



Department of Employee Relations

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June 29, 2017

To the Honorable
Milele Coggs, Chair of the
Committee on Finance and Personnel
Common Council-City Clerk
Room 205, City Hall
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Re: CC File #170400 Communication from the DER regarding separations and plans to address turnover rates and vacancies in the City service.

Dear Chairwoman Coggs and Finance and Personnel Committee Members,

Over the last several months, the Department of Employee Relations has been collecting, reviewing, and analyzing separation data along with requisitions for examinations to fill general city vacancies in an effort to develop and implement strategies and programs to address the City's workforce staffing challenges. A review of this data reveals that in 2016 nearly 1 in 11 general city employees left their position through resignation or retirement. This rate is a significant increase from 2012, when nearly 1 in 23 workers separated from employment.

The challenges associated with the increase in separation rates and the difficulty recruiting for certain critical positions are not unique to the City of Milwaukee. With the economy growing and the availability of private sector jobs, job applicants and current employees have options. Higher paying jobs, better promotional or career development opportunities, signing bonuses at time of hire, flexible schedules, and strong work/life balance policies lure applicants and employees to other organizations.

This purpose of this communication is to make you aware of the initiatives that the DER is working on to:

- Identify and better anticipate departmental staffing needs stemming from high rates of resignations and retirements;
- Streamline recruitment, examination, and placement processes to expedite the filling of vacancies;
- Identify difficult to recruit for classifications and work with departments to develop and implement targeted recruitment, retention, and succession plans.

This report summarizes data used in conducting this analysis. The report also summarizes specific intervention strategies that will be used to address the challenges. Specific information provided includes:

- Separations in the City Service 2010- 2016 (Resignations and Retirements)
- Service Retirement Projections for 2017 and 2020
- Recruitment Challenges and Opportunities

- Workforce Planning Initiative
- Other Related Initiatives- Exit Interviews and Alternative Work Arrangements

Separations in the City Service

Resignations

The number of resignations in the city service in 2016 was 149. This represents an increase of 9% over the number of resignations in 2015. Over the last three year period (2014-2016), the average number of resignations in the city service is 134. The average number of resignations over the previous three year period (2011 – 2013) was 70. The rate at which general city employees are resigning their position has consequently doubled in a six year period.

Resignations	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Grand Total	37	57	70	84	116	137	149

Only includes full time, regular appts.

The number of resignations by departments since 2010 is presented below. Significant areas that deserve attention are highlighted.

Resignations by Dept	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
ASSESSOR'S OFFICE				1	2	1	1
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS				1			2
CITY ATTORNEY	1	3		2	1	3	1
CITY TREASURER			2				1
COMMON COUNCIL - CITY CLERK	1	2	2	5	3	1	7
COMPTROLLER				1	2		2
DCD	2	2	1	3		4	2
DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN							1
DEPT OF NEIGHBORHOOD SRVCS	2		5	6	8	18	7
DER				1	2	2	1
DOA	2	1	1	1	2	4	5
DOA-ITMD			2	3	1	2	5
DPW-ADMIN	1		1	1			1
DPW-INFRA	5	9	6	6	8	15	15
DPW-OPS	2	6	10	11	26	33	38
DPW-PARKING	3	1	10	6	5	13	4
DPW-SEWER	1	1	4	3	3	2	2
DPW-WATER	1	5	5	3	12	10	11
ELECTION COMMISSION							1
EMPLOYEE'S RETIREMENT SYSTEM		1		1			1
FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION		1		1		1	1
HEALTH DEPARTMENT	14	19	15	15	21	15	26
Library	1	6	5	11	15	13	9
MUNICIPAL COURT	1				4		3
PORT OF MILWAUKEE			1	2	1		2

The following observations are worth noting:

