

Human Resources Division

County Administrative Office

Personnel Services • Labor Relations • Health Benefits • Training & Development

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August 16, 2016

Board of Supervisors
Kern County Administrative Center
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

REPORT ON FIRST YEAR OF HUMAN RESOURCES REALIGNMENT AND PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

(Fiscal Impact: FY 2016-17 \$122,000 savings; Not Budgeted; Discretionary)

On June 9, 2015, your Board realigned the human resource functions of the County into the Human Resources Division of the County Administrative Office (Kern County HR). It has been a little over a year since this action was implemented and Kern County HR became operational. During this year, Kern County HR has made significant organizational, cultural, and operational improvements that have enhanced the HR functions of this County for its employees, departments, and stakeholders. Kern County HR has sought and continues to seek constant improvement. It is based upon this organizational philosophy that we bring this report and proposed organizational restructuring to your Board for consideration and approval.

Kern County HR's First Year

During the past year, your Board and Kern County HR have continuously reviewed its organizational structure to create the most efficient operations. We ensure that every step, activity, and function is necessary to fulfill our goal of providing high-quality customer service. We seek to accomplish our functions in the most effective and intuitive way imaginable using new technology, new strategies, and the best organizational work flow. Finally, we continue to ensure that we have just the right amount of resources and staff in the appropriate job classifications to fulfill our mission. Some of the highlights of this past year's efforts include:

1. Completion of a Lean Six Sigma project resulting in an enhanced recruitment process and development of organizational lean culture.
2. Replacement of the Director of Personnel position with a new Principle Human Resources Analyst position to manage the talent acquisition services of the County. Annual savings of \$55,000 annually.
3. Creation of the Human Resources Specialist classification series and reclassification of various classifications into these positions to allow for greater cross-training and reduction of stove-piped functional responsibilities within the department.

4. Revision of the Personnel Analyst classification series to a Human Resources Analyst classification series allowing for more HR generalist functionality instead of more limited test and measurement duties.
5. Full departmental access to hiring requisitions and hiring decision reporting leading to a decrease of up to 2 weeks in the hiring process.
6. Creation of HR service teams that assist similar functional departments with their HR needs leading to a much faster certification process that leans the hiring time by an average of 3 days.
7. Enhanced departmental responsibility for step-level hiring decisions.
8. Pilot use of new Google platform technology and Chromebooks for oral and performance examinations that has lead to a 3-5 day reduction in the hiring process.
9. Switch to paperless application process reducing the time it takes for applicants to receive their examination scores by 2-3 days.
10. Reduced testing requirements for low-volume recruitments, allowing for immediate certification after closure of an application window.

We have accomplished so much to improve our service to both applicants and departments this year. We have seen and heard the difference from our customers. But, we are not nearly done.

Proposed Restructuring

Over the past year, your Board has discussed the significant fiscal difficulties that the County faces due to the reduction in oil and gas property tax values. General fund departments, such as Kern County HR, have been asked to reduce their Net General Fund Cost (NGFC) by 5% for this fiscal year, with an additional expectation that these same departments will need to reduce at least 10% of NGFC over the next 3 years. Your Board has asked departments to search high and low to find additional reductions that can be made and begin to prepare for the future years and adapt to the present “new normal.”

At the same time, Kern County HR has been adapting to its own new operational normal of being separated from the Civil Service Commission. We are no longer responsible for staffing and supporting the Civil Service Commission and its day-to-day responsibilities. Prior to this year, these functions have never been separated. At the time of realignment, it was unknown what the true impact would be on the Kern County HR workload. After one year of evaluating the impact and the successful hiring of a Civil Service Commission Secretary, it is clear that there has been a significant reduction in workload for at least one allocated position - Office Services Coordinator - Confidential (Item No. 3261).

In addition, this year the Kern County Hospital Authority was created and Kern Medical was successfully transitioned from the County. Kern County HR no longer performs recruiting and personnel services for Kern Medical, and the County has reduced its overall employee total by approximately 1,500 employees. After just one month of this new operational normal, it is clear that there has been an additional reduction in the workload of Kern County HR.

