

ACCOUNTABILITY AT THE COUNTY

25 Years of Transient HR Leadership and a Hobbled HR Department

SUMMARY

The Human Resources Department (HR) of Mendocino County has faced significant challenges in maintaining stable leadership and achieving long-term goals. Compared to similar counties in California, Mendocino has among the highest percentage of staffing vacancies, among the highest turnover in employees and HR leadership, and among the longest time from job posting to hire. Over the past 25 years, the County has had a staggering total of 19 people leading the HR Department, with an average tenure of only 1.2 years. This constant turnover has decreased the department's effectiveness and caused attrition among experienced staff.

Currently, the County lacks a permanent HR Director, and the position is not being actively recruited for. Instead, a Deputy Chief Executive Officer has been assigned to oversee HR. However, their responsibilities extend across four departments in addition to the CEO's office. The absence of a full-time Director has resulted in the division of day-to-day HR duties among four HR managers, who do not have the necessary time, resources, or authority to fulfill the full scope of a typical HR Director's responsibilities. Without an HR Director responsible for engaging in strategic long-term planning and making necessary organizational improvements, the department's effectiveness, employee morale, and retention rates have dropped. Additionally, the lack of an HR Director has had a broader impact on other County departments, further emphasizing the need for stable leadership.

The 2022-2023 Mendocino County Civil Grand Jury (GJ) has identified several areas of improvement for HR, including enhancing performance management processes, addressing workplace culture issues systematically, and resolving staffing shortages across various County departments. These improvements are crucial for maintaining qualified employees, providing training opportunities, improving retention rates, and fostering a healthy organizational culture.

Unfortunately, these challenges are not new, as a GJ report from 2013 highlighted similar issues with HR. The fact that these shortfalls continue to exist 10 years later is directly attributable to the lack of consistent and qualified leadership for HR, which in turn is due to the lack of support for HR by County leadership. Over the past decade, County leadership has been unsuccessful in resolving these ongoing problems, and employee efforts to address them have not received adequate support. The HR department's role is critical in ensuring the smooth operation of all County departments, and addressing the identified areas of improvement, in addition to hiring a qualified HR Director, will benefit the entire organization.

A county is nothing without its people, and the County government is nothing without its employees. Employees are the County's most important resource, and that is what a quality HR Director and HR Department are all about. The Grand Jury's hope is that through this report, the HR Department will get the support it needs so that they in turn can support the entire County workforce.

GLOSSARY

MCELT: Mendocino County Executive Leadership Team

Turnover/Churn Rate: The measure of the rate at which employees leave an organization, indicating the level of turnover/attrition within a given period.

Ombudsman (Ombuds): An Ombudsman, also known as an Ombuds, is an independent and impartial official who serves as a mediator or advocate to resolve conflicts and address concerns within an organization, ensuring fairness and protecting individuals' rights.

Institutional Knowledge: The combination of expertise, values, work processes, strategies, experiences, information, and data possessed by an organization's employees.

180-degree assessment: A method of performance assessment that considers the self-assessment of the employee being reviewed.

360-degree assessment: A performance evaluation method that gathers feedback from multiple sources, including supervisors, peers, subordinates, and sometimes clients or customers, to provide a comprehensive view of an individual's skills, behaviors, and performance.

BACKGROUND

The 2022-2023 Mendocino County Civil Grand Jury (GJ) investigated multiple complaints received from County residents and employees regarding dysfunction within various areas of County government, initially treated as separate issues.

Through interviews with County employees, the GJ identified several underlying root causes that connected these issues. Instead of investigating each individual symptom, the GJ opted to address the common factors contributing to all of them, with a primary focus on the lack of stability in the HR Director position for the purpose of this Grand Jury report. This lack of stability among HR management has caused many issues, the largest of which are:

1. A Performance Management system which is out of date and ineffective.
2. A Workplace Culture that has negatively impacted employee satisfaction and effectiveness, as well as the County's ability to hire and retain staff.
3. Staffing vacancy and turnover rates which are among the highest of comparable counties.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting the investigation that culminated in this report, the GJ:

- conducted over 30 interviews with BOS members, County executives, departmental leadership, County staff, former County employees, and citizens, averaging two hours each.
- regularly observed BOS meetings.
- contacted HR Departments from six other counties and requested specific data, statistics, and reports.
- conducted online research covering over 50 sites, including national Human Resources organizations and academic journal articles.
- requested and analyzed over 40 reports and documents from the County (see the Bibliography section for a complete list of all documents reviewed).
- reviewed prior GJ reports.

The GJ gratefully recognizes the time given freely by all of those interviewed. We appreciate their understanding that the GJ exists to support employees in improving the smooth operation of County government. The GJ commends interviewees on their willingness to answer openly and honestly and quickly provide all the necessary information in a spirit of partnership.

DISCUSSION

Human Resources Director

Mendocino County has had 19 people leading the HR Department in the last 25 years. Only two of the past HR Directors stayed in the role for more than two years. The average length of service for a permanent HR Director since 1998 has been 1.9 years. If we include interim directors, the HR Department has seen new leadership every 1.2 years (See Appendix B for a list of HR Directors and dates). The 2013 GJ report on HR (Appendix A) called out the lack of stability in HR leadership, and not much has changed. The County has not hired an HR Director from outside the County government since before the last CEO took office. Since then, all HR Directors have been internal appointees (County employees from other departments selected by the previous CEO to lead HR), and only one had formal HR training or background working in HR.

At present, the County has no permanent HR Director, and will not for the foreseeable future. The County has assigned a Deputy CEO to oversee the department, and the permanent HR Director position has been defunded and is not being actively recruited for. The Deputy CEO overseeing HR also works in a supporting role for four other departments, in addition to performing many duties within the CEO's office and managing the County's health plan.

In the absence of a full-time Director to lead the department, the four HR managers have split up the day-to-day responsibilities of running HR. One manages classification and compensation; one manages training, wellness, and leadership; one manages employee/labor relations and performance/discipline; and one manages hiring and retention. The GJ was very impressed with the HR staff's knowledge of, commitment to, and skills at performing their jobs. At the same time, the GJ recognizes that neither they nor the Interim Director have the time, resources, or authority to execute the full responsibilities of a typical HR Director in addition to their other daily responsibilities.

Mendocino County class specification documents state the HR Director's role includes "participat[ing] as a strategic partner in administrative studies and planning the County's long range organizational and human resource needs," and "[planning] and [implementing] short-term or annual goals, objectives, and strategies for the department, projects or programs to ensure efficient organization and completion of work."¹ Without a full-time, long-term Director for the HR department, the department has been unable to engage in strategic long-term planning or make organizational improvements.

¹ "MENDOCINO COUNTY GOVERNMENT CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION," January 2013, accessed June 7, 2023, <https://co.mendocino.ca.us/hr/cgi-bin/spec/Human%20Resources%20Director%2001-13.pdf>.

Past and present HR employees shared with the GJ that the constant turnover in the HR director's position has severely impacted their effectiveness. Every time the HR Department has new leadership, it comes with changes to policy, process, and strategy. Many interviewees complained this has placed HR in a state of constant flux, working on projects that get deprioritized or dropped when the new leader announces a new direction. Employees report this has caused attrition within the department, and that they have lost a number of their most experienced staff due to the constant changes. As a result, HR currently has little internal seniority among their staff. In addition, the lack of an HR Director has had many impacts outside the department, which are discussed throughout this report.

None of this is new. In 2013, the GJ reported: "The GJ's experience in working with HR showed that the department is focused solely on trying to keep up with the day-to-day operational tasks. There is no opportunity to do anything other than follow the process, work as hard as you can and hope it all comes together." Given that this still rings true among those interviewed for this report, it is evident that County leadership has not succeeded in improving this issue. County leadership has also failed to support employee efforts to do so.

In sum, HR is the lifeblood of an organization, responsible for keeping all other departments running with qualified employees, providing training to help employees work and grow, improving retention and employee satisfaction, and helping the organization maintain a healthy culture. The absence of an HR Director has limited the department's ability to do these things. The GJ has interviewed members of HR staff to identify additional areas of improvement which, when addressed, will benefit every department within the County. These include:

- Improving the performance management process
- Addressing workplace culture issues systematically
- Improving staffing shortages across County departments

Performance Management

An effective Performance Management (PM) process establishes shared organizational goals and provides meaningful feedback to employees, and is a means of increasing accountability, growth, and improved job satisfaction. Employers benefit from implementing PM processes because they can improve organizational culture and productivity in the workplace. In his book "Performance Management," Michael Armstrong explains that performance management should look like:

"a planned process of which the **primary elements are agreement, measurement, feedback, positive reinforcement, and dialogue**. It is concerned with measuring outputs in the shape of delivered performance compared with expectations[...] It provides the setting for **ongoing dialogues** about performance, which **involves the joint and**

continuing review of achievements against objectives, requirements, and plans.”²
(emphasis added.)

When the GJ requested HR policies, procedures, training, or guidelines regarding performance management, the GJ was informed that the department had no relevant written policies. Instead, the typical performance management process was described to the GJ verbally. The GJ received a summary of the online performance management training for supervisors, supplied by an outside vendor, Vector Solutions, as well as the current forms used for end-of-year performance assessment (one for department heads and one for all other County employees). The GJ focused only on the process for employees. The GJ reviewed the stated performance review policy and compared it to employee accounts of their own experience of how performance reviews were conducted.

Performance Reviews

Formal Performance Management in the County consists almost exclusively of an annual performance review. Managers from all departments are given an identical form (Appendix C) to assess each worker, where they rate different qualities on a 1-5 scale, from “Unsatisfactory” to “Outstanding.”

D. QUALITY		NA	Unsatis-factory	Needs Improvement	Standard	Above Standard	Out- Standing
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1. Accuracy		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Neatness of work product		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Thoroughness		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Oral expression		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Written expression		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E. ADAPTABILITY							

The current form has only one field for written feedback, tagged on at the end, asking for comments from the manager. Comments are only required if the final overall employee rating was either “1: Unsatisfactory” or “5: Outstanding.” Ratings of 2, 3, or 4 (a majority of employees) do not require comments to explain or support the ratings.

The use of subjective ratings on the form allows for different raters to interpret or assign scores differently. Indeed, studies have shown that loosely defined anchors like “good” or “excellent” leave raters “to impose their own interpretations on what these anchors meant,” and that “Raters applying their own idiosyncratic standards to defining different rating levels remains a persistent challenge today.” Further, this system of rating provides no guardrails against implicit race-based or gender-based bias in how managers rate employees.³ More so, a numerical rating alone does

² Michael Armstrong, *Performance Management: Key Strategies and Practical Guidelines*, 3rd ed. (Kogan Page Limited, 2006).

³ Elaine D. Pulakos, Rose A. Mueller-Hanson, and Sharon Arad, “The Evolution of Performance Management: Searching for Value,” *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior* 6, no. 1 (January 21, 2019): 249–71, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-012218-015009>.

not explain to an employee what they have done well or poorly, and therefore does not help them improve.

