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California Department of
Human Resources

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Projects Division

[STATEWIDE WORKFORCE PLANNING REPORT]

An Analysis of Agency and Department Interview Findings

Message from the Director

Today it is well established that organizations face extraordinary workforce challenges. California's civil service system is no exception. To be successful in the coming years, organizations must be proactive and aggressive in identifying and addressing their current and future workforce challenges.

All leaders must find ways to balance daily operations with the planning that is essential to ensuring there is a talented and diverse workforce available to perform the organization's mission. Human resource leaders play a critical role in supporting the efforts to build and maintain a high functioning workforce. At the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR), we recognize the important role that Human Resources (HR) plays in workforce planning and that is why we recently set out to establish new working relationships and partnerships with agency secretaries and department directors on the topic.

Never before has there been a more compelling reason for state government to work together to address a problem that has such broad impacts to the entire civil service system. This first-of-its-kind report calls attention to some of the workforce challenges that are common to many of our state organizations. Our ongoing Civil Service Improvement (CSI) initiatives will address some of these challenges but we can and will do more.

I would like to thank the many leaders in state government that participated in the workforce planning interviews that made this report possible. Your candid feedback is a valuable first step towards understanding both the problems and potential solutions.

I am confident that together, with the continued sponsorship of our executive leaders, we will ensure that all state organizations will be successful in their efforts to make state government a place where highly talented people come to serve the needs of all Californians.

Richard Gillihan
Director, Department of Human Resources

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
About This Report	6
Methodology	8
Findings	10
Conclusion	20

Executive Summary

The state's civil service system faces significant challenges in the coming years, most notably those associated with its workforce. Addressing these workforce challenges has become the focus of many of the state's ongoing Civil Service Improvement (CSI) initiatives. CalHR's Statewide Workforce Development Programs and Special Projects Division set out to find the workforce issues most concerning to state department directors. After interviewing nearly 100 executives, CalHR was able to identify the top workforce planning challenges affecting recruiting, training, retention and succession planning. The interviews also allowed CalHR to identify hurdles preventing organizations from creating and implementing effective workforce plans.

The findings in this report indicate that most state departments face similar workforce challenges. Directors are concerned with their ability to recruit qualified candidates, with the complex civil service hiring process and compensation being among the driving factors. There are specific concerns with succession planning and many directors question if they have a deep bench of experienced leaders.

In terms of training and development, most directors desire their workforce to be more proficient in communication and analytical competencies. When asked about diversity, directors reported that they need to do more to attract diverse demographics to certain occupations.

When questioned about the strength of the workforce, the overwhelming response was of employees' dedication to the mission. Despite this dedication, many departments said they have retention issues because their employees leave to pursue higher paying opportunities with other departments or local government. The directors of smaller organizations said they lack career advancement opportunities to retain qualified employees.

Of the departments interviewed, approximately three quarters have strategic plans. By contrast, only one-quarter of the departments have workforce plans. Although many departments are working to address their workforce challenges, the findings in this report indicate that most departments are not taking a proactive and comprehensive approach to strategically build and maintain a capable workforce. Directors said lack of resources and competing priorities with daily operations are the

greatest hurdles in creating strategic workforce plans.

The directors offered useful suggestions for how CalHR can better support their workforce planning needs. Directors specifically desire more simplified tools and templates, as well as direct consulting support and guidance. Each department also provided valuable feedback in a variety of areas specific to their needs.

The director interviews were informative and productive. Based upon the feedback shared, it is evident that departments are doing some great things to ensure the state has a strong civil service workforce, and CalHR is working to create more opportunities for sharing and collaborating on solutions to civil service workforce challenges.

The findings in this report will be used to create a Statewide Workforce Plan that will include strategies for how the state can address workforce challenges that are common across the multiple organizations. In many cases, these workforce issues are already being addressed by CalHR, some of which are in collaboration with statewide CSI initiatives. CalHR will continue to help departments create and implement workforce plans, thereby ensuring all state departments take a comprehensive and strategic approach towards ensuring the state builds and maintains a capable civil service workforce.

