

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – AUDIT SERVICES DIVISION REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit Report Title: Minding the Gap: Employee Friendly County Policies Did Not Entirely Stem the Loss of Women of Color During Covid-19 and Will Require Efforts by the County to Achieve its Goal of Racial Equity

File Number: 22-797
Status Report Date: December 2022

Audit Issued: June 2022
Department: Department of Human Resources

Open Recommendations

Recommendation #1	
<p>Recommendation - June 2022 DHR review all information available, including those contained in personnel files, exit interviews, and follow-up with direct supervisors to understand why these employees voluntarily separated and come back with a report on the results of this review and targeted retention strategies. DHR should report back to the County Board within one year with results and recommendations on how to increase retention of women of color.</p>	
<p>Deadlines Established Y/N? No</p>	
Date	Management Comments:
<p>Current - December 2022</p>	<p>The Department of Human Resources (DHR) continues to work to ensure all current and future employees feel a sense of inclusion during their tenure at Milwaukee County. DHR continues to work diligently to understand the root cause of employee turnover to increase employee retention. On October 18, 2022, the most inclusive all-employee engagement survey was deployed across Milwaukee County. DHR will systematically review and analyze the 2022 employee engagement survey data, along with data from exit interviews, stay surveys, etc., to help develop targeted strategies to improve the employee experience and to help County’s ability to retain all employees, including woman of color.</p>
<p>Audit response – June 2022</p>	<p>Department of Human Resources (DHR) is committed to partnering with Milwaukee County leaders to make Milwaukee County an “employer of choice” for all current and future employees. By identifying the key drivers of employee retention and the root causes of employee turnover, DHR can recommend the appropriate strategies and tactics to help promote and create a culture of engagement and inclusion for all employees. A variety of tools are used to identify these key drivers and root causes including all employee engagement surveys, employee focus groups, stay surveys, and the systematic review and analysis of other data like separation, absenteeism, and exit interview data, among others. Systematically analyzing employee engagement and inclusion related data will improve DHR’s ability to improve the retention of women of color and contribute to making Milwaukee County an employer of choice for all employees.</p>

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Recommendation #2	
Recommendation – June 2022	
DHR should work with the Office of Corporation Counsel to craft a plan to contact impacted County employees who have unknown listed as their race/ethnicity to request that they update the data. DHR should report back with an updated report on 2021 hiring data as soon as practicable but no later than within one year.	
Deadlines Established Y/N? No	
Date	Management Comments:
Current - December 2022	The Department of Human Resources (DHR) remains committed to encouraging all employees to self-identify and to voluntarily update their confidential demographic information in Dayforce. As previously reported, individual outreach to current employees who have “unknown” listed for their race/ethnicity will not occur as this information is voluntary and employees can decline to answer. As such, DHR is committed to ensuring employees have information regarding the importance of why Milwaukee County collects race/ethnicity information. To help employees understand the collection of this data, DHR will deploy several communications encouraging employees to update and ensure accuracy of all demographic information, including race/ethnicity. DHR is also working internally to update the applicant process to ensure race/ethnicity are required fields that can’t be left blank. If an employee opts out of providing their demographic information, the option will default to “decline to answer” as opposed to being left blank. DHR should finalize this process within the next few months.
Audit response – June 2022	DHR is committed to encouraging employees to self-identify and to voluntarily update their confidential demographic information in Dayforce. Significant steps have already been taken to reduce the number of employees classified as “unknown” including a video from the County Executive encouraging employees to update their information and other messaging. DHR will continue to support communication and marketing campaigns encouraging employees to provide their demographic information. Critical to the success of this effort is also helping employees understand the importance of collecting this demographic data. DHR and all County leaders must work to create an environment of trust where employees feel comfortable providing this information. DHR will work to communicate how self-identification and collecting demographic information are aligned with the mission and vision of Milwaukee County.

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Recommendation #3	
Recommendation - June 2022 DHR should review employee testimonial excerpts contained in the audit and evaluate whether the proposals could be implemented and studied further and report back to the County Board in six months with the results of the review.	
Deadlines Established Y/N? No	
Date	Management Comments:
Current - December 2022	The Department of Human Resources (DHR) deployed the most inclusive all employee engagement survey in October 2022. Gathering the voice of Milwaukee County employees will be critical as we enhance the employee experience for current employees and for future changemakers. Action Planning, based on survey feedback, will begin once the survey data is analyzed. DHR will continue to analyze all employee data and feedback, including feedback/testimonials captured in this report, to help identify activities that will positively impact employee engagement and retention.
Audit response – June 2022	Gathering “voice of the employee” feedback is critical to identifying actionable process improvement ideas and to ensure employees feel that their concerns are being heard. DHR is committed to further analyzing the voice of the employee themes identified in this audit and to identifying any potential actions to help improve retention of all employees.

Recommendation #4	
Recommendation – June 2022 DHR should pull together a pandemic lessons learned from the last two years and issue a guide for future actions including a review of communication of policies to managers and staff.	
Deadlines Established Y/N? No	
Date	Management Comments:
Current - December 2022	The Department of Human Resources (DHR), along with other departments, will continue monitoring the risk of Covid-19, and other related pandemics, and how to best respond relative to the workforce. Systematically analyzing these lessons learned may better inform the County’s ongoing response to the pandemic and identify a more effective response to similar challenges in the future. This work will continue into 2023.
Audit response – June 2022	DHR will partner with leaders from throughout the County to conduct a hindsight review of the steps taken since March 2020 to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 to Milwaukee County employees and the people they serve. This wide-ranging review will include a review of various employee related communications, policies, and

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	procedures. Systematically analyzing these lessons learned may better inform the County’s ongoing response to the pandemic and identify a more effective response to similar challenges in the future.
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Newly Closed Recommendations

None

Closed Recommendations

None