For any employees who fail to meet the expectations of their position (consistently getting a 1 rating), the County has a formal Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) process that generally follows industry standards. The PIP requires a plan of action leading to either performance improvement or dismissal. It is more formal and time intensive than the performance management processes experienced by employees who receive ratings above “unsatisfactory.”

For the majority of employees, the ones rated from 2 through 5, managers are not required to do anything more than the annual performance review ratings for these employees. Studies have shown that this method of performance management is insufficient, and the effectiveness of ratings-based performance management has been disputed by researchers since as early as the 1980’s. In particular, ratings-based PM strategies have been shown to be inaccurate and biased, and have raised concern for researchers over their potential for discrimination in the workplace.⁴

Managers receive online training from private contractor Vector Solutions that coaches them on how to give productive feedback to employees to improve their performance. This training is a video which is created for repeated use over a wide range of companies and organizations. While no issues were found with the training content, this training covers performance management, and evaluations in a general manner. It is not specific to the County and does not correspond to the County’s performance management policies, so it has limited relevance or usefulness to managers. Once the supervisor completes the training, unless they proactively reach out to HR for help, they do not receive any additional guidance on how to adapt the more general PM training to their particular workplace, and the current PM process does not support anything other than the annual review. The lack of guidance and follow-up from HR allows for a wide range of implementation of performance management and evaluation strategies.

Employees interviewed, some of whom have worked at the County for more than 15 years, were not able to inform the GJ of the last time any significant updates to the PM process were made. Research on performance management has shown that one-time annual performance reviews based on rating scales have limited value and do not assess workers accurately,⁵ and, according to the Society for Human Resource Management, sometimes do “more harm than good.”⁶

Towards an Improved Performance Management Policy

An effective PM process should include the following:

- sets clear expectations of outcomes based on employees’ specific positions
- goals are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant and Time-bound)

⁴ Pulakos, Mueller-Hanson, and Arad, “The Evolution of Performance Management: Searching for Value.”

⁵ Pulakos, Mueller-Hanson, and Arad, “The Evolution of Performance Management: Searching for Value.”

⁶ Brian O’Connell, “Performance Management Evolves,” *SHRM*, June 12, 2020, <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/performance-management-evolves.aspx>.

- aligns employees' work with the goals of the organization
- has continuous informal (but documented) coaching throughout the year culminating with a year end summary (an annual performance review)
- gives specifics to support both what needs improvement as well as what was done well
- discusses a plan of action to improve deficiencies
- identifies training needs
- discusses the employees' current career goals and lays out next steps to reach them
- is a two-way conversation, not a one-way judgment handed down

The GJ findings and recommendations serve as a roadmap for one path the department could follow to improve performance and cultivate a positive experience for employees. The GJ highly encourages the future HR Director to create written guidance for PM and build that into managers' training. Managers can always expand upon HR's guidance based on their own management style, but there should be a standard, baseline requirement for performance management laid out by the HR for County employees.

1. Setting Expectations

Managers should review position roles and responsibilities with employees annually to ensure alignment and avoid discrepancies in evaluations caused by differing understandings of the role.

The manager would then define specific projects, expectations, and goals for the employee, ensuring they are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, Time-bound) and directly related to the position and departmental objectives to foster employee morale and productivity. Each goal and expectation should be documented on the updated annual assessment form, described below.

2. Continuous Coaching:

The County's standardized ratings system has limited value in performance improvement and employee development, and the potential for bias (as described above) undermines its appearance of objectivity. To enhance performance management, HR should provide guidelines for managers to incorporate continuous coaching throughout the year. Effective feedback for driving performance and job attitudes is informal, real-time feedback, which managers should be coached in delivering and documenting as needed. The County's virtual training covers some aspects of ongoing coaching, but it lacks systematic support and oversight. Managers should keep a log of significant and recurring issues for discussion during regular informal check-ins with employees, and these notes can inform the end-of-year assessment without being part of the employee record.

3. Updating the Annual Assessment Form

The annual assessment should summarize the employees' performance, progress, and a plan for improvement when necessary. This assessment may still include ratings, as required by the union contract, but should also include their professional development plan

and career trajectory. With that in mind, the GJ has identified several potential improvements to the annual performance assessment policy.

The form currently used for performance assessments simply lists general attributes and asks the reviewer to rate the employee on a 1-5 scale, from “unsatisfactory” to “outstanding”.

D. QUALITY		NA	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Standard	Above Standard	Out- Standing
1.	Accuracy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Neatness of work product	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Thoroughness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Oral expression	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Written expression	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E. ADAPTABILITY							

(Complete form in Appendix C)

The same assessment form is used for every department and employee in the County whether they are in road maintenance, a planner in cannabis permitting, or a social worker doing child protection (with the exception of the Sheriff’s office, which has created their own performance management policy and form with many of the same changes we are recommending. See Appendix D). This creates a challenge for managers, who must review employees based on generic descriptors without having the opportunity to rate employees on the skills specific to their workplace and job. To target the assessment to the skills and expectations required of different jobs, and to provide a more holistic review of each employee, the GJ recommends the following changes:

- Establish goals and expectations. The employee’s job description and responsibilities should be listed at the top of the evaluation form, followed by the list of goals set by the employee and their manager at the start of the year. More specific goals may also be listed underneath relevant ratings areas.
- Encourage qualitative feedback. The current form only has one space at the end for managers to provide comments, and this is only required for employees rated 1 (“unsatisfactory”) or 5 (“outstanding.”) In the short term, qualitative feedback can be addressed through the addition of a text field for appropriate ratings where the manager is prompted to provide support for the ratings. The prompts should encourage feedback specific to the position, the goals, and the work that the employee performed that year. In the long term, changes to the form to make it more applicable for each type of position are recommended. The current form can apply as a general template to provide consistency, with updates made to align it appropriately with the type of work the employee performs, similar to what the Sheriff’s Department has done for their department.

In summary, a properly completed annual assessment should provide a clear summary of an employee’s performance during the year including:

- measuring against the goals and expectations of the prior year
- the specific work performed
- how well they performed
- their strengths and weaknesses
- whether the employee responded to informal coaching received during the year
- identification of a plan to address areas of needed improvement
- the goals and expectations for the next year
- the employee's interests in career advancement and identification of a path to get there (what they can do and what the County can do)

The current annual assessment form does nothing more than indicate whether the employee was rated as a good performer.

4. Adequately Communicating During Performance Reviews

The GJ interviews revealed that performance assessments are typically one-sided, with minimal verbal engagement. Specifically, the employees report receiving completed forms from managers, who simply inquire if the employee has any questions. The employee then signs the form, and the performance assessment process is completed.

The annual assessment should be a dialogue, similar to ongoing coaching. This is referred to as 180-degree assessments, where employees have the opportunity to incorporate their self-assessment into performance reviews.

While the form may be completed beforehand by the manager or by both parties as a starting point, it should primarily serve as a basis for discussion. This conversation should cover the key areas listed above, review real-time coaching check-ins, and address improvements or persistent issues. Employees should be able to advocate for themselves, and adjustments to ratings should be considered during the discussion, leaving the final decision to the manager. Ideally, both parties should leave the meeting in agreement about the current assessment and the path forward.

The HR Tracking of and Feedback on the PM Process

The HR Department is currently unable to consistently track and ensure all performance assessments are completed, completed on time, and submitted to HR. The HR Department should be tracking all assessments, ensuring they are completed appropriately and on time, and reporting this to department heads.

Additionally, there is no process within HR and many of the departments to ensure that assessments are consistent and equitable across workgroups and organizations. It is not uncommon to have teams that are not equivalent, where the best rated employees on one team can perform more poorly than the lowest rated employees on another team. There can also be inequities in ratings due to differences in performance review skills of the managers performing the assessment. The HR Department should randomly audit performance assessments looking for training opportunities, for trends across the County, and for standardization on the ratings.

Training Managers to Manage Performance Effectively

In interviews with employees, a pay increase was the only reason mentioned for conducting assessments because a “Standard” or above assessment rating is required by the union contract before an employee can move up to the next step in pay scale. Assessments were neglected or perfunctory for top-tier employees (step 5) as they are already at the top of their pay scale, and delays in assessments for others caused delays in pay increases.

The current PM system focuses solely on facilitating pay increases, lacking opportunities for coaching and development. A better process would require and facilitate supervisors in mentoring their direct reports, with the annual assessment reflecting their year-long efforts. Additionally, the management level above supervisors rarely participate in coaching or assessments to evaluate the supervisor’s effectiveness.

Finally, there is no formal process for employees to evaluate the performance of their direct supervisors. While the 360-degree assessment model is not a good fit for this particular organization, (due to being difficult to implement and very resource intensive), the GJ would recommend implementing one small part of this concept – employee reviews of direct supervisors. Such reviews enable honest feedback and promote managerial improvement and accountability.

Workplace Culture

Workplace culture refers to an organization's character, values, and expectations regarding operational and individual behavior, and dictates how employers and employees interact and treat one another. National surveys indicate that 46% of respondents declined job offers due to company culture, while 72% of job seekers prioritize information about employer culture in job descriptions.

Nearly every individual the GJ interviewed named poor workplace culture as a top issue in the County, specifically that it causes attrition and discourages applicants.

County employee surveys show significant issues with the County workplace culture. The 2022 Employee Engagement Survey found:

- Only 49% say that they would stay at the County if a similar job with similar pay and benefits were offered elsewhere.
- Only 54% say they feel comfortable in Mendocino County's culture.
- Only 31% of employees feel that the County leadership listens to their ideas and suggestions.
- Only 51% say they can share their ideas and opinions without fear of negative consequences.
- Only 28% feel the County leadership communicates well with them.
- Only 33% say innovative ideas are encouraged
- Only 24% felt that there were clear incentives for doing good work.

- Only 48% would recommend Mendocino County as a great place to work.

The workplace culture issues above appear to be some of the most significant reasons for both turnover and difficulty hiring. With county employee surveys showing that only 49% would stay working at the county if offered a job with similar pay and benefits elsewhere, and only 48% saying they would recommend the county as a good place to work, it's not hard to see the impacts of county culture on our staffing. It's clear the reputation of the county as an employer has suffered due to the workplace culture issues, which results in a reduction of the number of applicants. This is reinforced based on numerous comments from interviewees....some examples:

- 'When I told people about my new job with the county, the general response from most people, instead of the congratulations expected, was 'Why would you work for the county?' They proceeded to tell me about all the issues at the county and what they had heard it was like to work there.'
- "I've been thinking about this lately...'If I did not have my current job, would I want to come back to work for the county today?'....And the answer is No. And it isn't about the pay, it's about the culture."
- 'I used to work for Mendocino (redacted department). Though I still live in Mendocino, I left and now work for (redacted) for the same department, almost the same pay, and a long commute to (redacted) because of the environment of the department in Mendocino.'