- **DNS** with 18 resignations in 2015 – 6 of those resignations were from the Building Construction Inspectors, 5 were from Commercial and Residential Inspectors, and 2 were from Elevator Inspectors. These resignations reflect improved conditions in the construction industry and the availability of jobs given development projects in the City.
- **DPW Infrastructure** with a significant increase in resignations in 2015 and 2016 – the classifications with the highest number of resignations during that two year period include: City Laborers (8), Drafting Techs/Engineering Techs (6), Electrical Mechanics (3), Civil Engineers (3), and Public Works Inspectors (3).
- **DPW Operations** with a significant increase in resignations from 2015 - 2016 – the classifications with the highest number of resignations during that two year period include: Operations Driver Workers (30), Urban Forestry Specialists (10), City Laborers (6).
- **DPW- Parking** with a significant number of resignations in 2015 – 10 Parking Enforcement Officers.
- **MHD** with a significant number of resignations in 2016 (26) – 10 of the resignations were from Public Health Nurses and 3 were from Clinic Assistants.

A further review of the demographics by age and length of service is presented below:

GC Resignations by Age Range	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	4 Year Avg	% of City Workforce
Age Range 18-35/Millennials	18	26	28	36	56	45	58	49	18%
<i>% of total</i>	49%	46%	40%	43%	48%	33%	39%	40%	
Age Range 36-50/Generation X	15	21	32	41	41	69	65	54	45%
<i>% of total</i>	41%	37%	46%	49%	35%	50%	44%	44%	
Age Range 51-70/Baby Boomers	4	10	10	7	19	23	25	19	35%
<i>% of total</i>	11%	18%	14%	8%	16%	17%	17%	15%	
Age Range 71+/Traditionalists							1	2	1%
Grand Total	37	57	70	84	116	137	149	122	

Per the data presented above, 58 or 40% of the 149 resignations in 2016 were resignations from millennials. Over the course of the last seven years millennials have consistently represented a significant portion of the resignations even though they only represent 18% of the City's general city workforce. In addition, the table below demonstrates that 81% of the separations occur within the first five years of employment.

GC Resignations by Length of Service	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	4 Year Avg
0-5 Years	32	46	63	69	93	115	121	100
<i>% of total</i>	86%	81%	90%	82%	80%	84%	81%	82%
6-10 Years	4	10	4	10	14	17	15	14
<i>% of total</i>	11%	18%	6%	12%	12%	12%	10%	12%
11-15 Years			2	4	7	4	11	7
<i>% of total</i>	0%	0%	3%	5%	6%	3%	7%	5%
16-20 Years	1		1	1	1		2	1
<i>% of total</i>	3%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
20+ Years		1			1	1		1
Grand Total	37	57	70	84	116	137	149	122

Service Retirements 2010 – 2017

The number of general city service retirements in 2016 was 144. This represents an increase of 18% when compared to the number of service retirements in 2015.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Grand Total	292	146	77	107	117	122	144
			39%	9%	4%	18%	% Change

The chart below summarizes the number of service retirements by departments since 2010.

GC Retirements	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
ASSESSOR'S OFFICE	6	3	1	2	2	4	3	
CITY ATTORNEY	5		1	2	2	5	3	
CITY TREASURER	3	4		1		1		
COMMON COUNCIL - CITY CLERK	3	1	2		1	6	3	
COMPTROLLER	2	6	2	1	2	5	2	
DCD	23	4	3	8	8	11	5	
DEPT OF NEIGHBORHOOD SRVCS	16	8	5	5	6	3	10	
DER	6	4	2		2	2	3	
DOA	1	3	2	2	2		3	
DOA-ITMD	3	3	2	3	2	4	1	
DPW-ADMIN	4	5	2	2		1	2	
DPW-INFRA	60	26	14	35	16	24	29	
DPW-OPS	47	30	12	13	33	14	30	
DPW-PARKING	12	3	4	3	3	2	4	3
DPW-SEWER	10	3	2	3	3	3		3
DPW-WATER	31	18	9	8	20	16	12	14
ELECTION COMMISSION						1		1
EMPLOYEE'S RETIREMENT SYSTEM	3	2			1	2	2	2
FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION					1			1
HEALTH DEPARTMENT	16	8	3	11	6	7	13	9
Library	31	11	7	8	6	9	14	9
MAYOR		2						0
MUNICIPAL COURT	8		3			1	4	3
PORT OF MILWAUKEE	2	2	1		1	1	1	1

Service Retirement Projections

Data from the Employees Retirement System indicates that a total of 594 general city employees will be eligible for service retirement this year. That represents approximately 18% of the workforce. In 2020, an additional 356 employees will become eligible for service retirement, representing approximately 29% of the workforce. In some departments, such as Comptroller, Assessor and certain divisions of the Department of Public Works, this percentage is even higher. Accordingly, many of our valued, experienced employees with substantial institutional knowledge may leave the organization within the next few years; adjusting to this loss of expertise is going to require substantial planning and allocation of resources.

