



COUNTY OF YOLO

Office of the County Administrator

Patrick S. Blacklock
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To: Honorable Judge Paul Richardson
Superior Court of California, County of Yolo
1000 Main Street
Woodland, CA 95695

July 25, 2016

To: Yolo County Grand Jury
P.O. Box 2142
Woodland, CA 95776

via e-mail: grand-jury@sbcglobal.net

RE: 2015-2016 Yolo County Grand Jury Report – The Yolo County Health and Human Services Department: Personnel Practices

Honorable Judge Richardson:

The following is the response to the findings and recommendations in the 2015-2016 Yolo County Grand Jury Report titled, “The Yolo County Health and Human Services Department: Personnel Practices” from Yolo County Administrator Patrick Blacklock, Health & Human Services Agency Director Karen Larsen and Human Resources Director Gina Rowland (formerly Health & Human Services Agency Human Resources Director). For purposes of readability, we have included the Grand Jury’s recommendations in **bold**.

F1 The Grand Jury found the Yolo County Health and Human Services Department, Emergency and Intensive Services supervisors and manager do not foster a culture of open communication in addressing personnel complaints.

Response: The respondents partially disagree with the finding. This Grand Jury report focuses on a work unit that comprises less than 5% of the Health & Human Services Agency. There is one manager and four supervisors in the Employment & Intensive Services work unit. It is not accurate to say that all five individuals do not foster a culture of open communication in addressing personnel complaints.

F2 The Yolo County Health and Human Services Department has awarded permanent employment status to some probationary employees without proper performance evaluations.

Response: The respondents disagree partially with the finding. There was no evidence or examples provided by the Grand Jury to assist the Health & Human Services Agency

in substantiating or quantifying this finding. Agency staff reviewed all current performance evaluation due dates. Of the 530 current employees, there was only one incident in which a person passed their probationary period without a performance evaluation being performed. Given that this is less than 0.19%, this was likely an unfortunate oversight or anomaly, and does not reflect standard practices within the Agency.

F3 The Yolo County Health and Human Services Department does not consistently conduct timely annual performance evaluations for permanent staff.

Response: The respondents disagree partially with this finding. Timely performance evaluations were identified by the Health & Human Services Agency as an issue in July 2015, and thus prioritized and included in the Agency's 2015-16 goals. The Agency has made good progress in this area; in December 2015, 65% of employee performance evaluations were completed on time; by late May 2016, the timely completion of employee evaluations increased to 85%. This is an area that will continue to be a priority for the Agency.

F4 The Grand Jury found many front line staff do not understand the procedure for hiring internal applicants versus external applicants as it applies to hiring preferences.

Response: The respondents agree with the finding

R1 By September 1, 2016, the Yolo County Health and Human Services Department will provide additional training for supervisors and managers to promote open communication and resolution of personnel issues.

Response: This recommendation was implemented prior to the Health & Human Services Agency's knowledge of the Grand Jury investigation and subsequent report. The manager of this unit attended the UC Davis Management Development Program in late 2015 and early 2016. One supervisor in this unit attended the ICMA Effective Supervisory Practices training from January through June 2016. Both training programs emphasize open communication and resolution of personnel issues. In addition, ongoing training for supervisors and managers is offered countywide, including Agency staff.

R2 By January 2, 2017, all probationary and permanent employee evaluations are to be up to date, and the Department will conduct all evaluations in a timely manner.

Response: This recommendation will be implemented by January 2, 2017.