About this Report

The state's aging workforce continues to present significant risks to agencies and departments. The proportion of state employees age 50 or older has increased from 23 percent in 1988 to nearly 41 percent in 2015. These potential retirees have critical experience and institutional knowledge that will be difficult to replace, but also present valuable opportunity to infuse the state workforce with new ideas and perspectives. With over 50 percent of supervisors and managers eligible to retire, along with 60 percent of the state's executive-level decision makers (Career Executive Assignments), the state is at an even greater risk with its leadership positions. These unique circumstances underscore the importance of state efforts to maintain the talent needed to perform the missions and achieve the strategic goals of California's many state organizations.

The California State Auditor (CSA) has provided the Governor and the Legislature multiple high risk audit reports concerning the state's efforts to manage risks associated with this large exodus of experienced employees, which threaten the ability of the state to deliver critical services. The CSA pointed out that other states have done more than California to address workforce and succession planning.

In 2015, in response to CSA's concern, CalHR conducted an assessment of 87 state departments in an effort to collect and evaluate workforce and succession plans. CalHR's assessment found only 16 departments reported they had a workforce plan. Of the 16 plans collected, most were not current and up to date. These results support the CSA's findings that the state must do more to address workforce and succession planning.

State organizations rely on CalHR for human resource support and guidance related to all HR topics, including workforce and succession planning, recruiting and training. As the control agency over these human resource functions, CalHR is uniquely positioned and accountable to help the state create an integrated and seamless planning process to ensure all departments have a continuous supply of diverse and highly productive individuals in the right job at the right time. CalHR is looked to for leadership in identifying systemic statewide and department level workforce challenges and solutions associated with increasing the

overall productivity of the civil service workforce through improved recruitment, development, retention, and utilization of talent.

In 2014, CalHR formed the Workforce Development Programs and Special Projects Division, which includes Statewide Recruiting, Statewide Workforce Planning and Statewide Training. The new division was formed so that CalHR could provide oversight and, more importantly, provide better support and guidance to agency and department efforts to recruit, develop, and retain a talented and diverse workforce. To this end, the division has developed a website with a wide array of tools and resources to aid state departments in workforce and succession planning. In addition, the division has conducted training, and facilitated quarterly meetings to promote sharing and collaboration on workforce planning topics. Despite these efforts, it is evident that CalHR needs to do more to help the state with its workforce planning challenges.

In 2015, with the help of the Governor's ongoing CSI initiative, lead by the Government Operations Agency, CalHR ramped up its efforts to provide greater support to statewide workforce planning efforts. Several CSI teams were established to help CalHR update and improve its workforce planning tools, resources, and training.

Concurrent with CSI workforce planning efforts, CalHR sought to establish working relationships with all agency secretaries and department directors. The purpose of establishing working relationships with the state's executive level leadership is twofold:

- First and foremost, workforce planning is an organization-wide process that must be sponsored by executive management and owned by all levels of leadership. CalHR has strong working relationships with the managers and analysts working on department workforce and succession plans. In order to ensure the state is positioned to succeed in addressing its extraordinary workforce challenges, CalHR intends to build equally strong working relationships to support the sponsors of statewide workforce planning.
- Secondly, CalHR desires to create a first-ever statewide workforce plan that will identify those workforce challenges that are common to most state organizations. By taking a statewide perspective on civil service workforce challenges, there is the

opportunity to leverage the full strength of the state's combined expertise and resources to more efficiently identify and implement highly effective workforce planning strategies that will benefit all state organizations. CSI is a great working example of a statewide initiative that is, in large part, implementing workforce planning strategies to improve how the state attracts, recruits, hires, develops and retains a talented and diverse workforce.

By supporting both the workforce planning professionals and the sponsors of workforce planning, CalHR expects to see a significant increase in the number of departments with workforce plans. With more state organizations having complete and up-to-date workforce plans, CalHR will have the ongoing collective workforce planning data needed to identify systemic statewide workforce challenges. More importantly, departments will have identified and proactively addressed their own workforce challenges, including those associated with recruiting, developing and retaining a talented and diverse workforce.

Methodology

In order to achieve this report's objectives, CalHR set out to meet with all agency secretaries and department directors. Understanding that organizations face numerous human resource issues at any given time, the one-on-one workforce planning interviews were aimed at identifying those workforce challenges that most concern state leaders. These interviews required a significant amount of coordination that could not have been achieved without the support and cooperation of agency and department executive offices.

