSS deploys a continuous review of its training effectiveness by in-class testing, online self-evaluation surveys, follow-up visits to offices, supervisory reviews, staff performance evaluations and case audits, and customer feedback. Modifications to curriculum and internal processes are implemented based on the analysis outcome.

⁴ County of Riverside, California, Board of Supervisor Policy #C-7

DCSS facilitates internal and external training designed to improve employees' effectiveness in their current job duties. Its training classes include the topics of Child Support Program knowledge, technical skills, customer service and self-improvement. Specific training is also provided to its leadership team. The Department states that the priority of training is guided and delivered first by the mission and purpose of the Department, and secondly by developing and improving the employees' soft skills and career development. General countywide policies and procedures are included in DCSS' new employee orientation. DCSS may send its staff to attend general county-sponsored training courses as well.

Findings

Meets federal standards related to training.

MERIT PRINCIPLE 4 - RETENTION OF PERMANENT EMPLOYEES

Employees are retained on the basis of adequacy of their performance, inadequate performance is corrected, and when inadequate performance cannot be corrected, employees are separated

Discussion

Related Rules, Policies, and Procedures

Evaluation of Performance (Performance Planning and Evaluation)

Performance Evaluations are prescribed by Board of Supervisors Policy⁵. This Policy delegates the administration of all employee performances to the County Executive Officer (CEO). The Board requires each department to draft and implement a performance evaluation policy which shall contain, at a minimum, all components of the County Policy. The Policy also prescribes the evaluation process to be confidential, that employees' performance be documented with frequency beginning at the first six months of regular employment and continuing thereafter, at a minimum, upon each annual anniversary date. Managers, department heads and supervisors are to be provided the necessary information, methods and procedures to ensure evaluations are conducted on employees. Unless memorialized in subsequent collective bargaining agreements or ordinance, the Policy does not provide individual employees to appeal performance evaluations.

DPSS' departmental policy is dated 1998 and is in the process of being updated. In the meantime, the department follows the intent and requirements contained in the Board Policy rather than using the outdated departmental policy. The review of evaluation documents provided by the department revealed that supervisors do complete performance evaluations on both regular and probationary employees. However, to comply with the Board Policy, DPSS should have its departmental policy updated and communicated to employees.

DCSS' performance evaluation requirements and process are published in a section of the departmental administrative manual. The contents within the section follow the intent and spirit of the County's Board Policy. Review of the DCSS evaluation documents supported that the department is following the policies.

The majority of employees in both departments are covered by two bargaining units which defer to the County Policy for appeal rights.

Progressive Discipline and Separation

Disciplinary action for cause leading to employment termination is a final indicator of organizational enforcement of performance standards consistent with established work standards and disciplinary processes. Specific County causes for discipline up to and including employment termination are included in the Disciplinary Process Training Manual⁶:

Overview of Practices

Evaluation of Performance (Performance Planning and Evaluation)

The County Human Resources Department has an automated performance evaluation system known as the EPM (Employee Performance Manager) – a 24/7 online system. County departments are not required to utilize the EPM system for its performance system. For those

⁵ County of Riverside Board of Supervisors Policy No. C-21, Employee Performance Evaluations Reports

⁶ County of Riverside, Department of Human Resources, Disciplinary Process Training Manual, pp. 7-9

departments that do, individual department staff work collaboratively with County HR in setting up the system to accurately capture the standards for measuring employees' performance and then customizes specific components within the system to provide each evaluator with the same selected data to ensure consistent and complete forms. At this time, the Child Support Services uses the EPM system.

DPSS has developed and implemented its own system and forms to use when evaluating employees. Within departmental unit/section, managers and supervisors are given the flexibility to customize processes and forms which better meet their unit needs; however, the requirements in the Board Policy cannot be modified and each unit supervisor and manager must ensure they are evaluating employees according to the Board Policy.

Each employee is provided an overview of the performance evaluation process during the new employee's orientation. Additionally, it is the department's intent to have supervisors and managers trained on performance management processes and requirements. At the time of the audit, 79% of the DPSS managers and supervisors had completed the training. Within DCSS, newly hired or appointed supervisors receive one-on-one training, which is a comprehensive overview starting with how to prepare for evaluating an employee, form content and completion, frequency, rating scales and performance improvement. The department facilitates a supervisor's forum to review, update and reinforce the county and department expectations of the performance evaluation process.