The table below summarizes service retirement eligibility by department.

SR by Department	Elig 2017	As % of Current FTE	Elig 2020	2020 as % of Current FTE
ASSESSOR'S OFFICE	14	29%	15	31%
CCCC	21	22%	31	33%
CITY ATTORNEY	14	23%	20	33%
CITY TREASURER	4	14%	6	21%
COMPTROLLER	18	31%	24	41%
DCD	24	23%	36	35%
DEFERRED COMP	0	0%	1	50%
DER	10	21%	13	27%
DNS	51	19%	72	27%
DOA	8	12%	14	21%
DOA - INFO & TECH MGT DIV	10	13%	13	16%
DPW-ADMIN	11	24%	17	37%
DPW-INFRA	120	20%	190	31%
DPW-OPS	105	14%	188	26%
DPW-PARKING	15	13%	32	27%
DPW-SEWER	12	10%	18	16%
DPW-WATER	51	14%	96	26%
ELECTION COMMISSION	3	38%	10	125%
ERS	10	23%	14	33%
FIRE AND POLICE COMM	3	21%	3	21%
MAYOR	2	15%	3	23%
MHD	37	15%	59	24%
MPL	43	14%	63	21%
MUNICIPAL COURT	5	15%	6	18%
PORT OF MILWAUKEE	3	15%	6	30%
Grand Total	594		950	

The departments with a significant number of employees who will reach service retirement eligibility requirements are highlighted in red and blue. Anticipating separations in relation to meeting service eligibility requirements will be critical for departments already experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties as a result of resignations.

Recruitment Challenges and Opportunities

Attached to this report is data related to open and competitive recruitments performed from 2012 to the present for Group A (non-management, administrative support and the trades) Group B (professional and managerial) and Career Ladder (nursing, inspection, property appraiser) positions. The recruitment data chart for each group lists titles for which the DER has either performed multiple recruitments within the past five years and/or the eligible lists from those recruitments have yielded seven or fewer qualified candidates. The positions that are considered “high risk” are those for which there have been three or more outside recruitments performed during the past five years **and** at least one of those recruitments yielded seven or fewer qualified candidates.

The positions that meet both criteria and have required the largest number of recruitments during the past five years include:

TITLE	# OF SELECTION PROCESSES 2012-2017	YEAR(S) OF RECRUITMENTS THAT YIELDED 7 OR FEWER CANDIDATES	JOB GROUP
PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE	14	2012, 2015, 2016, 2017	CAREER LADDER
ENGINEERING DRAFTING TECHNICIAN I	7	2015, 2016, 2017	GROUP A
ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN I	6	2015, 2016, 2017	GROUP A
MUNICIPAL SERVICES ELECTRICIAN	6	2016, 2017	GROUP A
CIVIL ENGINEER I/II	6	2013	GROUP B
VEHICLE SERVICES TECHNICIAN I	5	2015	GROUP A
ELEVATOR INSPECTOR	5	2015, 2016, 2017	CAREER LADDER
WATER REPAIR WORKER	5	2016	GROUP A
ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN IV	4	2015, 2016	GROUP A
MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN II	4	2014, 2015, 2016, 2017	GROUP A
HEALTH PROJECT ASSISTANT	4	2016	GROUP A
URBAN FORESTRY MANAGER	4	2014, 2016	GROUP B
IT SUPPORT SPECIALIST – SR.	4	2016	GROUP B
PROPERTY APPRAISER	4	2012	CAREER LADDER

An analysis of recruitment related to all three job groups indicates the following:

- While the positions listed in the chart above represent those that have required the largest number of recruitments during the past five years, most of the positions for which eligible lists yield seven or fewer candidates are in Group B and are in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) areas. The broad job classifications in these areas include accounting, engineering, information technology and public health. Recruiting individuals in the trades, particularly Municipal Electricians, is a current challenge, given the boom in construction in the metropolitan area.
- The number of selection processes that yielded seven or fewer candidates increased significantly from 2102–2016: of significance, this number increased from 0 to 9 for Group A and from 4 to 24 for Group B. In the aggregate, it has become increasingly difficult to recruit a robust number of candidates for those positions. This represents a new paradigm for the Staffing Division, as our recruitments traditionally yielded a large number of qualified candidates, thus requiring fewer recruitments per title as the eligible lists were utilized multiple times.
- The number of “at risk” positions overall (i.e. three or more recruitments since 2012 and at least one of those recruitments yielded seven or fewer candidates) is 25; there are 11 in Group A, 10 in Group B and four amongst the career ladder positions.
- The examination workload has increased in recent years. In 2016, the Staffing Division performed 84 open and competitive examinations; 97 are in process or have been

completed to date in 2017. Additionally, the frequency with which examinations are being held for certain titles (e.g. Municipal Electrician, Auditor, Public Health Nurse, Vehicle Services Technician, entry-level professional and paraprofessional engineering positions) has increased, representative of the fact that there are more separations, more employees who are retirement eligible and fewer candidates on each eligible list.

The goal of the Staffing Division is to better prepare customer departments to anticipate vacancies rather than react to them once they occur. To this end, staffing analysts are working with departments to identify strategies to address positions that pose recruitment challenge or for which vacancies are expected. Examples of proactive steps the DER is taking with departments in order to address these issues include:

- Posting positions for which there are recurring vacancies on a continuous basis and testing periodically throughout the year to ensure an eligible list is available at all times. Examples of titles for which is or will be applied include Engineering Technician I and II, Engineering Drafting Technician I and II, Civil Engineer I and II, Public Health Nurse, Library Branch Manager, Municipal Electrician and City Laborer.
- Aligning the recruitment schedule with the job selection timeframe for college seniors in order to ensure that the City is competitive with other employers for top graduates in areas such as nursing, engineering and accounting.
- Enlisting hiring managers to serve on Civil Service structured interview panels, as appropriate, to create efficiencies between the Civil Service process and departmental interviewing. This also makes the selection process more timely and user-friendly for the candidates.
- Engaging with community-based organizations, such as the Milwaukee Urban League, to establish partnerships to ensure that Milwaukee residents view the City of Milwaukee as a potential employer and are prepared to apply for City jobs.
- Promoting the use of the Auxiliary Resource Program to encourage departments to anticipate vacancies and to overlap a new incumbent with a separating employee to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and expertise.
- Developing connections with Milwaukee high schools for job shadowing opportunities and to develop a recruitment presence, particularly for the engineering technician series.
- Developing and maintaining a consistent presence at Milwaukee's technical colleges and universities for the purpose of recruiting candidates and educating staff and students regarding careers with the City of Milwaukee.
- Establishing meaningful high school, college and graduate internships as well as trainee or underfill opportunities in departments. Examples of where this is currently in place including the Code Enforcement Intern program (DNS), the Management Trainee program (various departments, funded in the DER), Electrical Mechanic Apprentice (Infrastructure – Electrical Services) and the Trainee program in the Forestry Division.

The recent appointment of our Diversity Recruiter will assist immeasurably in developing and maintaining a strong community presence for the DER as well as in recruiting interns and recent

graduates from our local colleges and universities, particularly for our STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) positions.

Workforce Planning Initiative

Recognizing the data regarding separations, retirement eligibility and recruitment, the DER Staffing Division is working with departments to facilitate effective planning in anticipation of staffing needs. This Workforce Development Planning is being performed pursuant to Wisconsin State Statutes 63.18- 63.53, which direct that hiring for general City employment is performed under a Civil Service hiring process and under the authority of the Rules of the City Service Commission.