The combined total number of departments and agencies to be interviewed was 116. It should be noted that CalHR is constantly reevaluating and adding to its list of state organizations that it monitors and provides workforce planning support. Departments can contact CalHR at wfp@calhr.ca.gov with questions or requests regarding this list.

The workforce planning interview process began in October of 2015 with an email message from CalHR Director Richard Gillihan to agency secretaries. In November of 2015, two separate memorandums were

sent informing department directors about the upcoming director interviews.

There were 14 questions asked during the interviews. The questions was broken into the following three parts:

Part 1. Learning about the organization's workforce challenges.

Question 1 – What is the greatest strength of your workforce?

Question 2 – What is your greatest workforce challenge?

Question 3 – What is your greatest training challenge?

Question 4 – If you could further develop your entire workforce in one competency, what would it be?

Question 5 – What is your greatest recruiting challenge?

Question 6 – What is your greatest hurdle to achieving diversity in your workforce?

Question 7 – What is your greatest retention challenge?

Question 8 – What is your greatest succession planning challenge?

Part 2. Learning about the organization's challenges in creating and implementing workforce and succession plans.

Question 9 – Does your department have a strategic plan?

Question 10 – Does your department have a current workforce plan?

Question 11 – What is your greatest hurdle to conducting workforce and succession planning?

Question 12 – What would be the most important thing that CalHR could do to help you create and maintain an effective workforce plan?

Question 13 – Do you have an upward mobility plan?

Part 3. Learning about how CalHR can provide better support.

Question 14 – Do you have other thoughts or suggestions for how CalHR can better serve your organization?

Many departments requested to have the interview questions in advance, however CalHR did not share the questions with departments. The interview process was designed so that it would collect spontaneous feedback from the executives.

The interviews with agency secretaries started on November 18, 2015 to learn about agency-wide perspectives on workforce planning and to identify areas or departments that had unique workforce challenges and/or needs. The remaining interviews were with department directors and executive teams. The interviews were conducted by Jeff Douglas, Chief of CalHR's Workforce Development Programs and Special Projects Division. Adina Mijares, a CalHR workforce planning consultant, attended the meetings and facilitated the logistics.

CalHR conducted two to four workforce planning interviews per day for approximately three months, with the last interview being held on February 25, 2016. For efficiency CalHR only conducted one-on-one interviews with organizations that had 100 or more employees. On February 9, 2016, a facilitated session was held with the directors of departments with less than 100 employees. The facilitated process consisted of six stations with a facilitator and a scribe collecting responses from attendees as they moved from station to station. A questionnaire was also administered at the event to collect additional feedback pertaining to department efforts to create and implement workforce plans. CalHR offered to meet individually via phone conference with departments unable to attend due to location or other logistical issues. The interview feedback was manually collected and later entered into a data-base to be analyzed electronically.

Findings

The findings from the interviews are summarized by question. Based upon quantitative analysis, CalHR was able to identify the top three most common themes associated with responses to each interview question. Although the findings were mostly anecdotal, the feedback from the directors suggests most state departments face similar workforce challenges and opportunities.

The majority of directors began the interview by describing how their organization was uniquely challenged with operating and staffing multiple, distinctly different programs. Rather than being unique, this appeared to be a common theme in state organizations and, therefore, something to be considered in the workforce planning process.

Question #1.
***What is the
greatest
strength of
your
workforce?***

The most common answer to the first question was the **dedication and commitment of staff to the mission**. Directors described their staff as being very passionate about the work they do and the services they provide to the citizens of California. This dedication and commitment is seen in the long tenures of state employees in specific jobs and programs, and through the employees' tireless efforts to "get the job done." This finding is consistent with the [2015 CSI Employee Engagement Survey](#) results, where state employees gave the highest positive response to the question regarding whether they felt their work makes a difference in the lives of Californians.

The second most common response given was that **the current workforce has significant institutional knowledge and subject matter expertise**. This response relates to the first theme, wherein the current workforce achieved its knowledge and expertise through many years of dedicated service. To a lesser extent, directors also highlighted the skills and expertise of the incoming workforce as being a strength of their organization.

Longevity in civil service, and specifically at one department, was another core strength of the current workforce. Many organizations reported that they had few retention issues in certain occupations. Directors described passionate employees working well beyond retirement eligible years in certain programs. While directors found this to be a strength of their respective workforce, they recognized that low turnover can be a liability to organizations seeking to evolve and innovate.