Under all of these circumstances, Kern County HR is seeking your Board’s approval of the proposed restructuring. The purpose of this restructuring is to continue to “right-size” our department staffing to accurately meet the department’s workload, to absorb and prepare for future budget reductions, to continue to define the new HR classification series, and continue to seek new and creative ways to provide the best HR services to our County departments, employees, and applicants.

The proposed restructuring includes:

1. Retitling of “Employee Relations” classification series to align with the Human Resources functional title. This would impact both the Employee Relations Officer and Deputy Employee Relations Officer classifications. It would not result in a salary increase or any fiscal impact. However, it would better align the classification structure with the changes your Board made last year to create the Human Resources Division. It would also align these classifications with industry standards, both private and public. The proposed new titles are Chief Human Resources Officer and Deputy Human Resources Officer.
2. Creation of a Human Resources Assistant-Confidential classification at salary range 48.6 (attached specification). This action will allow Kern County HR to further its efforts to find qualified employees who have a background and interest in the HR field, and complete the HR career ladder that has been developed over the last year. It will in turn allow Kern County HR to service its customers with greater knowledge and expertise. This action will not have a fiscal impact.
3. Reclassification of one (1) vacant and funded Office Services Technician-Confidential position to one (1) Human Resources Assistant-Confidential position effective August 16, 2016. This action will not have any fiscal impact as the positions are equivalent in salary.
4. Deletion of one (1) Office Services Assistant-Confidential position effective September 2, 2016. It is anticipated that this position will be vacant at the time of deletion. Deletion of this position for the remainder of the fiscal year would amount to a savings of \$49,000 for Fiscal Year 2016-2017 and \$60,000 annually thereafter.
5. Deletion of one (1) Office Services Technician-Confidential position effective September 2, 2016. This position is slated to be unfunded in this year’s budget, and was part of the department’s 5% NGFC reduction. It is not anticipated that the department would seek to fill this function in the future as the work will be absorbed by the department’s proposed Human Resources Assistant and current Human Resources Specialists. The deletion of this position will result in a savings of approximately \$65,000 for FY 2016-2017.
6. Deletion of one (1) Office Services Coordinator-Confidential position effective September 2, 2016. As stated the duties of this position in substantial part were reorganized under the new Civil Service Commission Secretary position. The remainder of the duties can be absorbed by other classifications within the department. Deletion of this position will lead to a layoff of one individual. The department has included this deletion as the remainder of its 5% NGFC reduction in this year’s budget. It is anticipated that deletion of this position amounts to a savings of \$86,000 for Fiscal Year 2016-2017 and \$104,000 annually thereafter.
7. Deletion of one vacant Administrative Analyst I position, effective September 2, 2016. During the transition, several County Administrative Office classifications were moved to Kern County HR budget unit. This position was recently vacated and the duties of the position can be absorbed by existing HR staff. This action will achieve a savings of \$73,000 for Fiscal Year 2016-2017.

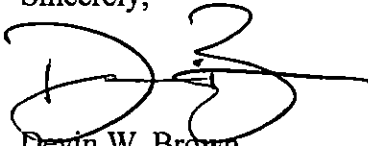
Though not part of the proposed restructuring, Kern County HR is exploring a partnership with the Department of Public Works to pilot an effort to utilize an HR staff member as a full-scale HR manager for the operating department. It is anticipated that this effort would allow the combination of the recruitment, labor, and payroll services provided by Kern County HR with the normal everyday management duties found in an operating department’s HR function. If successful, this will mitigate the need to hire additional staff in the operating department, create further synergy between Kern County HR and Public Works, and reduce the

impact on the General Fund. It will also allow for the County to develop staff with well-rounded HR expertise, similar to private industry.

We continue to work well with our operating partners to find solutions to the difficult challenges posed by the County budget, reorganization, and reduced workload. Every solution we generate is driven by our mission to provide continuously better HR services for the County. In total, the proposed restructuring will allow Kern County HR to meet its 5% NGFC reduction for Fiscal Year 2016-2017 and prepare the department for anticipated future cuts that we will undoubtedly face next fiscal year.