In general this means that employee selection is performed in an open and competitive manner and selection processes (e.g. structured interviews, evaluations of training and experience, performance exams and written exams) are based upon job analysis, which identifies the most critical tasks and knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform the job.

Job analysis is also utilized to establish minimum educational and experience requirements for general City positions, meaning the requirements are fair and based upon what is required at time of entry into the position. Civil Service selection processes are performed in a standardized manner, which removes bias to the greatest extent possible. This is accomplished by using diverse interview panels and by ensuring that every candidate is assessed consistently and fairly, according to standards established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection.

The letter and spirit of the City Service Commission's Rules are consistent with the Staffing Division's Workforce Planning Initiative, in that Rule V (Examinations and Recruitment) states:

“DER shall recruit and hold examinations for positions in the city services that will best meet or anticipate the needs of the services and take into consideration equal employment opportunity, staff development patterns, availability of qualified persons employed by the city or employing unit and effect upon employee morale of turnover, designated promotional patterns in the class series, availability of trained people in the labor market, value of bringing new personnel into the service, ...and the efficiency in conducting recruitment program and examinations, including provision, when necessary, for continuous recruitment and examination...It is the policy of the City Service to fill positions efficiently, with the best qualified available persons and to promote a career service which will make the greatest possible use of each employee's ability and knowledge.”

Accordingly, Staffing Analysts will work with customer departments to identify efficiencies in selection process and to recruit on a continuous basis for positions with many incumbents that are also difficult to fill.

Workforce Planning Process

The focus of the Workforce Development Planning will be upon retention, succession planning for difficult to fill, high-level positions and innovative and timely recruitment strategies. Each department will be provided with data to develop a Workforce Development Plan, tailored to the department's staffing needs. Examining this information will enable the Staffing Division and hiring managers to determine which positions are most frequently vacated as well as to identify staffing “hot spots:” difficult to fill positions and those positions that would create instability within the organization if vacated without a succession plan in place. Staffing Representatives will work with

their customer departments to perform the analysis and implementation of the five parts of the Workforce Development Plan, which include:

Part I: Strategic Direction and Operational Challenges. Departments will analyze anticipated changes in mission, budget and regulations that will impact staffing levels and will identify the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) needed in order to meet the needs of the department in the next five years.

Part II: Identify Workforce Planning Targets. Using data provided by the DER, the department will identify up to five titles that present a recruitment challenge as well specialized and stand-alone positions that require succession planning in order to prevent disruption to services should the position be vacated without notice.

Part III: Mitigation Strategies. The DER and the department will consider multiple strategies for retention, succession planning and recruitment.

Part IV: Action Plan. Taking into consideration future workforce needs, separation data, recruitment data and potential mitigation strategies, the department will identify and implement up to five concrete strategies related to retention, succession planning and recruitment to ensure that future workforce needs are addressed. Examples may include conducting stay interviews, utilizing local colleges and universities to provide training and development for staff and creating connections with community organizations and academic institutions to recruit candidates prior to positions being vacated.

Beginning this month, the Staffing Division will schedule meetings with personnel officers and departmental managers in order to obtain feedback on this and other staff-related processes. Workforce planning meetings with the individual departments will commence in late July and will be held throughout the summer, with the goal of implementing the plan action steps in late 2017 and early 2018. The DER staff is already working with customer departments, such as DPW-Infrastructure, on tailored Workforce Planning Initiatives. Examples of proactive steps the DER is taking with departments as part of workforce planning include:

- Encouraging the use of the Auxiliary Resource Program for knowledge transfer between a current and new incumbent;
- Developing succession plans for difficult to fill and critical positions;
- Identifying the gaps between current skills within the workforce and those that will be needed in the future and identifying a plan to address them;
- Evaluating and promoting reasonable opportunities for alternative work arrangements, such as flexible schedules and job-sharing, to enable employees to balance work and personal responsibilities.

Alternative Work Arrangements

A survey of State and Local Governments conducted by the Center for State and Local Government Excellence published in June of this year identifies recruitment and retention as one of the highest priorities of employers (91% of responders). This survey reflects the responses of 283 members of International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA-HR) and the National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE).