The MSS review team examined a sampling of performance evaluation forms provided by both departments. Of the 14 samples provided, supervisors included appropriate descriptive comments assessing each employee's performance and goals, discussed job performance details supported by work product statistical measures and standards, and numerical ratings assigned to specific categories with an overall performance rating. A performance improvement plan is required for all employees whose rating is less than satisfactory.

Timely completion of evaluations is a component of the Board Policy and is the responsibility of each Department Head. DCSS is assisted in this area through its use of the EPM system as the system auto-generates notices 30 days in advance and a past due notice after the required due date. After 30 days past due, managers are included in the auto-generated notice. DPSS has established its own tracking system to comply with the timelines for completion. It was reported through the audit process that the County CEO discusses with each department head whose department's employee evaluations are untimely, and reinforces the need for compliance to the Board Policy.

The following table summarizes the timeliness of each department's performance evaluation process. By Board Policy, annual employee performance evaluations are due no later than an employee's anniversary date.

DPSS	No. Reg Employees	No. 30-90 Days Late	No. Over 90 Days Late
2014	3787	302	948
2013	3625	463	1676

DCSS	No. Reg Employees	No. 30-90 Days Late	No. Over 90 Days Late
2014	290	80	69
2013	279	78	65

As the data in the above table illustrates, both DPSS and DCSS have a large percentage of performance evaluations not meeting the timeliness standards in the Board's policy. In 2014, a large percentage of evaluations in both departments were over 30 days late (33% in DPSS and 51% in DCSS). Spot-checking by the MSS team found reports of some evaluations more than a year past due. It is noted that DPSS's timeliness in 2014 shows an improvement over 2013.

Correction of Performance, Discipline and Separation

Reviewed records for an approximate four-year period verify that appointing authorities use separation in cases where corrective action (via coaching, performance improvement plan, and/or training) cannot be successfully achieved. Appeal procedures are detailed in MOU's and the Disciplinary Process Training Manual⁷:

Case files were found to be well documented, contained proposed notice of disciplinary action, and the final notice of disciplinary action.

Findings

The County has a policy related to performance management and the HR Department has provided performance management tools, processes and related training for the departments. This meets the federal standards as related to Retention. Discipline and separation policies, procedures, and documentation also meet federal and state standards and County policy.

However, the Board's policy assigns responsibility for administering performance management to the departments. The two departments reviewed by the MSS team are not consistently fulfilling their responsibilities related to performance management. DPSS does not have an updated departmental policy related to performance evaluation as required by Board policy. While DPSS shows some improvement in 2014, both DPSS and DCSS are not meeting the timeliness standards for a significant percentage of their employees. It is recommended that both departments come into compliance with County policy.

⁷ County of Riverside, Department of Human Resources, Disciplinary Process Training Manual

MERIT PRINCIPLE 5 - FAIR TREATMENT

Applicants and employees are treated fairly in all aspects of personnel administration without regard to political affiliation, race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, age or handicap and with proper regard to their privacy and constitutional rights as citizens.

This "fair treatment" principle includes compliance with the Federal equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination laws.

Discussion

Responsibilities for equal employment opportunity and fair treatment reside within the Human Resources Department, Division of Employee and Labor Relations (ER). While ultimate responsibilities are stipulated to the Human Resources Director, designated ER staff perform the supporting duties of EEO-related reporting, internal training, complaint investigations and consultation to management.

Related Rules, Policies, and Procedures

The County-wide policy is promulgated via employee orientation/onboarding, posting to the Human Resources website and is part of internal training processes⁸. Additionally the department of Public Social Services reinforces EEO and anti-discrimination by separately issuing at initial employment a department statement⁹ clarifying required work behaviors to support the County policy and attendant state and federal legal requirements. Additional State brochures¹⁰ are issued at orientation/onboarding and in training/re-training sessions. The County EEO/discrimination policy includes a complaint procedure and standardized complaint form, as well as direction on effective complaint investigation processes.

