

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: March 7, 2024

To: The Honorable Members of the Personnel, Audits and Hiring Committee

From: DANA H. BROWN, General Manager
Personnel Department 

Subject: **COUNCIL FILE 17-1098-S1 PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT'S
REPORT BACK REGARDING THE OVERVIEW OF SUBMITTED
SUCCESSION PLANS**

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council note and file this report.

BACKGROUND

In compliance with Mayor Garcetti's Executive Directive No. 15, the Personnel Department submitted the Overview of Submitted Succession Plans Report (C.F. 17-1098) for Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023 on June 26, 2023. This report included recommendations for succession planning, training, contactless government, knowledge transfer, a diverse workforce, and telecommuting.

The Council motion introduced by Councilmembers Bob Blumenfield and Tim McOsker and seconded by Councilmember Eunisses Hernandez on December 12, 2023 instructed the Personnel Department, the Office of the City Administrative Officer, and the Information Technology Agency to report back with tools and trainings to enable City departments to do the following:

- Formalize knowledge transfer processes and standard operating procedures
- Conduct needs analysis for process improvements
- Facilitate intra and inter-departmental meetings utilizing “design-thinking” and other solutions-based methodologies
- Adapt to operational changes and technological advancements
- Support the workforce development of youth into City service, and programs such as Targeted Local Hire, Bridge to Jobs
- Provide cross-training, mentorship, and job rotation opportunities
- Administer feedback surveys after trainings and exit surveys from employees
- Document/digitize essential information
- Reduce workflow and improve productivity

DISCUSSION

Knowledge Transfer/Cross-Training/Mentorship/Job Rotation

According to responses collected for the FY 2023-2024 Equitable Workforce and Service Restoration Plan, 24 of 41 departments (59%) stated that they employ cross-training, 23 of 41 departments (56%) utilize job rotations/reassignments, and 10 of 41 departments (24%) use a mentorship program.

The Personnel Department offers various opportunities for employees that will help prepare for future retirements, employee transfers, and new staff. These resources include an online Knowledge Transfer course, a Mentorship Program Template, and available training resources on the Cornerstone training platform. These items are described in detail below.

The Knowledge Transfer - A City of Los Angeles Interactive Course was launched in October of 2020. This interactive course is currently available to all City staff and teaches a step- by-step guide to develop plans for knowledge transfer between employees. It includes templates, worksheets, checklists, examples, best practices, and strategies to improve team/department long-term resiliency to maintain and cultivate talent to meet the City's current and future needs. This is a helpful resource to use when preparing for retirements, transfers, new staff, etc. As of January 2024, 611 employees have completed this training.

In 2019, the Personnel Department created a Citywide Mentorship Program Guide. This guide was sent out to General Managers and Personnel Directors and was created to assist Departments with creating their own mentorship program. The guide includes a description of the different types of mentorship, best practices for mentoring, a timeline of how the program should work, check-lists, email templates, and more. Personnel sent this program to departments in hopes that departments could use the guide to create their own mentorship programs using available staff. However, it seemed that departments at the time often did not have enough resources to successfully launch and oversee their own program even with the availability of the guide. Personnel believes that this guide is still a great resource that can be used by departments who are interested in developing and facilitating a mentorship program. Personnel will continue to promote this by the department training coordinators.

The Personnel Department recently began compiling playlists in the online Cornerstone training platform. One of the available playlists is entitled Leadership 101 which has courses specifically related to coaching/mentoring. For example, there is a 6 part series entitled Coaching Skills that includes the different roles and aspects of coaching employees. The videos within this series are only 3-5 minutes each and provide a quick overview of items that will help employees obtain an understanding of coaching. The Leadership 101 playlist also includes courses on conflict management, understanding

learning styles of employees, etc. The Personnel department will continue to add courses to the available playlists as needed and promote these to departments via their respective training coordinators.

Digital Tools and Transformation

As stated in the motion, with 30% of City employees having less than five years of service, departments need to ensure smooth transition of key roles and continuity of City services. Technology is fundamental in enhancing succession planning in organizations. In addition to identifying key roles (people) and developing knowledge transfer practices (processes), City Departments should leverage Citywide modern digital tools (technology) for meeting succession planning and transfer of knowledge challenges.

Specifically, 13 key technologies were identified by the ITA, along with collaboration from other City departments, and have been recommended in the City of Los Angeles Digital Strategy, published on ITA.LAcity.gov ([link](#)), that if implemented, would dramatically improve City services and build a permanent foundation for a long-term, effective digital workforce and support departments' succession planning process. The ITA has published these technologies and been providing assistance to City departments.

Below are some examples of technologies and modern digital tools that enable the City's mobile and digital workforce to retain and transfer work knowledge and skills across positions and roles, Citywide.

- The upgraded Google Workspace Gmail, Calendar and Drive suite of applications available to 22,000 City employees for contact, collaboration, and document management;
- The MyLA311 Citywide customer service platform available for Angelenos to access via mobile apps, online, or by phone as well as departments to use for service request intake and fulfillment, with over 45 standard service request types and a comprehensive knowledge base of over 1,700 articles offering relevant information from all departments covering information related to City services;
- The ServiceNow cloud-based platform available to departments for digitizing and automating business process workflows and offering a knowledge base to create, store, and organize departmental documentation (how-to's) and manage self-service content in a centralized system for employees to use and easily access;
- The improved Connect2LACity telework platform and Mobile Worker Program with comprehensive access to City of Los Angeles apps, shared drives, and office computers to enable the long-term productivity and capabilities of LA City teleworkers;
- Access to Citywide digital training platforms and resources, such as the Office Hours virtual technology training program and video library, available for employees to enhance skill sets in modern work trends and office productivity tools and techniques, Google workspace, data analysis, visualization, cybersecurity, and more;

- Continuously improved and upgraded enterprise-wide application systems (Enterprise Resource Planning Systems or ERP) such as Workday Payroll and Human Resources system, Financial Management System (FMS), among others, increasingly digitizing organizational processes such as payroll, human resources, financial transaction processing, and allowing departments and employees to retain and transfer their skills and work knowledge across positions and roles.