Question #2.
***What is your
greatest
workforce
challenge?***

The biggest workforce challenge facing departments is **recruiting and hiring employees with the competencies needed to succeed in public service jobs**. Directors said they continue to see a high volume of applicants for most jobs, but the candidate pools are lacking the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform on the job. For this reason, many directors said they end up failing new employees on probation. When departments have the opportunity to attract highly qualified candidates, they are finding that the lengthy and complex civil service hiring process often prevents them from successfully hiring candidates. Directors suggest the arduous civil service hiring process is discouraging top talent from applying for positions with the state.

The second most common workforce challenge expressed by directors was associated with **employee compensation**. While public vs. private salaries is a concern, directors more often talked about the challenges they face due to salary disparities between state and local government. Some directors said highly qualified employees are leaving critical positions to work in jobs in local government with higher pay and less responsibility. Another common compensation theme was associated with equal pay for equal work. Many departments have significant retention and morale issues due to the lack of pay parity between departments and similar classifications within a department. Finally, geographical pay differentials was a common interview response theme. Many directors said it was difficult to recruit and retain employees in certain high cost of living areas, such as the San Francisco Bay Area. Lower level administrative positions were especially impacted in these high cost regions. In some cases, directors expressed concern with pay parity issues associated with inequities in geographical pay differentials.

Succession planning was another top workforce challenge expressed in the interviews. Directors question whether or not their organizations are adequately prepared for the loss of knowledge and expertise that will result from impending retirements. An even greater and immediate concern to the directors pertains to the strength and capability of civil service leaders. Many directors are finding that their leadership teams lack sufficient skills and experience to take on increased responsibility. Organizations are working hard to find ways to more quickly develop a deeper bench of leaders with the skills to move up in the organizations. Many organizations said their succession planning issues start at the supervisor level, as they are seeing fewer employees pursue careers in management.

***Question #3.
What is your
greatest
training
challenge?***

One of the most common training challenges faced by departments is the **lack of resources to internally train and/or outsource the training of staff**. Directors said they continue to feel the impact of decisions made years ago to cut training. Rebuilding internal training programs is difficult and the state does not offer sufficient options to address all of their technical and soft skill training needs. Many directors also talked about how travel restrictions limit their ability to use conferences and similar venues as learning and development opportunities for specific technical careers.

In addition, **organizations struggle to find the time to train and develop employees.** Even when training is offered, staff and management are too busy to step away from their daily jobs to attend training. Directors talked about how the pace and complexity of work has increased substantially in the past several years.

Directors are concerned about their **ability to develop leaders.** Outsourcing for leadership development through local colleges is a common practice among many departments. Departments with more resources are using vendors to create custom leadership development programs. Directors do not feel that the 80-hour supervisor training is sufficient, so many pursue additional training opportunities to further develop the leadership skills of their supervisors and managers. The topic of onboarding is a concern as employees new to state service, especially leaders, are lacking the opportunity to more quickly learn how to work and be successful in their civil service career.

***Question #4.
If you could
further develop
your entire
workforce in
one competency,
what would it
be?***

Communication, specifically written communication, was the most common response to this question. While a few organizations said they had good writers, most directors said the overall workforce struggles to produce well-written deliverables. Directors desire to have more effective writers and speakers to interface with the public and colleagues. The lack of strong communication skills impacts collaboration in many departments.

Analytical skills was the second most common response to this question. Directors want employees to be more effective at analyzing problems and producing completed staff work.

Directors would also like to see **staff be more creative and think independently, and use better judgment when problem solving.** They need the workforce to be focused on achieving results and coming up with solutions to business problems facing their programs and organizations. Directors desire their staff to think more globally when conducting business and making decisions.

Question #5.
**What is your
 greatest
 recruiting
 challenge?**

Compensation was said to be the greatest challenge in recruiting highly qualified staff. That said, some directors felt that we should not be recruiting and competing for new talent on pay alone as the state offers great benefits and a unique opportunity to serve. Some departments said they rely on marketing civil service benefits to offset lower pay. Those departments are concerned that reducing the benefits offered to new employees will have a negative impact on recruiting efforts.¹ Directors also expressed a desire for more flexibility to offer the most qualified candidates a higher range of salary.