The survey findings include information regarding trends in hiring practices, changes in compensation, areas of recruitment difficulty, and changes in healthcare and pension benefits. According to the survey 56% of the jurisdictions responding to the survey indicated that flexible schedules (such as 4 days, 10 hours) were offered by their organization. In addition, 45% of the jurisdictions reported offering flexible work hours (earlier or later start and quitting times).

These findings are consistent with the Common Council's action earlier this year to create legislation allowing employees to request and department heads to consider alternative work arrangements (AWAs) that better enable employees to balance their work responsibilities with their personal needs and obligations. As a result of this legislation, DER has conducted an assessment of the availability and use of AWAs by departments. Some of the most critical findings of this assessment are presented below:

- AWAs are permitted and encouraged to allow employees to address health issues, education commitments/interests, child care or other family needs, and transportation issues;
- Some departments require employees to be in good standing and off probation for employees to be able to participate in AWAs;
- AWAs are used to assist in recruitment and retention efforts, to improve morale, expand services to hours when clients and customers are available;
- Decisions regarding requests to participate in AWAs are delegated to section managers and supervisors;
- Department heads have final decision making authority on telecommuting options;
- Factors influencing the availability and use of AWAs in specific departments relate to the compatibility of the service provided and the availability of the client, the type of technology necessary to perform the work, the size of the department, the nature of the services provided, staffing levels, and the degree of oversight or supervision needed to ensure the quality and timeliness of the work product, whether the work is performed by a person or by a team.
- Telecommuting options are used on a limited basis primarily in response to a personal need, in conjunction with an accommodation, or to help transition an employee back to work after an extended leave.

Recommendations regarding the use of AWAs in the City include the following:

1. Departments should document AWA options in an employment handbook or work rules or have a standing policy documenting options and protocols for approval.
2. DER should prepare and issue guidelines for departments to use in determining the feasibility and viability of AWAs and implementation considerations.
3. Departments should implement an annual review of AWAs to ensure the justification for use and participation is consistent with department's mission and the delivery of critical services.
4. Departmental policies should ensure that security, productivity, accountability, availability requirements are established and complied with when approving an employee's participation in an AWA.
5. The City should consider creating positions at less than 1 FTE but more than .5FTE to achieve savings in salary and benefits while providing opportunities for greater work life balance.
6. DER should highlight availability and use of AWAS in recruitment efforts.

Exit Interviews

In order to better understand the reason for separations in the City service, DER has developed an Exit Interview Policy and Questionnaire that will facilitate the centralized collection of important data regarding resignation trends. While some departments have their unique protocols for collecting information relevant to their own departments and operations, there is no consistency in the methodology used of the type of data collected.

Exit interviews are an excellent tool to gather important information about the work environment, day-to-day job concerns of the employees, communication issues, supervisory issues, and employee job satisfaction. In addition, exit interviews are also a good opportunity for obtaining feedback on employment issues such as vacation time and pay, health benefits, and other fringe benefits.

Exit interviews can be used to gather information which can then play a part in preventing future employees from leaving the City and improving our ability to design and implement programs and strategies to stem the high rate of separations. DER hopes to also identify why turnover is higher in certain positions and departments, whether there are management issues in certain areas, and whether the City's compensation and benefit programs are appropriate in attracting, retaining and engaging employees.

A sample of the letter and the survey instrument that we intent to use is attached to this report. It is our intent to send exit questionnaires to all general city employees who have voluntarily separated effective January of 2017 in order to start collecting relevant data. DER will also offer the opportunity to conduct exit interviews in person when employees give notice of intent to separate, effective in August of this year.

The Department of Employee Relations is looking forward to meeting the challenges of our changing workforce while maintaining the integrity and spirit of the Civil Service system. The continued analysis of separation, retirement and recruitment data, the implementation of a systematic exit interview approach and the Workforce Planning Initiative, as well as encouraging managers to consider AWAs when compatible with the work will contribute greatly toward ensuring the stability of our workforce and the continuity of the highest quality of service to our citizens. I will continue to apprise you of our strategies as they are implemented.

Please contact me at 414.286.3335 should you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

Maria Monteagudo
Employee Relations Director