The uniform implementation of recommended modern technologies, digital tools, and application systems enhances the City's workforce strategy. With City departments implementing the same recommended standard set of tools and technologies, more employees in the workforce use the same systems and tools, retain, and transfer skills and their training when promoting or transferring within the City, and can leverage enterprise training programs already available to all employees. A workforce strategy should incorporate existing and future advancement in technology in order to support the next generations entering into City service.

Personnel Employee Records Keeping System (PERKS)

The City's new HRP system, Workday, has been tailored by the Personnel Department's HRP team to meet the City's requirements for electronically managing employee personnel records that were previously maintained in hardcopy personnel folders.

To that end, the Personnel Department's HRP team contracted with an external vendor, ViaTRON, to scan and digitize full-time civilian personnel records, previously maintained in hardcopy folders, citywide. Scanning has been completed for most City Departments. The Personnel Department, with support from ITA will migrate these digitized documents, along with all other documents currently housed within the aging Personnel Employee Records Keeping System (PERKS) Documentum-based, into Workday.

This effort will make employee's records more manageable and accessible to employees and their managers, while maintaining confidentiality standards.

PerformLA Training

In 2014, the Personnel Department began a program called PerformLA. This program, which was later run out of the Mayor's Office, was modeled after the City and County of Denver's Peak Academy, which provides training, coaching, and project facilitation to help employees continuously improve their service delivery for residents and within government (i.e. Personnel, GSD, ITA). The City and County of Denver started Peak Academy in 2011 and since then have trained 12,000 employees and realized \$64.7M in both hard and soft cost savings. The average savings realized from an innovation is \$17,000.

The core principles behind the tools are:

- It's important to build a culture of continuous improvement, where all employees consistently evaluate how they deliver their services and find ways to improve their workflow and productivity;
- Services should be designed with the customer (or end user) in mind, not from what is easiest or most convenient for employees;
- Employees who do the work (as opposed to management), know best about which improvements need to be made and are the ultimate owners for making those changes stick;
- It's important to make processes and service delivery visible in order to reduce waste (i.e. wait times, extra staff time, extra physical resources);
- Technology should only be brought in after processes are streamlined and improved; and
- Metrics and data are critical to understanding what's actually happening and to make improvements or adjustments that are impactful.

Approximately 1,000 employees across the City of Los Angeles were trained on continuous improvement tools, which are based on Lean Methodology and Design Thinking. However, the program stalled without dedicated resources.

The Personnel Department is planning an Executive Training in 2024 that would explain the elements of a continuous improvement organization and how to build one. In order to build on this effort, some online training would need to be created to help reach more employees. An interactive introductory training would cost approximately \$50,000.

To scale PerformLA, though, a dedicated training and coaching team in the Personnel Department would be needed to support citywide efforts. For example, the City and County of Denver's Peak Academy has a 7-person team for approximately 11,000 employees. This team provides training, helps departments conduct needs assessments for process improvements, and facilitates and project manages Rapid Improvement Events where they bring a small cross functional group of employees to make improvements to a service/process.

The City Administrative Officer suggests that any additional resources for the PerformLA program be considered in the context of the FY 2024-25 budget development process.

Youth Employment Programs

The City currently offers several programs to support the economic well-being of local youth, some of which provide employment opportunities with the City:

- Angeleno Corps - 10-month internship program that simultaneously connects participants to community college and work experience
- City Pathways for Youth - 12-month internship program with the Department of Recreation and Parks
- Clean LA - 12-month full-time employment program with the Public Works Bureau of Sanitation

- LA Community College/City Pathways - 12-month internship program for LACCD students to explore careers with City departments
- Early Childhood Education Student Advancement Project - provides internships, mentoring, and financial awards for LACCD students
- HIRE LA - Provides starter job opportunities, skills development, financial literacy, and career mentoring/coaching
- LA River Rangers - 12-month full-time employment program to maintain and operate services along the Los Angeles River
- Summer Night Lights - seasonal employment program to coordinate summer events for the Department of Recreation and Parks
- Youth & Community Harvest Internship Program - 6-month internship program with farmer's markets, urban farms, and community gardens

The Personnel Department also administers the Targeted Local Hire and Bridge to Jobs programs, which supplement the civil service process for hiring. These programs are open to all, but one of the targeted populations for these employment programs includes disconnected/foster youth. Outreach is primarily done by partnering with the Personnel Department's civilian recruitment team, community based organizations (CBOs), and the WorkSource Centers (WSCs), as well as participating in job fairs hosted by City departments and program partners. As of December 1, 2023, these programs have received a combined 866 youth applicants, which has resulted in 94 youth hires.

Feedback/Exit Surveys

The primary vehicle for the Personnel Department's training efforts is Cornerstone, an online training platform with thousands of courses available on-demand for employees. After each course, an employee has the opportunity to rate the training and provide comments/feedback. In addition to what the Personnel Department provides, each department has their own training and development plan that they execute, and will request feedback accordingly. This is usually via an application such as Google Forms. Exit surveys are currently conducted on a department-by-department basis. If a citywide exit survey template is required, Personnel will need staff to conduct additional research for exit survey best practices and create a survey that is accessible to all employees.