Therefore, **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that your Board: receive and file this report; approve the proposed restructuring, which includes the retitling of the Employee Relations classification series to a Human Resources classification series; creation of a new classification of Human Resources Assistant-Confidential (Item No. 3060) at salary range 48.6; reclassification of one (1) Office Services Technician-Confidential (Item No. 3276) to one (1) Human Resources Assistant-Confidential (Item No. 3060) in Budget Unit 1310, effective August 16, 2016; deletion of one (1) Office Services Assistant-Confidential (Item No. 3281), one (1) Office Services Technician-Confidential (Item No. 3276), one (1) Office Services Coordinator-Confidential (Item No. 3261) resulting in one layoff, and one Administrative Analyst I (Item No. 0796), in Budget Unit 1310, effective September 2, 2016; authorize Kern County HR to amend the Departmental Positions and Salary Schedule in accordance with this action.

Sincerely,



Devin W. Brown
Employee Relations Officer

Attachment

cc: John Nilon, CAO
Members, Civil Service Commission

HUMAN RESOURCES ASSISTANT

Definition

Under direct supervision, performs a variety of clerical human resources activities and services County-wide or in support of human resource functions within a county department.

Distinguishing Characteristics

The Human Resources Assistant is the entry level classification performing human resources duties. Incumbents provide customer service to applicants, county employees and staff in the administration of employee benefits, employment services, equal employment opportunity, and labor relations. This classification is also used by operating departments to assist in the maintenance of a departmental human resources program. Positions in this class are categorized as confidential due to the sensitivity and nature of information incumbents will be privy to that affect employee relations.

Essential Functions

- Responds to a variety of inquiries, including but not limited to training, recruitment, payroll and benefits.
- Prepares employee personnel files for review according to policy and procedures for retirement and employee file review
- Responsible for department's personnel records management and ensures compliance with County policy for destruction of records.
- Reviews, accepts, and responds to subpoenas regarding personnel records.
- Assists employees in completing various human resources documents.
- Creates and maintains personnel records in accordance with county policies and procedures.
- Establishes and maintains employee personnel files and other personnel records in electronic or paper form; scans personnel documents and manages files; coordinates employee access to personnel records.
- Receives, processes and maintains employee performance appraisals.

Essential Functions (continued)

- Assists in scheduling employee training, orientation, and recognition programs.
- Responds to employee questions regarding records and updates employee benefit coverage records; and compiles benefit data and prepares summary reports.
- Assists with updating payroll insurance tables and transfers premium amounts between County accounts; bills and collects premium payments from employees on leaves of absence or on COBRA coverage.
- Assist in reconciling bills from service providers to County service records and prepares claims for payment to providers; assists management, employees and insurance companies in resolving issues.
- Prepares and distributes informational literature to employees and attends meetings as required.
- Uses a personal computer and associated software.

Other Functions

- May prepare cash/check deposits, completes electronic record of deposit for Treasurer/Tax Collector.
- Performs other job-related duties as assigned.

Employment Standards

High School Diploma, G.E.D. or equivalent and six (6) months of education, training and/or experience sufficient to obtain the knowledge and skill to successfully perform the essential duties of the job.

Qualifying related work experience may include job tasks in one of the following areas: payroll, employee benefits, employment services and employee relations.

Possession of a valid California Motor Vehicle Driver's License.

Knowledge of: basic human resource programs; basic functions of a human resources department; office operations and clerical functions; business English including Spelling, punctuation, grammar and vocabulary, principles and methods of public relations/customer service and interviewing techniques; data gathering, compilation and report writing.

Ability to: read and comprehend technical material; maintain confidential information; communicate orally and in writing; gather and analyze a variety of data and prepare appropriate reports; coordinate and prioritize assignments; apply basic statistical and mathematical concepts; establish and maintain effective work relationships; work effectively in teams; and operate a personal computer and associated software.

New

September 2016

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