

2016 Budget Statement Department of Human Resources

Commissioner Soo Choi

September 30, 2015

Good morning, Chairman Austin, Vice Chairman Ervin and members of the City Council. Thank you for the opportunity to present the proposed Department of Human Resources (DHR) budget for 2016.

The Department of Human Resources effectively delivers City services and a professional human resources management program to current employees and job applicants. DHR coordinates with operating departments, boards, and commissions to attract and retain quality personnel. We ensure a fair and equitable hiring process through the use of CAREERS, our award-winning job search engine. Additionally, we manage and approve all human resources functions within the City, establish cost efficient processes, and advise City departments and Department Heads on human resources matters. It is our mission to foster equal employment opportunities for all the citizens of Chicago.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Employment Services

Our Employment Services Division is responsible for administering the City's hiring processes. DHR remains committed to maintaining and enhancing the high level of integrity in our hiring process. In the past year, we improved communication with our job applicants by sending automatic correspondences via e-mail to inform the applicant if their application was submitted successfully or was rejected. We processed over 125,179 applications and filled 2,529 vacancies as of 9/16/15.

The Employment Services Division also worked in conjunction with the Testing Division to revise the process for Foreman promotions to enable departments to select the best person for each position.

Testing

- Police Department
 - In June 2015, we successfully administered the first component of the Police Lieutenant examination (known as the "written qualifying test"), to 640 candidates. In August 2015, we successfully administered the second component (known as the "oral and written assessment exercises"), to 601 candidates.
 - In June 2015, we successfully administered the military make-up exam for entry-level Police Officer to 25 candidates.
 - Recently, we kicked off the Police Detective test development project with our selected vendor. The exam is scheduled to take place in 2016.
 - Over the course of the past year, we have worked with CPD and the test development vendor on the development of the Sergeant Merit Selection Process.
 - Preparations for the 2016 Police Officer exam, slated to take place in late February 2016, have already begun. We are working with CPD and ASGK, a public strategies firm, on developing a recruiting and outreach campaign geared towards increasing applicant participation specifically amongst the City of Chicago's minority population.

- Fire Department
 - In December 2014, we successfully administered the Firefighter/EMT entry level examination to 20,531 candidates.
 - In June 2015, we successfully administered the military make-up exam for Firefighter/EMT to 187 candidates.
 - In June 2015, we held a kick-off meeting with CFD and our test development vendor to continue working on research related to validating the physical ability assessments required both before and during the Paramedic training academy.
 - Recently, we kicked off the Fire Engineer test development project. ~~with our selected vendor.~~ The exam is scheduled to take place in 2016.
 - Preparations for the development of the Battalion Chief, Fire Captain, Ambulance Commander, and Paramedic Field Chief examinations have already begun.
- Other City Positions
 - DHR's Testing Division successfully revised the process for Foreman promotions to provide more flexibility to create and/or utilize tests and assessments that follow best practices and address each department's specific hiring needs.
 - Over the course of the past year, DHR has worked with the Office of Emergency Management & Communications (OEMC) on validating and implementing a new pre-employment test for the titles of PCO-I and PCO-II. The test, called CritiCall, is a multimedia assessment that simulates the work performed by employees in call-taking and dispatching positions and is used by a large number of municipalities across the country. We started testing candidates in July and will be testing additional candidates through October.
 - In July 2015, we successfully administered the Department-wide Foreman of Motor Truck Drivers examination, in which 130 candidates were invited to test.
 - To date, we have tested over 1,000 candidates seeking employment with the City of Chicago for a wide variety of positions.

Diversity and EEO

In July, the Diversity and EEO Division released a new Reasonable Accommodation Policy, ensuring that employees and applicants are aware of the City's procedures for providing reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities during the hiring process, and to qualified employees with disabilities who need accommodations to perform the essential functions of their job.

The new policy, along with updated and streamlined forms, will increase our ability to efficiently respond to accommodation requests.

Training and Development

The Training and Development Division expanded its role in the onboarding of new employees and orientation for employees moving into new positions. The Training team assisted several departments

with these orientation and onboarding efforts by offering training on various City policies and procedures, as well as management skills training for new supervisory employees.

In support of the Department of Family and Support Services' Age Friendly Chicago initiative, the Training division created and delivered a program for City employees who may have caregiving responsibilities. The Caregiving Training addressed challenges facing caregivers, and offered information on the wide range of resources available to caregivers and those they care for.

Information Services

The Information Services Division works in conjunction with the Department of Innovation and Technology to store and provide access to thousands of HR documents. Currently DHR is using the "Knowledge Tree" Electronic Employee Document Management System (EEDMS) solution with equipment that has been decommissioned by the vendor. The current "Knowledge Tree" system has approximately 187,000 documents. Yearly, the division receives between 35,000 and 40,000 HR documents supporting all City employees' HR transactions.

The Division is actively working on implementing a FileNet-based Document Management Solution that will allow operating departments to securely provide DHR with personnel-related documents in compliance with legal requirements. The Division is extending this functionality to other divisions within DHR to improve their business processes, enhance access, and reduce their need to keep paper copies in file cabinets. The goal is to create a secure enterprise document management system that can be used City-wide, not only for HR-related paperwork, but also for other business documents. This initiative is expected to be implemented in the first quarter of 2016.

Classifications and Compensation

The Classification and Compensation Division works with OBM on the process of recommending salary ranges for Special Rate positions and processing reclassification requests for the upcoming fiscal year.