The GJ received many reports from former and current County employees that they had experienced or witnessed workplace culture issues that negatively impacted the work environment including such issues as harassment, discrimination, nepotism, bullying, and favoritism. These can be divided up into two general categories: legally protected EEO issues such as harassment and discrimination, and other types of issues that negatively impact the workplace such as favoritism, nepotism, and workplace bullying. The GJ requested the County policies and process surrounding workplace culture issues.

We were provided a very thorough and complete policy and process on harassment and discrimination (summary in Appendix K). Interviewees stated that they were aware of this process. However, they stated that the issues were often not reported due to concerns that the reports would not remain confidential, or a belief that when reports had been made there appeared to be neither action taken, nor changes made. Several of the interviewees reported that they or someone they knew had left County employment due to these issues.

As for the second category of workplace culture issues, interviewees acknowledged that employees knew they could speak to HR, and some employees were aware that the County had internal policies addressing some of these issues. However, interviewees stated there were no formal guidelines on how to proceed with reporting issues unless laws were broken as in the cases discussed above. Here again there is also a widespread distrust of the reporting process; employees did not feel their report would be confidential, protected from repercussions, or have an impact. Without knowing that there is a process that employees can fully trust will protect them, interviewees acknowledged a widespread reluctance across all departments to formally report workplace concerns.

Although there is no way for us to determine how often these issues occur, and the GJ do not feel they were pervasive, they clearly happen enough to negatively impact the workplace culture, drive attrition, and discourage people from wanting to work for the County.

To address the widespread concerns about the unhealthy workplace culture generally, and the management of reported issues more specifically, the GJ recommends the County look into the feasibility of creating a Countywide Ombuds position. This will require discussion with the Civil Service Commission and unions to address how this might impact them and may require some changes to their rules and agreements, however the GJ believes that as this is in the best interest of the employees they support, they will be open to the discussion.

The Ombuds should report outside the chain of command to ensure independence and engender trust from employees. For example, this could mean they direct-line report to the BOS, or dual report; direct-line to BOS and dotted-line to the CEO or HR. The person selected as Ombuds should start with basic training (the International Association of Ombuds offers a starter class for about \$2000). When needs are identified and money becomes available, the GJ suggests complete training and certification.

In addition to setting up and overseeing the reporting process, the Ombuds would conduct training of all employees on the process of appropriate handling of reporting, underlining program principles of impartiality, confidentiality, independence, and informality to build trust that those raising concerns are legally protected. The Ombuds would also track and trend issues and report to leadership every six months to prevent problems from becoming entrenched and causing widespread harm. In addition, the Ombuds would close the loop by ensuring at the conclusion of an investigation that appropriate action was taken by the department in question to address the report, that this action was documented, and that the issue has been resolved. This is critical to ensuring employees' trust in the efficacy of the Ombuds department.

Without an HR Director, the County lacks a leader to engage in long-term planning for improving workplace culture and increasing employee satisfaction, retention, and productivity. As a result, workplace culture issues may impact the County's desirability as a workplace. Therefore, the GJ strongly recommends renewing the recruitment initiative for a fully qualified HR Director to guide the department in addressing these issues in the long term.

Understaffing

The GJ conducted interviews with employees in many different departments for several different GJ reports. Staffing shortage was listed as one of the primary challenges to completing work assignments in every case. This scenario is not new. The 2012-2013 GJ stated in their report: "There is no staff capacity for planning beyond the immediate and no capability to effectively position the organization for the continued staff turnover endemic of an aging workforce." The 2013 GJ report noted that the County had staffing issues with a 29% overall vacancy rate. Ten years later the vacancy rate is at 27.5% overall with some departments running as high as 50%. The turnover rate County-wide today is over 30% with some departments over 100%.

To ensure that this wasn't the norm for counties similar to Mendocino, we did research on 6 counties that are comparable to Mendocino based on factors such as location, population density, government size and budget, etc. The Mendocino HR Department uses the same list of counties for comparison to ensure they are offering market rate salaries and benefits. The full list of counties and data collected is in Appendix J. We found that Mendocino is ranked with the highest vacancy rate and turnover rate among the comparable counties that responded.

Impacts of Understaffing

One of the most obvious impacts of understaffing is the inability of departments to complete their work or accomplish their work in a timely manner. This is most obvious to the public in departments such as Planning and Building, Assessor/Tax Collector, and Social Services.

Staffing issues and high turnover in the County have also led to the loss of institutional knowledge at an alarming rate. In many departments, the "senior employees" have only worked in their department for a year or two.

Understaffing has caused widespread burnout in the County. Employees are often asked to compensate for vacant positions through increased workload and overtime, leading to an unsustainable situation where individuals either leave their job or perform at a lower standard (referred to as "retired in place"). Burnout is a self-perpetuating cycle; the increased workload resulting from understaffing causes burnout, which then increases attrition and turnover, which in turn further reduces the number of employees doing the same amount of work.

While the shortage in available housing is often thought to be a prime reason for understaffing, followed by non-competitive wages, the GJ's research reviewed comparable counties' statistics and found that Mendocino was in the middle of the pack on both compensation and housing availability – yet those counties do not experience the same degree of staffing issues as Mendocino. The GJ research indicates that the key factors behind the chronic understaffing in Mendocino County are workplace culture (as discussed above) and the hiring process which will be covered next.

A Lengthy Hiring Process Exacerbating Staffing Issues

The 2012-2013 GJ reported, "Elapsed time for hiring can take up to six or seven months." As a result, the GJ found, "Qualified candidates are difficult to attract and may not be interviewed and offered a position in a timely manner."

Currently, the hiring process in Mendocino County for government positions averages 90 days, and can even take up to 5-6 months, according to reports from interviews with County staff and external applicants. The GJ was unable to obtain County data detailing the average timeline for the entire hiring process due to issues with the data available from HR (see below: Tracking Hiring Timelines). A 2022 report (Appendix E) detailing the final step of the hiring process (section three in the chart on page 16: date list is given to the hiring manager to date offer made) tells us that just this step of the process averages 48 days for simpler positions and 71 days for more complicated positions.

The County's 3-6 month hiring timeline was the slowest time to hire among comparable California counties who responded to requests for information. Of those counties, some boasted hiring

timelines under two months, with one at 32 days in the departments participating in their Reduced Time To Hire pilot program. The Society of Human Resource Management states that more qualified and higher quality candidates are hired quickly, so the longer the “Time to Fill” (the time it takes to produce an offer), the less likely the County will find qualified candidates who will accept a job offer.⁷

While each department in the County is responsible for part of the hiring process, HR is responsible for setting the procedures and timeline, training managers in hiring, and tracking, reporting on and enforcing the timelines. The absence of a director to lead the department has kept the department from strategic, long-term planning to reduce the time it takes to hire qualified applicants.

Reducing Time to Hire

The GJ has no concerns with the hiring process itself (Appendix F). Timely completion of these activities would allow the County to achieve a 4-8 week timeframe for most positions, 6-12 weeks for more complex roles with multiple interviews or testing, and longer for a few cases requiring reposting due to slow application submissions from qualified candidates.

These timelines are consistent with applicant expectations in competing counties and companies. The average hiring process time across positions and industries, as reported by The Society of Human Resource Management, is approximately 34 days.⁷ DHI, a company that operates popular recruiting and job search websites, analyzed the US Bureau of Labor Statistics JOLTS Report and found that government jobs typically take 40 days to fill.⁸ Considering these benchmarks, a 4-8 week timeframe is realistic. To streamline the current lengthy timelines, the GJ recommends training enhancements and improved tracking and reporting of hiring timelines.

Training the Department’s Hiring Managers

At present, hiring managers take well over a month (averaging 63 days for basic positions, and 81 for more complicated hires) to interview the approximately 10 applicants sent to them by HR and select a candidate. Department hiring managers need improved training on how to schedule, plan, and conduct interviews. A manager with this training or prior experience will move through the process more efficiently and is more likely to make better hires.

The hiring manager should be given notice by HR of when to expect the list of candidates. The schedule from there is straightforward:

- Day 1-2: Review resumes and set up applicants for interviews over the next week.
- Day 3-7: Interview candidates.
- Day 7-10: Conduct delayed interviews, if any, and select and approve candidates to be hired.

⁷ Jamie Ross and Karen Werner, “Staffing Metrics: ‘Time to Fill’ Can Kill Prospects of Landing Top Talent,” *SHRM*, April 10, 2018, <https://shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/Pages/TimetoFillCanKillLandingTopTalent.aspx>.

⁸ Nikolett Bika, “What Is the Average Time to Hire By Industry?,” *Recruiting Resources: How to Recruit and Hire Better*, July 5, 2022, <https://resources.workable.com/stories-and-insights/time-to-hire-industry>.

If a department hiring manager cannot spend 1-2 weeks after receiving the list to focus on hiring, then the department manager should delay the posting of the open job position until they are more available. This will avoid leaving applicants waiting for extended periods.

Tracking Hiring Timelines

Usable data and progress tracking is necessary for further improvements to the hiring process. Current data collection is insufficient. The GJ was unable to validate anecdotal reports of how long hiring takes with data on position recruitments from available reports due to poor data collection. The Staffing Request Log for the years 2020-2023, which the County provided the GJ, was incomplete, and the report changed format and dates tracked each year. Milestone dates were not entered for many of the positions hired, so we could not validate the reported length of time it took to hire. Out of a random sampling of 25 position listings, only three had all the dates entered, and only one listing had all the dates entered and was within the expected timeline. As the report format and content changed from year to year, it was not possible to identify trends or do a year-to-year comparison.

Poor tracking of application timelines and poor reporting to department heads and HR are key failures. Fixing this will enable all involved to identify and address bottleneck points to reduce the time to hire. The Grand Jury recommends the County track the following important metrics with the goal of meeting the following timelines for completion:

Milestones	Who is responsible	Expected time to complete
1. Date position was approved to date posted for hire	HR	• 1 week
2. Date posted for hire to date list of approved applicants given to the hiring manager	HR	• 1-2 weeks more than posting duration for a position without testing. • 2-3 weeks more than posting duration for those with testing.
3. Date list is given to the hiring manager to date offer made	Hiring Department	• 2 weeks to either offer or request reposting for lower-level positions requiring 1 interview per candidate. (currently averaging 63 days) • 3 weeks to either offer or request reposting for more complex positions or higher-level positions requiring 2 interviews per candidate. (currently averaging 81.5 days)

Given the 2-week standard posting duration for most positions, this would drive a timeline of 6-8 weeks for most hires. The last two areas combined, from posting to offer, encompass the

applicant's experience. This is where the GJ finds the County has the most room for improvement, and where improvements will make the biggest impact on the hiring process.