Equal Employment Opportunity

EEO reporting in support of policy and fair treatment includes a current EEOP Report¹¹ specifying program grants involving federal funding which require the report, an analysis of underutilization, tracking of improvements in addressing underutilization since the previous report, and ongoing action steps to continue to improve utilization and outreach to qualified employee pools. Significant progress was noted for recruitment and retention of White and Hispanic females in the professional, sworn official, administrative support and service/maintenance job categories.

⁸ County of Riverside, California, Board of Supervisors Policy "Non-discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure," policy C-25

⁹ County of Riverside, Department of Public Social Services, "Department Equal Employment Opportunity Statement," DPSS 2623, Rev. 3/05.

¹⁰ Department of Fair Employment and Housing, "Sexual Harassment-The Facts about Sexual Harassment, Brochure DFEH-185 (11/07); Department of Fair Employment and housing, "Discrimination is Against the Law," Brochure DFEH-151, (4/04).

¹¹ "EEOP Utilization Report," 6-26-14

Anti-Harassment Policy

County policy¹² provides the requisite federal and state employee protections against unlawful discrimination, workplace harassment or subsequent retaliation if making complaints for policy violation.

The policy stipulates training requirements for supervisory and management consistent with California AB 1825 training and re-training requirements (2 year re-training cycle) and specified initial training and re-training every four years for non-management employees.

Appeal and Hearing Procedures

As a complaint of discrimination/harassment is included in the County's list of work behaviors than can be a cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, such actions are subject to the same appeal processes as other prohibited behaviors in the workplace. Appeal procedures are stipulated in the work group MOUs and entail incremental steps of written communications between the employee and appointing department (i.e., notice of disciplinary action, amended notice of disciplinary action), an optional appeal to the Human Resources Director, and a final hearing process, the outcome of which is binding.

Hearing procedures are differentiated between minor disciplines and major disciplines, distinguished by the scale of the proposed disciplinary penalty (whether the penalty is greater or less than the equivalent of 80 hours of gross pay). Internally these are sometimes referred to as mini-hearings and maxi-hearings. In mini-hearings final appeal to the external neutral party may be a person assigned by the State Conciliation Service or a different third party mutually agreed to by the two parties. The decision of the neutral party is binding without further appeal. In maxi-hearings the process of selecting the neutral party involves a County and union "striking" method to winnow a list of potential hearing officers to determine the one accepted party.¹³ Though not focused on violations of discrimination/harassment standards solely, a report of CSS and DPSS employment terminations over a several year period showed that arbitration hearings were pursued in 59% of the cases, an indication a frequent use of the appeal process.¹⁴

Overview of Practices

Board Policy¹⁵ requires all employees be trained on the non-discrimination policy and complaint procedures. In addition to the mandated supervisory training, non-supervisory employees attend "Employee Harassment Prevention Training" within the first six months of hire or promotion and every four years thereafter. A review of training records¹⁶ for supervisory training in DPSS and DCSS indicated that the mandated Management Harassment Prevention training is reliably attended. For the period December 2011 through December 2014, 230 scheduled training "slots" for the DPSS and DCSS supervisors and managers indicated only 32 records of a "no show" for the initial training date -- a "no show" rate of 13.9%; some attendees were quickly re-scheduled and are included as having completed the training. Enrollment for these classes are through the COR Learning Center; participation is either in-class or online. All courses are coordinated through the COR Learning Center and instructed by the County HR Department.

¹² County of Riverside, California, Board of Supervisors Policy "Non-discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure," policy C-25

¹³ County of Riverside and SEIU Local 721, Memorandum of Understanding 2012-2016

¹⁴ Report provided by Human Resource Staff, "CSS and DPSS Terminations 12-1-10 to 12-1-04"

¹⁵ County of Riverside, California, Board of Supervisors Policy "Non-discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure," policy C-25

¹⁶ Printout table County COR Learning Center record provided at the audit

The viability of EEO/Discrimination policy and its enforcement based on actual complaints can be illustrated via the complaint activity levels over time. The merit team reviewed records of annual complaint filings over the last eight years and found that a small number of complaints were filed in both DPSS and DCSS in each year. Over that period, fifteen (15) of those complaints resulted in some form of disciplinary action from lowest level (corrective counseling) to termination of employment (highest level). Based on this data, the merit team concluded that the policy and complaint process is well communicated to all employees, is being used by employees as intended and action is taken when warranted.