Directors said they have difficulty **attracting prospective employees with the specialized skill sets and competencies necessary to perform highly technical jobs**. Recruiting for IT skills is especially challenging for most departments. Directors desire to change the way the state markets and recruits new employees, and creative ideas were shared. Some directors said they believe the state is still suffering the impact of cutting back on marketing and recruiting years ago, and that it will take time to rebuild recruiting programs and our image and presence in the job market. While some departments are putting innovative recruiting ideas into action, most were finding it difficult to dedicate resources to implement new best-practice recruiting strategies.

Leaders reported that the **arduous civil service hiring process** continues to negatively impact departments' ability to hire top talent. The most common concern expressed was the time it takes to hire a new employee. Directors said that they cannot compete for top talent as the most qualified job candidates have too many options available to them to sit and wait on our lengthy hiring process. Another concern was that the process of getting a job is too complex and that prospective employees are struggling to figure out how to apply for positions. Finally, there was concern that some exams are producing lists of candidates who can't perform on the job.

¹ Of the 47 occupation groups included in CalHR's 2014 Total Compensation Report, 20 of the 47 occupation groups were leading market average when comparing wages only. When looking at total compensation, the state was leading in 30 of the 47 occupation groups.

***Question #6.
What is your
greatest hurdle
to achieving
diversity in your
workforce?***

The majority of the directors felt they have a diverse workforce, including their management teams. While most organizations believe they have a diverse workforce, many of the directors admitted they **lacked diversity in certain occupational groups**. Directors expressed a strong desire to have a workforce representative of the state's population.

In those cases where departments lacked diversity, directors often said that it is the **job location or the job itself that is not appealing to certain demographics**. For instance, some departments are located in rural areas and their candidate pools are mostly representative of the local demographic. In other cases, the occupation itself is only appealing to certain demographics and so that becomes the candidate pool available in the job market. Directors desire to do more to educate and market opportunities to broader audiences in order to change these trends and create more diverse candidate pools.

In discussing the challenges that departments face with attracting more diversity in their candidate pools for certain occupations, many **directors agreed that they could do more to market their positions more broadly**. The challenge however, as previously stated in the findings from question #5, is that many departments struggle to find the time and resources to devote to improve recruiting practices, including those that target marketing efforts more broadly to attract a more diverse candidate pool.

***Question #7.
What is your
greatest
retention
challenge?***

In response to question #7, **compensation** was once again the top theme. The same compensation issues that impact recruiting also affect retention. The competition for top talent results in people leaving their jobs for higher pay offered at competing departments, local government and private industry. Directors said they found it particularly hard to retain Information Technology (IT) positions. Many departments see high turnover in their administrative positions as those employees have skills that are needed in all organizations. Some directors embrace the movement of employees as they see people gaining the additional knowledge and experience needed to handle greater levels of responsibility in state service.

Another common retention issue is related to a **lack of promotional career opportunities**, especially in smaller organizations. The new

workforce wants the opportunity for career growth and they leave when career paths or promotional opportunities are not evident. In some cases, directors said career paths exist but they are so disjointed that employees either can't see the path or the path involves too many hurdles, such as classification changes, to smoothly transition to higher level positions in the organization. In those cases, organizations struggle to keep highly talented employees moving through a career path. A strong resume of state service experience and expertise in a field is often not enough to qualify for advancement, even when management desires to promote the individual.

Some organizations reported that they have higher turnover due to the **heavy workload**. When employees struggle with work-life balance they start to look at other opportunities. This feeds the competition between departments as some organizations are able to offer jobs with similar or greater pay but with better work-life balance options.

***Question #8.
What is your
greatest
succession
planning
challenge?***

Most directors have concerns with their **ability to adequately develop current and future leaders**. Directors often described their current leadership teams as lacking the depth of knowledge and experience of their predecessors. Directors describe the current generation of civil service leaders as moving quickly into positions of greater responsibility with less opportunity to fully develop their leadership skills. This issue occurs most often in larger organizations where there are more opportunities for advancement. While many organizations talked about their leadership development initiatives, few referenced having an actual succession plan. Leadership development initiatives varied considerably, from large custom programs supported by local colleges to no leadership training at all. The most common succession planning strategies were associated with instructor-led-training (ILT) courses. Other knowledge transfer, coaching, mentoring and on-the-job leadership development initiatives were said to be needed and desired, however fewer organizations had implemented those particular succession planning strategies.