Retaining New Hires

The County cannot afford to pay relocation expenses for new employees, but there are many low- and no-cost strategies to facilitate a smooth integration by creating a supportive environment and providing other forms of assistance during the transition. The GJ recommends the establishment of a County staff position dedicated to helping new employees settle into the community and adapt to rural life. This role would serve as a combination of a relocation specialist and a concierge, leveraging their love for Mendocino, knowledge of the County, and personal network. The responsibilities of this role would include assisting new employees in finding housing, childcare, religious and cultural groups, as well as connecting them with special interest groups and community organizations, such as art classes or community service initiatives (Appendix G). By fostering early and strong connections with the community, new employees are more likely to stay long term.

One of the most significant avoidable expenses for any organization is the cost of onboarding and training an employee who doesn't remain with the company. Losing an employee incurs significant costs beyond the obvious cost to the county of having no one in that position, including: loss of institutional knowledge, time spent by HR and hiring managers to find and hire a new employee, time spent doing new employee onboarding and training, time spent on the job training for their specific position's skillset, and then the work inefficiency as they learn how things work and increase their skills till they reach the level of the employee who left. While the County currently doesn't track this data, given the County's high turnover rate, it may be reasonable to infer that turnover costs exceed the investment required to retain employees through dedicated support. This position has the potential to pay for itself by enhancing employee satisfaction and retention. Once the role is established and capable of supporting new staff effectively, there is potential to expand its scope to also assist existing employees.

Expanding the Pool of Qualified Applicants

In order to address the shortage of qualified candidates for local jobs, it is crucial for rural county governments to establish partnerships with schools. One of the main reasons people leave rural counties is for education. By providing options within the County, the County can cultivate a pool of applicants and encourage individuals to remain within the community. This approach serves a dual purpose: fulfilling the pressing need for skilled professionals and providing community members with more opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Similar models have proven successful in alleviating shortages in the healthcare industry across Mendocino. Notably, Mendocino College's nursing program, initiated in 2003 to address the local nursing shortage, has emerged as one of the state's top programs, attracting 120 applications from across the nation for just 20 spots in recent years. Despite the potential for significantly higher wages in nearby Santa Rosa, 69% of graduates choose to work locally. Additionally, the Mendocino County Office of Education has launched highly effective adult classes, addressing the needs expressed by healthcare offices. Over 90% of graduates from these programs opt to work within the county. While staffing shortages persist, these local initiatives have mitigated the problem to a considerable extent.

Where Mendocino County does not have the faculty or local demand for certain classes in a degree program, establishing hybrid degree programs can fill the gap by leveraging the advantages of distance learning in collaboration with other institutions. These hybrids offer a blend of in-person and online courses enabling complete degree programs.

It is advisable for the county government to take a proactive stance and collaborate with local education resources, including high schools, Mendocino College, other NorCal colleges, Mendocino Lake Adult & Career Education, and the Mendocino County Office of Education. By fostering and supporting the development of programs that address chronic vacancies, the County can serve as a leader in guiding high school students and adults towards gaining the necessary education and securing employment within the County.

MCELT Recruitment and Retention Team Dissolution

Near the end of the GJ's term, the GJ received copies of meeting notes from the Mendocino County Executive Leadership Team (MCELT) Recruitment and Retention project team. The MCELT was an initiative comprising seven project teams made up of employees at all levels from across all departments. They were tasked with investigating and making recommendations for improvements in their project area.

A review of the Recruitment and Retention team's 2017 meeting notes revealed that many of the same issues and potential solutions identified by the GJ in this report had already been recognized by the team. However, it was perplexing to discover that no significant changes have been implemented in the five years since. Further investigation revealed that the team had disbanded shortly after those meetings, with varying explanations for its dissolution. The lack of continued support and completion of its tasks indicates insufficient leadership backing.

Given that Recruitment and Retention falls under the purview of Human Resources, an HR Director would likely have ensured its continuity and aided in fulfilling its objectives. The GJ views this project as highly significant, and the disbandment without fulfilling its charter deliverables is profoundly disappointing. The GJ recommends its re-establishment, urging a review of the previous group's findings for relevance, a thorough examination of this report, the formulation of new findings, and the subsequent recommendation of changes to leadership. The GJ strongly advises leadership to support this group and take its recommendations seriously.

FINDINGS

For clarity, the Findings have been grouped into four sections:

HR Director - Instability in the HR Director position over the past 25 years has undermined the HR Department and its ability to support the rest of the County departments, specifically:

- F1.** The HR Department has not had consistent qualified leadership for the last 25 years.
- F2.** The constant turnover in the HR Director position prevents clear direction or policy objectives and obstructs any possibility of a long-term vision for the department.
- F3.** The constant turnover in the HR Director position has led to staff confusion, inefficacy, discouragement, and job attrition within the HR department.
- F4.** The current interim HR director is commended for doing all she can to support the HR department's day-to-day functionality. However, leading the department forward is beyond her capacity because her time is split between five County departments and multiple other duties.
- F5.** The HR department employees, particularly the four HR managers, are commended for keeping the HR Department functioning through years of transitory HR Directors (or the lack thereof). However, HR managers are unable to engage in long-term strategic planning or process improvement as their workdays are preoccupied with putting out daily fires and ensuring the basic functions of HR are completed.
- F6.** The challenges faced by the HR Department are likely to continue for the foreseeable future because the BOS and CEO have stopped recruiting a department director and have recently unfunded the position.

Performance Management - Performance management strategies are underutilized by the County, and the current performance review process does not promote professional development of employees and does not promote accountability. Specifically:

- F7.** Performance assessments are based solely on a numeric rating scale, severely limiting opportunities for constructive feedback. The lack of supporting information prevents sufficient accountability or a useful record of employee performance.
- F8.** There is no process within HR or most County departments to ensure that employee performance assessments are consistent and equitable across workgroups and organizations.
- F9.** HR is unable to consistently ensure all performance assessments are completed, completed on time, and submitted to HR for the records.
- F10.** Once employees reach step 5 of the salary schedule, they often no longer receive performance assessments, which limits opportunities for growth and accountability for their work.

F11. Managers do not receive sufficient training from HR or departmental leadership on effective performance assessment strategies. Neither HR nor departmental leadership participate in supervisor assessments of lower-level employees to evaluate supervisor's performance management and assessment skills.

F12. The County PM process does not facilitate performance management strategies like SMART goal setting, continuous coaching, or 180- or 360-degree assessments.

Workplace Culture - A fair and healthy workplace environment is critical to employee satisfaction, retention, and productivity. Workplace culture issues are significantly impairing the County's functionality. Specifically:

F13. Workplace culture issues are a significant concern among employees and these issues have led directly to attrition.

F14. Employees feel that County leadership has not done enough to address workplace culture issues in some departments.

F15. Employees do not trust the existing process for reporting harassment and discrimination.

F16. There is no formal protected process for employees to report other types of workplace culture issues, which contributes to limited reporting due to fear of retaliation

F17. There is no formal process for employees to report other types of workplace culture issues, therefore employees state they do not report because they see no meaningful change as a result.

F18. Workplace culture and management issues cause attrition across departments and reduce applicants for County jobs.

Understaffing is an ongoing issue with ripple effects throughout the County. Many of these issues were reported in the 2013 GJ "Human Resources" report. Specifically:

F19. Understaffing across departments has caused underperformance, slow progress, and service failures at the County.

F20. The County has a 27.5% vacancy rate overall, with some departments experiencing vacancy rates as high as 49%.

F21. The hiring process is reported to average 2-4 months before an applicant is notified of a job offer, sometimes up to 6 months, resulting in the loss of qualified applicants.

F22. Hiring managers average over a month to interview the approximately 10 people on the list of qualified candidates received from HR.

- F23.** The County is experiencing major challenges retaining employees. Average turnover rate in the County was 30.6% in 2022, with turnover among some job classifications up to 120% in a year.
- F24.** Understaffing issues have been exacerbated by the instability within HR. Consistent turnover in HR leadership has impaired HR's ability to effectively handle recruitment and on-boarding duties for other County departments.
- F25.** The County as an employer has suffered due to the workplace culture, which makes the County less attractive to potential applicants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mendocino Civil GJ recommends that the BOS and CEO:

- R1.** Explore ways to encourage longer tenure for the HR Director role, such as including a bonus clause in the contract for a time commitment, or other incentives to stay. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6)
- R2.** Prioritize hiring an HR Director, and target hiring by the end of 2023. Candidates must have HR specific education and qualifications, and either HR Director or significant HR Department experience (preferably for a county or municipality). Job posting should be live by September 30, 2023. Use all resources including recruitment agencies to get qualified candidates. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10, F11, F12, F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18, F19, F20, F21, F22, F23, F24, F25)

The Mendocino Civil Grand Jury recommends that the CEO and BOS work with and support the Deputy CEO/interim HR Director, incoming HR Director, and HR staff to:

Improve the **performance management** process to address workplace culture issues, improve accountability, and grow and support employees. Specifically:

- R3.** Reinforce that assessments are mandatory for all employees, all levels, even step 5. Assessments should be audited and tracked by HR across the organization to ensure all are completed. This should be completed by EOY 2023. (F9, F10)
- R4.** Direct the department heads (for department level) and HR (at County level) to perform oversight/audit of performance assessments to ensure consistent, equitable, and standardized assessments across workgroups, and to assess and develop managers' performance assessment skills. This should be conducted annually beginning EOY 2023. (F8, F11, F12)
- R5.** Implement 180-degree assessments and employee assessments of their supervisors within 12 months of the new HR Director's hire date. (F12)
- R6.** Write procedural guidelines describing the updated Performance Management policy, including the recommended changes to the assessment process, as well as guidelines on implementing formal goal-setting and ongoing coaching check-ins during the year. Complete within 12 months of hiring an HR Director. (F7, F8, F11, F12)
- R7.** Update the performance assessment form before EOY 2023 to include open text boxes under appropriate ratings to require supporting details, relevant qualitative feedback, and examples that justify the rating for all employees. (F7)
- R8.** Update the performance assessment form before EOY 2023 to include additional sections where managers can list the goals and expectations of the past year that the employee is being assessed against, a summary and assessment of their completed work, the short and long-term objectives, and steps for improvement when necessary. (F7, F11, F12)

- R9.** Develop follow-up training on effective performance management for all employees (manager and frontline). This training should take the basics learned in the current Vector Solutions training and connect them to each employee's particular workplace and the County's specific PM process. Training development should begin by EOY 2023 and should be implemented in 2024. (F11)
- R10.** Develop a formal process for managers to implement and track ongoing coaching sessions with their direct reports within six months of the HR Director's hire date. (F11, F12)

Address **workplace culture** issues to cultivate a positive working environment and reduce attrition. Specifically:

- R11.** Look into the feasibility of creating an Ombuds program or similar by March 2024. Responsibilities of the Ombuds would initially include training of all management staff on the process of appropriate handling of reported issues, underlining program principles of impartiality, confidentiality, independence, and informality to build trust that those raising concerns are legally protected. (F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18)
- R12.** Authorize formal Ombuds training/certification (such as International Ombuds Association) for Ombuds at minimum, immediately following the creation of the Ombuds program. Ombuds may then train any other staff responsible for accepting or working on employee reports. (F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18)
- R13.** Communicate Ombuds program to all County employees underlining program principles of impartiality, confidentiality, independence, and informality to build trust that anyone raising concerns is legally protected. Complete within three months of program creation. (F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18)
- R14.** Direct the Ombuds to track and trend reported issues and report to leadership every six months to identify issues that may be becoming widespread. (F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18)
- R15.** Direct the Ombuds to document results of investigations of reported issues, as well as any action taken to address the issue. Ombuds and their leadership should regularly review and ensure that corrective actions taken are appropriate in scale and effectively remedy the issue. (F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18)
- R16.** Communicate in 2023, and annually thereafter, with all employees to improve the awareness and understanding of the current discrimination and harassment policy and reporting options. (F15)

Address **staffing** issues by reducing the time from application submission to hire notification, and the total time from job requisition approval to hire. Specifically:

- R17.** Set timeline expectations and track the hiring timeline with a standardized report from year to year, and report on them at department level and to the HR Director. Key metrics should include:
- Time elapsed between when job was requested by department and approved, and when job was posted for hire
 - Time elapsed between when listing is posted and when list of approved applicants is given to hiring manager
 - Time elapsed between when the hiring manager receives a list of eligible applicants and when job offer is extended
- (F19, F20, F21, F22)
- R18.** Provide training for department hiring managers on effective and timely hiring and interviewing to reduce the time required to interview qualified candidates. (F21, F22)
- R19.** Follow-up with hiring managers if interviews have not been completed within the expected timeline of receiving the list of qualified candidates. If hiring managers fail to conduct interviews in a timely way, HR should escalate to department heads. (F21, F22)
- R20.** Collect data on why applicants decline job offers. This data should be reported to the HR Director every six months. If there is a trend in reasons for declining, this must be reported to the BOS and to the CEO. (F21, F22, F25)
- R21.** Assign a relocation support person for new employees within six months of publication of this report. Similar to a “concierge” type concept, they will help new employees adapt to, get connected with, and settled into our County. (F23, F24)
- R22.** Reestablish the collapsed MCELT Recruitment and Retention team to review the prior team notes and progress, add their own recommendations, and combine those with the GJ’s recommendations to determine how best to enact the recommendations they select. Reform the team by October of 2023. (F19, F20, F21, F22, F23, F24, F25)
- R23.** Identify positions that are particularly difficult to find applicants for due to widespread state and national shortages (such as Social Services), and research ways to support local training and certification at both high school and college level, as well as with the Mendocino County Office of Education’s Institute of Career Education. (F19, F20, F23)
- R24.** Track vital staffing statistics such as job vacancy rates and turnover rates in the County and include those statistics in the public CEO report. (F19, F20, F21, F22, F23)

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

RESPONSES

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code § 933 and § 933.05 the following responses are required:

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors (All Findings) and (All Recommendations)

REQUESTED RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code § 933.05, responses are requested from the following individual(s):

Mendocino County CEO and Mendocino County Deputy CEO overseeing HR (All Findings) and (All Recommendations)

The four Mendocino County HR managers currently managing the HR Department. One response together. (F5-F20, R3-R24)

California Penal Code Section 933 requires the governing body of any public agency which the Grand Jury has reviewed, and about which it has issued a final report, to comment to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the governing body. Such a comment shall be made no later than 90 days after the Grand Jury publishes its report (filed with the Clerk of the Court). Additionally, in the case of a report containing findings and recommendations pertaining to a department or agency headed by an elected County official (e.g. District Attorney, Sheriff, etc.), such elected County official shall comment on the findings and recommendations pertaining to the matters under that elected official's control within 60 days to the Presiding Judge with an information copy sent to the Board of Supervisors.

Furthermore, California Penal Code Section 933.05 specifies the manner in which such comment(s) are to be made as follows:

- 1) As to each Grand Jury finding, the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following:
 - a) The respondent agrees with the finding.
 - b) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding, in which case the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons, therefore.
- 2) As to each Grand Jury recommendation, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions:
 - a) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.
 - b) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a time frame for implementation.
 - c) The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a time frame for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This time frame shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury report.
 - d) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation, therefore.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Armstrong, Michael. *Performance Management: Key Strategies and Practical Guidelines*. 3rd ed. Kogan Page Limited, 2006.

Ashkenas, Ron. "How to Preserve Institutional Knowledge." *Harvard Business Review*, August 7, 2014. <https://hbr.org/2013/03/how-to-preserve-institutional>.

Bakker, Arnold B., Evangelia Demerouti, and Ana Isabel Sanz-Vergel. "Burnout and Work Engagement: The JD–R Approach." *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior* 1, no. 1 (March 21, 2014): 389–411. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091235>.

Bika, Nikoletta. "What Is the Average Time to Hire By Industry?" *Recruiting Resources: How to Recruit and Hire Better*, July 5, 2022. <https://resources.workable.com/stories-and-insights/time-to-hire-industry>.

Ficarra, Laura, Michael Rubino, and Elsa-Sofia Morote. "Does Organizational Culture Affect Employee Happiness?," 2020. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1282787>.

Groysberg, Boris. "The Leader's Guide to Corporate Culture." *Harvard Business Review*, April 4, 2023. <https://hbr.org/2018/01/the-leaders-guide-to-corporate-culture>.

International Ombuds Association Office. "What Is an Organizational Ombuds," n.d. <https://www.ombudsassociation.org/what-is-an-ombuds->.

"JOLTS Home : U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics," November 4, 2022. <https://www.bls.gov/jlt/>.

"MENDOCINO COUNTY GOVERNMENT CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION," January 2013. Accessed June 7, 2023. <https://co.mendocino.ca.us/hr/cgi-bin/spec/Human%20Resources%20Director%2001-13.pdf>.

Mendocinocounty.org. "Leadership Initiative Project Teams." Accessed June 7, 2023. <https://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/human-resources/leadership-initiative/leadership-initiative-project-teams>.

O'Connell, Brian. "Performance Management Evolves." *SHRM*, June 12, 2020. <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/performance-management-evolves.aspx>.

Professional Development Blog, University of Phoenix. "How to Create a Healthy Company Culture and Why It's Important." *Professional Development Blog | University of Phoenix*, May 1, 2023. <https://www.phoenix.edu/professional-development/blog/create-healthy-company-culture/>.

Pulakos, Elaine D., Rose A. Mueller-Hanson, and Sharon Arad. "The Evolution of Performance Management: Searching for Value." *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and*

Organizational Behavior 6, no. 1 (January 21, 2019): 249–71. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-012218-015009>.

Ross, Jamie, and Karen Werner. "Staffing Metrics: 'Time to Fill' Can Kill Prospects of Landing Top Talent." *SHRM*, April 10, 2018. <https://shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/Pages/TimetoFillCanKillLandingTopTalent.aspx>.

Van Vulpen, Erik. "What Is Performance Management? The Complete Guide." *AIHR*, May 26, 2023. <https://www.aihr.com/blog/what-is-performance-management/>.

Documents and Reports from County Reviewed by Grand Jury

- CEO Report November 11/2022 Churn Rate
- Civil Service Rules 2018
- County Organizational Chart
- County positions and vacancies 09/17/2022
- Decision Wise : Anniversary Employee Survey Questions - 2022
- Decision Wise : Engaging People Manager Report - 2022
- Department Head Performance Evaluation Form
- Employee Harassment / Discrimination Complaint Process Form
- Employee Performance Evaluation Form
- Employee Survey Report – County wide 2018
- Employee Survey Report – County wide 2019
- Employee Termination Reasons 2017-2022
- High Churn Rate Departments 10/2021-10/2022
- List of HR Directors – Permanent and Interim 03/1998 – 10/2021
- Memorandum of Understanding between County of Mendocino and SEIU, 7-01-2019-June 30, 2022
- Overtime and Extra Help costs by year for 2019 -2022
- Position Allocation Table as of 03/04/2023 with vacancies by position
- Recruitment and Retention Minutes and Recommendations
- Recruitment and Retention Project Charter
- Recruitment Process Flow Chart
- Sheriff's Department Annual Review Form
- Staffing Requisition Form
- Staffing Requisition Log
- Supervisor and Manager Training Catalog
- Wage chart as of 02/2023

Appendices

- Appendix A.** Further Reading List
- Appendix B.** Historical List of HR Directors
- Appendix C.** Employee Annual Performance Assessment Form
- Appendix D.** Sheriff's Department Annual Performance Assessment Form
- Appendix E.** Average Time From Application to Hire 2022
- Appendix F.** Recruitment Process
- Appendix G.** Relocation Support "Concierge" Position Details
- Appendix H.** 2022 Churn Rates by Department
- Appendix I.** Recruitment and Retention Charter
- Appendix J.** County Comparison Data
- Appendix K.** Discrimination and Harassment

Appendix A

For Further Reading

2013 Mendocino Civil Grand Jury Report on Human Resources

<https://www.mendocinocounty.org/home/showpublisheddocument/3636/636239053199570000>

Sonoma County Article on Their Staffing Vacancy (12% compared to Mendocino's 28%)

<https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/staffing-woes-dominate-sonoma-County-government-budget-talks/>

Additional Articles of Interest Used in Research

Studies and articles regarding reasons for employee leaving:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/top-5-reasons-people-leave-jobs-february-2022-clay-scroggins/>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bryanrobinson/2022/05/03/discover-the-top-5-reasons-workers-want-to-quit-their-jobs/?sh=206e29f5d466>

Studies and articles regarding company/workplace culture:

<https://www.indeed.com/hire/c/info/business-in-culture>

<https://www.phoenix.edu/professional-development/blog/create-healthy-company-culture/>

<https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/guide/company-culture/>

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1282787>

<https://hbr.org/2018/01/the-leaders-guide-to-corporate-culture>

Studies and articles regarding Ombudsman:

<https://www.ombudsassociation.org/what-is-an-ombuds->

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/o/ombudsman.asp#toc-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-an-ombudsman>

Studies and articles regarding Performance Management:

<https://www.aihr.com/blog/what-is-performance-management/>

<https://engagedly.com/the-evolution-of-performance-management-system/>

<https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/all-things-work/pages/performance-management-evolves.aspx>

Studies and articles regarding the impact of Institutional knowledge loss:

<https://hbr.org/2013/03/how-to-preserve-institutional>

<https://workforcegroup.com/what-is-institutional-knowledge/>

<https://www.gartner.com/en/articles/how-to-safeguard-institutional-knowledge-in-the-face-of-the-great-resignation>

Studies and articles regarding Burnout:

<https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/full/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091235# i2>

Studies and articles regarding hiring process and timelines:

<https://resources.workable.com/stories-and-insights/time-to-hire-industry>

<https://www.pitchnhire.com/blog/average-hiring-process-time>

Studies and articles regarding people leaving rural areas:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/nurturing-resilience/201511/the-end-rural-communities-why-young-people-leave>

Mendocino County Executive Leadership Team Information:

<https://www.mendocinoCounty.org/government/human-resources/leadership-initiative/leadership-initiative-project-teams>

Appendix B

Historical List of HR Directors

Last long term HR Director was Steve Smith who served 1988 – 1998 10 years

Permanent and Interim HR Directors for the 25 year period from 1998 to 2023

1. Jim Anderson (Assist CAO)	3/1998 – 10/1998 (Interim)	7m
2. Roger Wong OUTSIDE HIRE	11/1998 – 1/2000	1y 3m
3. Charles (Bud) Lafferty (Contracted)	1/2000 – 6/2000 (Interim)	6 m
4. Bruce Mordhorst (Asst. CAO)	7/2000 – 2/2001(Interim)	7 m
5. Sue Campbell OUTSIDE HIRE	2/2001 – 9/2004	3y 7m
6. Pat Pinney (Sr. HR Analyst)	9/2004 – 10/2004 (Interim)	1m
7. Dick Gearhart (Contracted)	10/2004 – 6/2005 (Interim)	8m
8. Stephanie Kentala OUTSIDE HIRE	6/2005 – 7/2006	1y 1m
9. Keith Jarus (Sr. HR Analyst)	7/2006 – 1 week (Interim)	1w
10. Linda Clouser (Benefits Manager)	8/2006 – 2/2007 (Interim)	6m
11. Linda Clouser INTERNAL HIRE	2/2007 – 1/2009	1y 11m
12. Gary Hudson (Undersheriff)	2/2009 – 4/ 2009 (Interim)	2m
13. Tom Mitchell (CAO)	4/2009 – 10/2009 (Interim)	6m
14. Teresia Haase Last OUTSIDE HIRE	10/2009 – 4/2011	1y 6m
15. Carmel Angelo (CEO)	4/2011 – 8/2011 (Interim)	4m
16. Pat Meek INTERNAL HIRE	8/2011 – 3/201	1y 7m
17. Carmel Angelo (CEO)	3/2013 – 8/2013 (Interim)	5m
18. Tammi Weselsky (Deputy CEO)	8/2013 – 4/2014(Interim)	9 m
19. Tammi Weselsky INTERNAL HIRE	4/2014 – 3/2015	11m
20. Heidi Dunham (Deputy CEO)	3/2015 – 7/18/15(Interim)	4 m
21. Heidi Dunham INTERNAL HIRE	7/19/2015 – 9/6/2019	4y 2 m
22. Cherie Johnson (Asst HR Director)	9/6/19 – 12/28/19 (Interim)	3m
23. William Schurtz INTERNAL HIRE	12/29/2019 – 10/30/2021	1y 10m
24. Cherie Johnson (Deputy CEO)	10/31/2021 – Current (Interim)	1y 3m

Average leadership tenure 1.2 years over last 25 years.

Have had changed HR leadership 22 times in 25 years

All directors since Carmel Angelo became CEO have been appointed, and though many have had extensive history of service with the county, only one (Schurtz) had HR training and background.

- *Permanent appointments to HR Director are shown as either internal hires for those who were already employed with the County prior to their appointment, or external hires for those who were initially employed with the County as HR Director*
- *All interim appointments would be appointed by the CEO/CAO at the time.*

Appendix C Mendocino County Employee Annual Review Form

COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE REPORT

Employee:	Department:
Classification:	Report Period: From:
	To:
Report Reason: ☐ 3 mo/Prob ☐ 5 mo/Prob ☐ Annual ☐ Other:	

Check the box after each factor that best describes the employee being rated.	NA	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Standard	Above Standard	Out-Standing
A. PERSONAL RELATIONS						
1. Meeting & handling the public	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Getting along with fellow employees	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Personal appearance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B. WORK HABITS						
1. Observance of rules & regulations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Observance of safety rules	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Compliance with work instructions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Orderliness in work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Application to duties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C. QUANTITY						
1. Amount of work performed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Completion of work on schedule	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D. QUALITY	NA	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Standard	Above Standard	Out-Standing
1. Accuracy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Neatness of work product	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Thoroughness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Oral expression	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Written expression	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E. ADAPTABILITY						
1. Performance in a new situation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Performance in emergencies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Performance with minimum instruction	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
F. MOTIVATION						
1. Self-reliance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Resourcefulness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Willingness to accept & carry out responsibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
G. OBSERVANCE OF WORKING HOURS		☐		☐		
H. ATTENDANCE		☐		☐		
I. SUPERVISORY ABILITY (Supervisors only)						
1. Planning & assigning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Training & instructing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Disciplinary control	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Evaluating Performance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Making decisions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Fairness & impartiality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Approachability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J. OVER-ALL RATING (Must be consistent with above ratings; employee must receive an overall rating equivalent to standard or above to be eligible for a merit increase.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

This report represents my best judgment of this employee's performance.
Supervisor (Print and Sign):

Date:

This report has been discussed with me by my Rater or Department Head.
Employee:

Date:

My comments, if any, are attached.

Revised – CSC 10/20/2021

COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS -- RATER/SUPERVISOR

Use space below for accomplishments, goals / objectives for coming rating period, comments, suggestions for improving performance, etc. OVER-ALL RATINGS OF OUTSTANDING OR UNSATISFACTORY MUST BE SUBSTANTIATED IN WRITING

Employee: Report Period: Comments:

Rater's Signature

Date

Employee Performance Report**Employee Response**

Employee may make comments or respond to the evaluation. Such response shall be attached to the Employee Performance Report

and placed in the employee's personnel file.

Employee: Report Period: Comments:

Employee's Signature

Date

Appendix D

Sherriff's Department Annual Review Form (excerpt from 11 page document)



Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Performance Appraisal Report

Name: _____ **Position:** _____

Assignment: _____ **Division:** _____

Rating Period: _____ to _____ **Rater:** _____

☐ Annual
 ☐ Step Increase
 ☐ Other: _____
☐ Probation: _____
 ☐ Probation Complete
 ☐ Outside Employment
 ☐ Yes ☐ No

General Performance	Below Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
	-	✓	+
1. Job Knowledge and Skill	☐	☐	☐
2. Productivity / Quality / Quantity	☐	☐	☐
3. Verbal Communication	☐	☐	☐
4. Written Communication	☐	☐	☐
5. Initiative and Independence	☐	☐	☐
6. Interpersonal Skills	☐	☐	☐
7. Judgment / Decision Making / Problem Solving	☐	☐	☐
8. Attendance / Conduct / Dependability	☐	☐	☐
9. Appearance and Equipment	☐	☐	☐
10. Core Values	☐	☐	☐
Supervisory / Managerial Performance	-	✓	+
11. Leadership and Discernment Skills	☐	☐	☐
12. Employee Development	☐	☐	☐
13. Planning and Organizational Skills	☐	☐	☐
14. Professional Work Environment	☐	☐	☐

SUPERVISOR: This report is based on my observation and/or knowledge as well as feedback from other supervisors and managers who have observed this employee or have specific knowledge about the employee's performance during the rating period. It represents my best judgment of the employee's performance.

Overall Performance Rating: ☐ Below Standards ☐ Meets Standards ☐ Exceeds Standards

Rating Supervisor: _____
Name and Title _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Supervisor Reviewing with Employee: _____
Name and Title _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Area Commander: _____
Name and Title _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Professional Standards Bureau Commander: _____
Name and Title _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Field Operations Division Commander: _____
Name and Title _____ Signature _____ Date _____

EMPLOYEE: This report has been discussed with me. I hereby acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to read this performance appraisal report and discuss its contents. I further acknowledge receipt of a copy of this report. My signature does not necessarily imply agreement with the findings of this report. I also understand that I may file a written response to this report or any portion thereof within thirty days of the date I received a copy of the report.

Employee: _____
Name and I.D. _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Driver's License Number: _____ Expiration: ____ / ____

CATEGORY RATING FOR EVALUATION PERIOD

1. JOB KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL

(- Below Standards, ✓ Meets Standards, + Exceeds Standards, n Not Applicable)

-	✓	+	n
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐

1. Maintains current working knowledge of, and appropriately applies industry standards, State and local laws, and Department policies and procedures.
2. Effectively applies all available information and/or other Department databases relevant to the job assignment.
3. Demonstrates awareness of officer/employee safety.
4. Attends and participates in Department training as required.
5. Readily applies and shares new knowledge and acquired skills to enhance job and/or team performance.
6. Maintains technical/tactical/perishable skills and is current on required qualifications relevant to his/her job assignment (EMD, CPR/First-aid, emergency driving, firearms, defensive tactics, CLETS training).

OVERALL RATING FOR JOB KNOWLEDGE/SKILL

☐ Below Standards	☐ Meets Standards	☐ Exceeds Standards
Significant improvement needed in basic skills and knowledge. Fails to maintain and apply basic knowledge and skills required for the job.	Displays proficient skills and knowledge required for the job. Maintains basic proficiency in perishable skills as required.	Consistently demonstrates excellent proficiency and is recognized as expert in the skills and knowledge required for the job. Independently applies acquired skills and knowledge in performance of job responsibilities.

COMMENTS:

2. PRODUCTIVITY/QUALITY/QUANTITY

(- Below, ✓ Meets, + Exceeds, n Not Applicable)

-	✓	+	n
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐

1. Maintains work/activity level that is consistent with team expectations and assignments.
2. Conducts thorough investigations and follow-up (e.g. assures appropriate crime scene preservation and processing).
3. Meets deadlines and schedules for assigned work; completes assignments as directed.
4. Manages and uses work time appropriately (e.g. completes reports and other paperwork in a timely manner, stays engaged in job related duties, does not waste time on the job, etc.).
5. Completes assignments with appropriate attention to detail and consistent with assignment/section expectations and addresses customer concerns.
6. Gathers information or intelligence from community members, field contacts, and/or research that assists with investigations, problem areas, and/or crime trends.

OVERALL RATING FOR PRODUCTIVITY/QUALITY/QUANTITY

☐ Below Standards	☐ Meets Standards	☐ Exceeds Standards
Frequently fails to complete acceptable volume of work within established deadlines and schedules. Requires constant rework due to errors and/or monitoring due to a consistently high volume of backlog. Makes frequent and repeated errors on routine tasks. Work productivity or quality is consistently unacceptable.	Regularly completes work with acceptable speed and accuracy. May sometimes require assistance from others. Work is completed by the established deadlines and schedules. Errors are within acceptable margins. Work productivity, quality, and volume meet expectations.	Consistently completes high volume of work, timely and accurately. Seldom requires direction or assistance from others. Highly self-motivated. Work is completed on or before deadlines. Work is productive, high quality, accurate, and thorough.