Investigation Process

EEO/Discrimination investigations are conducted consistent with policy guidelines by trained Employee Relations professional staff (6 persons currently as investigators) and through the use of external resources (attorneys) on occasion due to special case complexity or sensitivity. ER staff are used as investigators versus department HR staff to reinforce a neutral third party perspective coming from outside the department that initiates the complaint. ER investigators are prepared for the role via working with an experienced ER investigator and additional training as needed.

In addition to the review of complaint activity noted in the previous section, (5) DPSS or DCSS complaint case files were reviewed to discern the actual practice of EEO complaint investigations. Case files were routinely comprehensive and organized with a standard format of disciplinary action section, summary investigation section and primary documents in an appendix. Narrative investigation write-ups were detailed, neutral in narrative tone, and followed the chronological format:

- Allegation
- Investigation
- Findings
- Statement of Policy
- Attachments

EEO/Discrimination complaint investigation processes are organized and systematic and support the enforcement of County policy to prevent harassment/discrimination and to take needed action when violations are confirmed.

Findings

Meets the federal standards as related to Fair Treatment.

MERIT PRINCIPLE 6 - POLITICAL RIGHTS AND PROHIBITIONS

Employees are protected against coercion for partisan political purposes and are prohibited from using their official authority for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of an election or a nomination for office.

Discussion

Political rights are stipulated in the County Code of Ordinance under general provisions and are consistent with California State Government Code.¹⁷ The negotiated Memoranda of Understanding with the County's recognized employee groups, as well as the resolution for management and confidential employees, also reference political prohibitions.¹⁸

Civic rights pertinent to elections are supported within a separate Board policy encouraging employee participation as election officers.¹⁹ Additionally, political rights and prohibitions related to the Hatch Act are posted with other standard employee rights posters in the requisite break rooms or communication centers.

Findings

Meets the federal standards as related to Political Rights and Prohibitions.

¹⁷ Riverside County, California, Code of Ordinances, Statutory References for California Counties: Political Activities of Public Employees, Government Code § 3201 et seq.

¹⁸ County of Riverside, Resolution for Exempt Management, Management, Confidential and Other Unrepresented Employees. Resolution #2014-152, p. 54.

¹⁹ County of Riverside, California, Board of Supervisor Policy "Use of County Employees as Election Officers, #C-29.

ADDENDUM FUTURE OBSERVATIONS

The MSS personnel system review that is documented in this report occurred in December 2014. The recruitment and selection processes and procedures in use at the time for DPSS and DCSS were those developed to support the JobMatch resume search system the County has been using since 1998. In early 2014, the County began conversion to a recruitment module from its existing PeopleSoft HRIS, customized to support its recruitment and selection processes. Throughout 2014, some County departments converted to the new system and its new procedures and the County plans to finish the conversion for all departments in 2015. Under the PeopleSoft system, most vacancies will be posted and interested parties will express interest and apply to that posting rather than submitting unsolicited resumes that are eligible for consideration for all vacancies.

As stated in the body of this report, the MSS audit team observed that Riverside County HR Department had consistent and well-documented procedures and tools in place to ensure employees in DPSS and DCSS are selected on the basis of their relative ability, knowledge and skills consistent with the federal merit principles. With the imminent conversion to a new system for DPSS and DCSS, MSS would like to confirm that similar parameters, procedures and tools will be in place to ensure future compliance with merit principles. Therefore, we request that the County send its new recruitment and selection procedure manual to MSS for review when the DPSS and DCSS transition is complete. If there is a delay in the transition, MSS requests to be notified of the status by the end of June 2015. After review, MSS may determine the need to conduct an onsite confirmatory audit or telephone interviews to ensure the County's procedures are consistent with its practices related to the federal merit principles.