This year, the Classifications and Compensation Division delivered on its goal of utilizing contacts at other cities and counties to collect information and limit the use of purchased surveys. In addition to the salary survey conducted during the summer and currently being summarized, surveys were conducted on other topics such as confirming promotional procedures for Fire Engineer, types of tests used for selection of 9-1-1 call takers, as well as minimum typing speeds, and minimum length of service for promotions.

We not only have contacts with HR counterparts in over 60 cities and counties, but have developed a number of contacts with representatives from a number of Police and Fire departments such as NYC, Los Angeles, LA County (Fire), Austin, Baltimore, Clark County (includes Police for Clark County and Las Vegas), El Paso, Kansas City, Minneapolis San Antonio, and the Public Safety HR/Testing teams for Columbus, Seattle, San Francisco, San Diego, and Washington D.C.

GOALS

Employment Services

The Employment Services Division will continue and improve upon the progress made in achieving substantial compliance with the Shakman ruling. In 2016, we will strive to implement measures that will

increase the efficiency of the hiring process and reduce the time to fill positions, in line with established hiring requirements.

Testing

With respect to major test developments and administrations, DHR's Testing Division intends to partner with our vendors to develop and administer many large-scale exams in 2016/17 including Police Detective, Police Officer, Fire Engineer, Battalion Chief, Fire Captain, Ambulance Commander, and Paramedic Field Chief.

~~DHR's Testing Division is exploring the possibility of setting up its own testing facility/center and is looking to partner with testing professionals at sister agencies on this initiative.~~ DHR's Testing Division also intends to procure a test scoring machine/scanner that will save time and improve productivity and efficiency in our division. We hope that over the long term, this initiative can significantly reduce the time it takes to hire individuals into new positions.

Diversity and EEO

In 2016, the Diversity and EEO Division will revise and update the City's Violence in the Workplace Policy. The new policy will clarify the roles that departments should take to see that allegations of violent conduct are addressed in an expedient manner, and streamline the procedures for moving appropriate complaints through DHR's investigation process.

The Division will also continue to monitor the progress of its harassment and discrimination investigations through a recently-implemented workflow tool. By requiring that EEO complaints be tracked using this system, we will establish standard turnaround times and ensure that new cases are reviewed in a timely manner.

The Division will continue its focus on training for supervisory staff, with the primary goal of emphasizing their responsibilities regarding our EEO Policy, Violence in the Workplace Policy and Reasonable Accommodation Policy. In addition, the Division will work with the Training and Development team to train non-supervisory employees on each of these policies.

Training and Development

The Training and Development Division will add an online component to our standard course on the Interviewing and Consensus Meeting process. This portion will consist of a brief quiz to follow classroom instruction. The quiz will be a precursor to online learning that will be available through a Citywide Learning Management System (LMS). DHR will continue to work closely with DoIT to launch the LMS, and take the lead on content development for the system.

In addition, the Division will roll out a curriculum of courses on Human Resources Management for the City's departmental HR Liaisons. This HR Management series will be comprised of topics critical to city processes, such as Time & Attendance, Employee Relations and New Employee Onboarding, and will result in more effective interaction between DHR and operating departments on personnel matters.

The Division also plans to roll out a revised on-boarding program to ensure that all new hires will receive a comprehensive and professional introduction to City employment.

Information Services

The Information Services Division, in conjunction with the Department of Finance's Payroll Division, will work to streamline the payroll certification process. This will significantly reduce the administrative time that commissioners and DHR spend certifying the City-wide payroll each pay period.

The Division will also convert thousands of microfiche documents to a digital media format, which will reduce costs relating to microfiche maintenance and equipment, as well as produce efficiencies with respect to locating and pulling that data.

In addition, the Division has been working on a computerized module for employee evaluations, which we plan to develop into a formal, City-wide employee evaluation process.

Classifications and Compensation

In 2016, our Classifications and Compensation Division will continue to build on the success we had with networking with other cities and counties and establish a more formal national survey. This survey will be based on the one conducted this year, which focused on positions where we have historically had difficulty in obtaining market data. One improvement will be in the timing of distribution. Instead of conducting the survey in the summer, it will be distributed during the traditional survey period of February/March when most vendors collect survey data for publication start their process.

While there is still a need for multiple sources of survey data such as the use of published surveys, we will limit their use in 2016 to minimize costs.

In addition to surveys related to pay and benefits, we are now in a position to conduct surveys on other issues such as benefits, HR policies, hiring practices, etc. Several of the surveys mentioned under the accomplishments in 2015 demonstrate this ability.

During 2016, we would also like to formalize and execute the process of conducting random audits to ensure employees are in the proper classifications. It is a best practice used by audit departments and auditing firms to ensure that processes and procedures are followed and are effective. We are also going to look into ways to further enhance access to job descriptions, provide more market data when recommending salary ranges, and consider the use of electronic signature to improve faster delivery of recommendation letters.

Additional Projects

In addition, the Human Resource Board (HRB) will be making improvements to the hearing process, both with respect to employee appeals of discipline and appeals by candidates who have been disqualified due to their background check. In 2015, we were able to eliminate a backlog of appeals through productive changes administratively, which allow us to schedule hearings in a timely manner and to improve communications with appellants.

In 2016, DHR will also research various options for FMLA management, which include outsourcing, creating an in-house operation, and partnering with sister agencies. In conjunction with this project, the City will be working closely with the Law Department on a City-wide FMLA policy.

IN CLOSING

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the City Council for its partnership in administering effective human resources services to our employees and the public. It has been a pleasure working with you, and I look forward to our continued work in improving and enhancing DHR's services during the coming year. I would also like to thank all of the DHR staff, as these accomplishments could not have been achieved without their hard work and dedication.

Department of Human Resources 2015