COMMENTS:

3. VERBAL COMMUNICATION

(= Below, ✓ Meets, + Exceeds, n Not Applicable)

-	✓	+	n	
☐	☐	☐	☐	1. Demonstrates effective interviewing, customer service and other verbal skills (e.g., elicits pertinent information from victims, witnesses, and/or suspects).
☐	☐	☐	☐	2. Demonstrates effective listening skills (e.g., is attentive in briefing, meetings, and during training; is appropriately patient with the public and co-workers; is able to recall critical information he/she is given, etc.).
☐	☐	☐	☐	3. Utilizes verbal and conflict-resolution skills to de-escalate volatile situations and maintain professional communication with difficult, angry, distraught and/or unreasonable people.
☐	☐	☐	☐	4. Radio transmissions are clear, concise, and appropriate.
☐	☐	☐	☐	5. Conveys job related information with co-workers, supervisors and specialty units to accomplish required work.
☐	☐	☐	☐	6. Directs others in high-stress situations as appropriate.

OVERALL RATING FOR VERBAL COMMUNICATION

☐ Below Standards	☐ Meets Standards	☐ Exceeds Standards
Unable or unwilling to convey or elicit verbal information in an effective manner. Regularly fails to keep supervisor informed and follow instructions. Demonstrates poor listening skills.	Verbal communication is conveyed effectively. Regularly keeps supervisor informed. Demonstrates attentive listening skills that occasionally requires follow-up.	Demonstrates excellent verbal communication skills. Proactive in keeping others well informed. Effective listening skills requiring little or no follow-up. Takes initiative to seek clarification or gather additional information when necessary.

COMMENTS:

4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

(= Below, ✓ Meets, + Exceeds, n Not Applicable)

-	✓	+	n	
☐	☐	☐	☐	1. Accurately and thoroughly completes Department forms.
☐	☐	☐	☐	2. Completes written communications that are accurate, clear, concise, and grammatically correct; contain relevant facts, are timely; and includes required information and/or the necessary elements of a crime. (e.g. memorandums, manual reports, CAD call narratives, press releases, etc.)
☐	☐	☐	☐	3. Uses electronic communication (e.g. email, texting/chat, MCT, data entry) in an appropriate manner as set forth by Department and County Policies.
☐	☐	☐	☐	4. Follows the report writing standard as set forth by Department policies and procedures.
☐	☐	☐	☐	5. Quality of work results in minimal complaints returned by the District Attorney's Office for additional follow-up or clarification.

OVERALL RATING FOR WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

☐ Below Standards	☐ Meets Standards	☐ Exceeds Standards
Unable or unwilling to present written information in an effective manner. Requires frequent feedback, clarification, and/or corrections.	Written communication is conveyed effectively. Demonstrates attentive writing skills that may occasionally require feedback, clarification, and/or corrections.	Written communication is consistently clear and concise. Corrections are rarely required. Takes initiative to seek clarification or gather additional information when necessary.

COMMENTS:

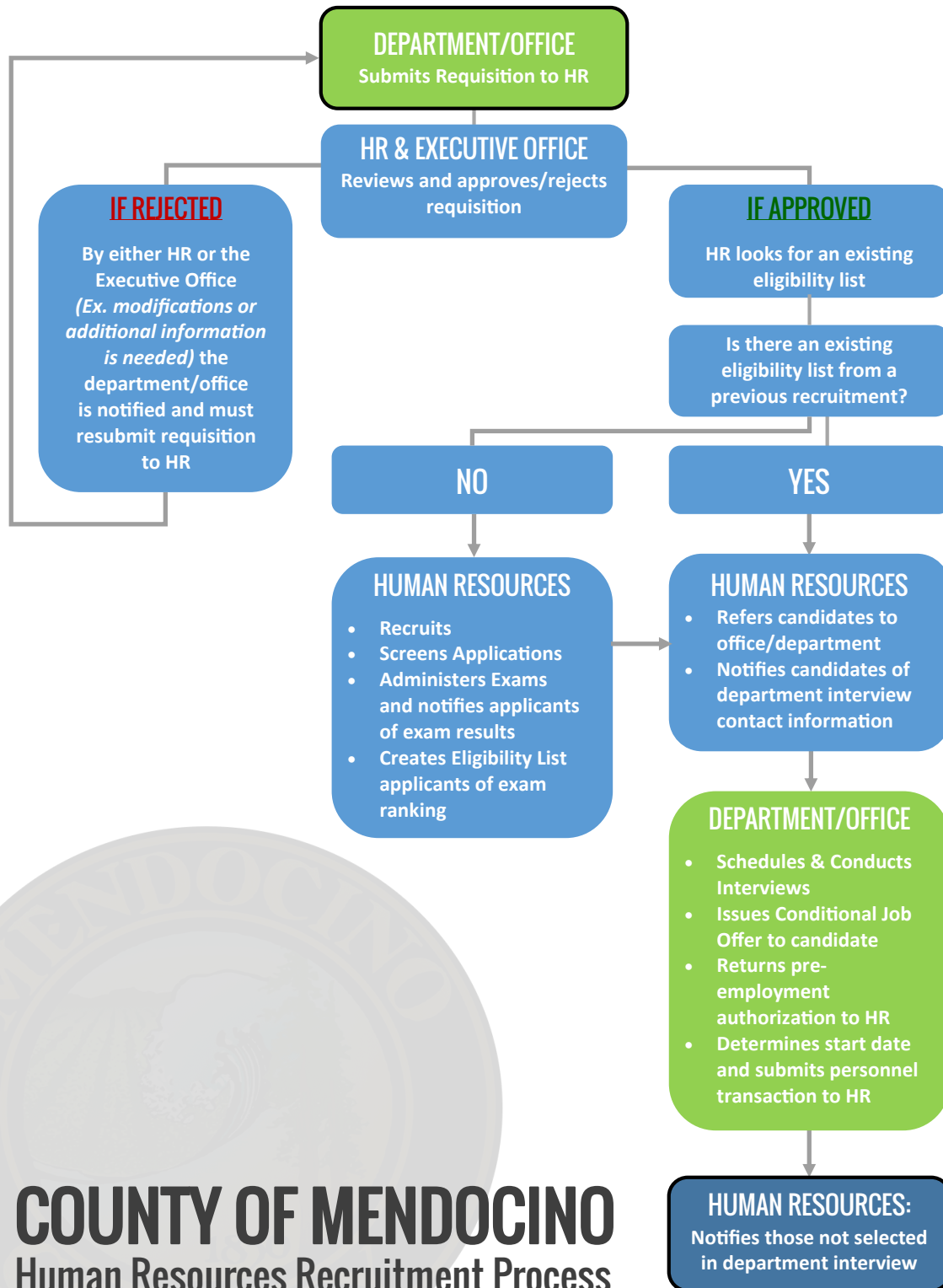
Appendix E

2022 Recruitment to Hire

Average time from close of recruitment to hire in 2022	This doesn't not include the time from when the position was requested by the department to when the recruitment was closed		
Time between Process Steps: <u>1-Referral Recruitment</u>	Recruitments	Calendar Days of Process	
Close of Recruitment -- Referral List sent to Department -- Hired	Count	Average	Median
Close of recruitment -- Referral list sent to department	88	16.1	14
Referral list received by department -- Hired	88	47.7	43
Close of recruitment -- Hired	88	63.9	56
Time between Process Steps: <u>Multiple-Referrals Recruitment</u>	Recruitments	Calendar Days of Process	
Close of Recruitment - Referral List sent to Department - Hired	Count	Average	Median
Close of recruitment -- Referral list sent to department	43	24.8	13
Referral list received by department -- Hired	248	70.8	46
Close of recruitment -- Hired	71	81.5	61
Difference between 1-Referral Recruitment and Multiple-Referral Recruitment: 1-referral recruitment occurs when HR opens a recruitment, a referral list is generated and sent to the department, and the department makes a selection from that referral list for hire. Multiple referrals occur when additional recruitment steps are needed to produce additional referral lists from the initial recruitment for the following reasons: the initial referral list does not produce qualified applicants, no qualifying applicants in the exam phase, the department doesn't make a selection from the initial referral list, or there are no applicants for the initial recruitment.			
Close of recruitment means: date at the end of the minimum 2-week open recruitment when collection of all applications for screening occurs. Start of HR processing of applications.			
Referral list sent to department means: date upon HR's completion of minimum qualifications screening and any exams required, resulting in the referral list sent to the department. Start of department process to interview and selection of candidate.			
Hired means: effective date of which the candidate starts employment with the County.			

Appendix F

Mendocino Recruitment Process



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO
Human Resources Recruitment Process

Appendix G

Relocation Support “Concierge” Position Details

Welcome and support new employees who are relocating to your area. Creating a welcoming environment and providing assistance during the transition can indeed contribute to their happiness and retention. Establishing a position like a "concierge" or relocation specialist can be a valuable resource for new employees. Here are some suggestions to help make the move easier and aid in their adjustment:

- **Housing Assistance:** Help new employees find suitable housing options within their budget. Provide them with information about local rental or real estate websites, affordable neighborhoods, and contacts for landlords or real estate agents. Help find rental options or potentially even set up partnerships with landlords.
- **Community Integration:** Introduce newcomers to community groups, clubs, or organizations that align with their interests or hobbies. This can help them build connections and feel more at home in the new area.
- **Childcare Support:** Provide information on local childcare centers, schools, and after-school programs, helping employees with children find suitable arrangements. The relocation specialist can offer guidance and recommendations based on their knowledge of the county.
- **Religious and Cultural Resources:** If employees have specific religious or cultural needs, the relocation specialist can assist in locating relevant places of worship, cultural events, or community groups that may be of interest.
- **Recreational and Special Interest Activities:** Help new employees discover recreational activities and special interest groups available in the area, such as art classes, sports clubs, or community centers. This will allow them to pursue their hobbies and interests while connecting with like-minded individuals.
- **Volunteer Opportunities:** Provide information on local community service organizations and volunteering opportunities. Encourage employees to engage in giving back to the community, which can foster a sense of belonging and purpose.
- **Ongoing Support for Existing Staff:** As the relocation specialist becomes established, expanding their role to support existing staff can enhance employee satisfaction and retention. This can involve organizing social events, networking opportunities, or wellness programs for the entire workforce.

By actively assisting employees in their transition and helping them connect with the community, you can increase their likelihood of staying long-term. Remember to track the impact of these initiatives on employee happiness, retention, and the associated cost savings to demonstrate the value of this position within the organization.

Appendix H

2022 Churn Rates by Department

2022 Churn/Turnover Rate by Department				Terminations are part of	
Showing only departments that had filled positions that were vacated				total vacated positions	
Department	Allocated	Vacated	Churn Rate	Terminations	Term Rate
AGRICULTURE	9	4	44.4%	4	44.4%
AIR QUALITY	10	5	50.0%	2	20.0%
ANIMAL CARE	18	4	22.2%	3	16.7%
ASSESSOR-CLERK RECORDER	30	12	40.0%	6	20.0%
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER-TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR	25	10	40.0%	4	16.0%
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RECOVERY SERVICES	93	32	34.4%	10	10.8%
CANNABIS PROGRAM	22	5	22.7%	0	0.0%
CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES	28	6	21.4%	3	10.7%
COUNTY COUNSEL	12	2	16.7%	2	16.7%
CULTURAL SERVICES AGENCY	38.5	7	18.2%	4	10.4%
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	102.8	30	29.2%	16	15.6%
DISTRICT ATTORNEY	54	18	33.3%	14	25.9%
EXECUTIVE OFFICE	56	17	30.4%	10	17.9%
GENERAL SERVICES	47.8	15	31.4%	9	18.8%
HUMAN RESOURCES	19	5	26.3%	4	21.1%
PLANNING AND BUILDING	59.5	15	25.2%	5	8.4%
PROBATION OFFICE	74	14	18.9%	9	12.2%
PUBLIC DEFENDER	27	12	44.4%	10	37.0%
PUBLIC HEALTH	115.8	20	17.3%	9	7.8%
RETIREMENT	6	4	66.7%	2	33.3%
SHERIFF CORONER	185	42	22.7%	26	14.1%
SOCIAL SERVICES	420	166	39.5%	64	15.2%
Note: Vacated positions include terminations, promotions, demotions, and transfers.					

Appendix I

Recruitment and Retention



Our Leadership Philosophy

In order to achieve effective leadership at all levels, and excellence in public service, we believe...

(1) Trust and integrity are essential.

(2) In departments working together as one organization.

(3) In employees being involved in key program and policy decisions that impact the organization.

(4) That investing in and supporting employee development results in the retention and promotion of quality employees.

(September 9, 2013)

COUNTY OF MENDOCINO EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Recruitment and Retention Project Charter

Date Created:	Date Last Revised:
---------------	--------------------

Project Name:
Recruitment and Retention Team

Description and Purpose:

The Mendocino County Recruitment and Retention Team is an HPO-based group that will provide recommendations to the Mendocino County Executive Leadership Team (MCELT) and will participate in, and champion, the implementation of improvements to Mendocino County's recruitment and retention-related processes and activities, including additional resiliency measures.

Project Background and Summary: *(Includes a brief description of what the project is all about, including some of the significant history that contributes to it being scheduled and approved.)*

This group is comprised of members from the Executive Office/Risk Management, HHSA, Human Resources, Library, Office of the Public Defender, and Transportation. The goal of this team is to review the County's recruitment and hiring process (including promotions), evaluate its effectiveness and efficiency, and make recommendations for improvement. It is expected that recommended improvements would result in attracting and keeping qualified employees who want to contribute to their community and its residents.

The County of Mendocino is comprised of approximately 1115 employees and is the largest employer in the county. The current recruitment process takes 24.5 days, on average. The time between generation of an eligibility list and hire varies. As of 2016, Mendocino County had a turnover rate of 14.71%, which is the highest of the eight designated comparison counties. The rate of resignations has been steadily rising, jumping from 69 in 2011 to 125 in 2016.

Provide Examples of Project Goals and Objectives: *(Includes a brief description of specific accomplishments sought by the project.)*

- Improve candidate pool.
- Reduce the length of the hiring process.
- Increase the retention of excellent employees.
- Increase current employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide them with opportunities to promote.
- Work directly with other County project teams.
- Support County departments/offices and leadership teams working on:
 1. Communicating the value of benefits;
 2. Panel participant training;
 3. Branding the County/improving the County's image; and,
 4. Employee engagement and morale.

Provide Examples of Project Deliverables: *(Includes a brief description of the new services, work processes, equipment, or other aspects that are expected from the project. Remember that "deliverables" are objects or things, not actions. Also, number each deliverable to allow easier reference. This would include the decommissioning of any existing services or equipment.)*

By June 30, 2018, the team will make a detailed review of the County's recruitment and hiring process, including class specifications, advertising, acceptance of applications, and selection of appropriate candidates. The team will seek to distinguish impacts resulting from the recent fire disaster. Further, the team will work with liaisons from all County departments/offices to identify areas that could be improved and streamlined with the goal of developing a written plan to improve our recruitment and hiring process.

By June 30, 2019, the team will attempt to identify factors that contribute to employee retention (*Why do they stay?* vs. *Why do they leave?*), and generate recommendations for retention improvement.

Other potential deliverables may include a mechanism for feedback between all involved in the recruitment, hiring, and retention process. Additionally, the team may work with Human Resources in training for phase three of the compensation study currently in process.

Key Assumptions/Constraints: *(Includes a brief description of any assumptions important to the project's success, and any constraints that must be accommodated in the project's planning and execution.)*

- Increased compensation will increase retention.
- Reduction of time in recruitment and hiring process will improve recruitment.
- People are more likely to want to work for a company that treats employees well.

Anticipated Needs and Impacts: *(Includes any future, ongoing costs and impacts associated with the implementation or completion of this project. Examples might include server maintenance and replacement, application maintenance contracts, access to ISD servers by vendors, user maintenance of application tables, etc. Please list all items even if a cost estimate is not possible.)*

The team will explore the potential need for an outside consultant to aid in the assessment of the current recruitment and hiring process.

Risks:

- Lack of follow-through from project team members.
- Lack of department/office buy-in or participation.
- Possibility of biased data due to factors such as poorly formed survey questions, etc.

Success and Completion Criteria: *(Includes a brief description of the criteria that will be used to determine when the project is completed.)*

The Recruitment and Retention Team will be successful once all deliverables in this charter have been completed.

County Comparisons

General County 2021 info: (*2)

Population	89,999	62,147	482,404	221,165	67,407	135,168	101,242
Population density (per sq mile)	23.2		272.9	74.7	50.7	33.4	103.9
Number county employees	1,414	950	5,361	2,056	1,122	2561	1029
Total county wages	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####	#####
Average employee wage	\$60,357.86	\$41,715.04	\$75,720.46	\$67,963.99	\$45,342.59	\$51,095.52	\$64,649,288.39
Total county benefits (health & retirement) °	44,945.495	16,176.415	132,842.909	23,111.247	13,556.336	28,981.218	30,939.4111
Average employee benefits value °	31,786	17,028	24,780	11,241	12,084	11,316	30,067

Number of houses available estimate 2022 (*)
Availability (# of unit available per 1000 population)

Number of houses available estimate 2022 (*)3	5312	2435	17,306	3637	6968	6197	11743
Availability # of unit available per 1000 population)	59	39	36	16	103	46	116
Federal or state-subsidised affordable housing units per 1000 population	16	17	18	20	17	12	17
Median house price Q3 2022. (*)	\$465,737	\$302,685	\$797,367	\$590,898	\$325,883	\$415,678	\$638,557
County housing vacancy estimate (%) 2022 (*)3	12.8	8.9	8.4	4.4	20.3	9.9	21.7
County Seat vacancy estimate (%) 2022 (*)3	5.7	5.6	5.1	3.1	11.9	7.2	9.8

Staffing data: from the HR Departments of each county (if the county didn't respond, or their data was measured in a significantly different manner than Mendocino, the field is left blank)

Churn/employee turnover %	30.6% in 2022		11.9% last fiscal year, 8.9% this fiscal			13%
Current % Vacancy	28%	28%	12%	17%		9%
% new HR Directors in the last 25 years (unless stated otherwise)	10 with 15 interim	7 with 3 interim	5			5 in 20 years

Average time from job posting response to hire

decentralized recruitment. Dpts in the Reduced Time to Hire program	73-80 days	54 days
90 days	32 days	

Salary (*2): highest listed employee

HR Director Salary 2021	\$146,901.00	contract	\$225,123.00	\$216,961.00	\$113,481.00	\$115,307.00	\$210,257.00
CEO/CAO Salary 2021	\$248,500.00	\$167,353.00	\$314,037.00	\$306,021.00	\$207,890.00	\$224,645.00	\$293,788.00
Eligibility Specialist II Salary 2021	\$60,501.00	\$35,936.00	\$63,344.09		\$56,435.72	\$53,331.20	
Senior Planner Salary 2021	\$95,645.00	none listed	\$117,159.00	\$104,185.00	none	\$99,111.00	\$89,305.00
IT Director 2021	\$109,398.00		\$223,756.00	\$204,021.00	\$136,465.00	\$122,630.00	\$239,118.00

Benefits Value (*2): highest listed employee

HR Director Benefits 2021	\$60,270.00	contract	\$73,549.00	\$13,134.00	\$22,542.00	\$19,728.00	\$48,395.00
CEO/CAO Benefits 2021	\$106,008.00	\$35,993.00	\$104,344.00	\$26,800.00	\$31,062.00	\$30,384.00	\$115,649.00
Eligibility Specialist II Benefits 2021	\$41,300.00						
Senior Planner Benefits 2021	\$59,289.00						\$51,642.00
IT Director 2021	\$46,341.00						

* These counties add payments toward the unfunded liability of the employer sponsored retirement plan to their benefit numbers.

Sources:

[*1 - Realtor.com](http://www.1-Realtor.com)

*2 - State of CA <https://publicpay.ca.gov>

*3 - State of CA

Appendix K

Harassment and Discrimination



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING A HARASSMENT or DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT

HARASSMENT

Pursuant to Policy #23, it is the policy of the County of Mendocino to provide for a work environment free from unwelcome sexual behavior and overtures. This policy applies to all employees, including permanent, probationary, part-time, and temporary employees. This policy also applies to all volunteers. Sexual harassment is an unlawful employment practice prohibited by state and federal law and is an unacceptable work behavior that will not be tolerated by the County.

In order to prevent sexual harassment, management and supervisory employees are responsible for, among other things, informing employees of the County policy and complaint procedure, and reporting all complaints of sexual harassment to the Departmental Management and the Human Resources Department for investigation.

Acts of sexual harassment should, if possible, be reported first to the supervisor or manager. However, it is sometimes more comfortable for the complainant to talk directly with the Human Resources Director or Human Resources staff. Any one who would prefer to contact Human Resources rather than his/her supervisor is encouraged to do so.

It is the responsibility of the County of Mendocino to take appropriate disciplinary action if the findings of the investigation indicate sexual harassment has occurred.

DISCRIMINATION

Pursuant to Policy #10, the County of Mendocino is an equal opportunity employer. It is the stated policy of the County of Mendocino that all employees and applicants shall receive equal consideration and treatment in employment without regard to race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, marital status, medical condition, disability, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local law. All such discrimination is unlawful.

If you believe you have been subjected to any form of unlawful discrimination, provide a written complaint to the Director of Human Resources as soon as possible. Your complaint should be specific and should include name(s) of individual(s) involved and the name(s) of any witnesses. The County will take immediate action to make an effective, thorough and objective investigation and attempt to resolve the situation.

If it is determined that unlawful discrimination has occurred, effective remedial action will be taken, commensurate with the severity of the offense. The action taken by the County to remedy the situation will be made known to you.

NON-RETALIATION

The County will not retaliate nor permit retaliation against you for filing a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination.

The complaint form may be obtained upon request from your supervisor or the County Human Resources Department at 501 Low Gap Road, Room 1326, Ukiah, CA 95482, (707) 234-6600.