Another succession planning challenge is associated with the **pipeline of employees moving into management**. Many directors said they struggle to get qualified employees to promote into supervisor and manager positions. Directors said their employees do not see the incentive to promote as the pay difference is too small to justify the additional

responsibility and workload. Similarly, many organizations have difficulty hiring candidates motivated to be leaders or that have the necessary competencies to be a successful leader in state service. In many cases, organizations' succession planning pipeline lacks sufficient promotional opportunities for leaders. This is especially common in small and flat organizations.

Organizations appear to be struggling with **balancing the pace of daily operations with finding the time and resources to devote to leadership development**. Many directors have been unable to take a proactive and strategic approach towards identifying and implementing comprehensive succession planning strategies within their organizations. The directors commented that leaders themselves have difficulty breaking away from work to pursue professional development. Leaders expressed concern that daily operations and competing priorities makes it difficult for them to serve in an effective leadership role (i.e. having the time to regularly coach and mentor staff, etc.).

Question #9.
Does your department have a current strategic plan?



Several organizations had strategic plans and in those cases CalHR was able to review the plans in advance of the director interviews. While some organizations said they used internal resources to create their strategic plan, most outsourced to local consultants. The format and content within the strategic plans varied considerably and often times the plans were found to not be current. Of particular concern to CalHR was whether or not the strategic plan made reference to a goal or strategy that addressed the organization's workforce, in which case most did include a strategic goal focused on the workforce.

Question #10.
Does your department have a current workforce plan?

Workforce Plans



According to the director interviews, the majority of organizations do not have workforce plans, which is consistent with the information that CalHR has been able to collect from department workforce planning professionals. CalHR is in the process of creating a new annual process for collecting and accurately reporting on the status of department workforce plans. Although most departments do not have workforce plans, the director interviews did identify that state organizations are doing a lot to address their workforce challenges. CalHR will be using the information gleaned from the report to improve its ability to support department efforts to take a more proactive and comprehensive approach toward planning and addressing workforce challenges.

Question #11.
What is your greatest hurdle to conducting workforce and succession planning?

The most common response to this question was **lack of resources**. Directors explained that, while their business operations have often grown in recent years, resources to support HR and administrative functions have not kept pace. Directors are using their limited resources to support leadership's immediate day-to-day workforce challenges.

Similarly, directors said they are **constantly facing shifting priorities, and that operational and mandated workloads take precedence over more strategic workforce planning initiatives**. That said, many directors said they could and will do more to make strategic workforce planning a priority in their organization.

Directors said their organizations **lack the expertise and understanding to create and implement a workforce plan**. Directors often said they see workforce planning as a complicated and overwhelming process. Some said it has taken months and even years to create their workforce plan. If the process were simplified, directors felt they could make time create workforce plans in their organization.

Question #12.
What would be the most important thing CalHR could do to help you create and maintain an effective workforce plan?

The most frequent response was they **need more simplified tools to conduct workforce and succession planning**. Some departments said they are not sure where to begin so they would like a simple template or framework for how to build a workforce plan. Others said they have seen our templates but that it's not clear how they are to get the data and/or information needed to populate the plan. Organizations said they see the value with how other organizations have created their workforce plans. Directors realize, as more state organizations complete their workforce plans, there will be more examples to choose from when considering how to create a new plan.

Several departments requested **consulting services from CalHR**. Some departments asked CalHR to provide specific guidance on how to develop a plan. Organizations need "hands-on" help facilitating the workforce planning discussions with leadership teams and with creating new, or reviewing existing, plans. One department said, "help departments see the importance of workforce planning, including the impact of not strategically addressing workforce issues." Leaders are forced to weigh the consequences of redirecting resources away from current workforce challenges to develop and implement long-term strategies to build and sustain a more capable workforce. If the strategic approach to planning for the future is too labor intensive, departments will continue to struggle to justify the investment.

Organizations expressed the need for more **training and guidance on workforce planning**. Some requested more workshops, webinars, and other opportunities to be trained in workforce planning.

Question #13.
Do you have an Upward Mobility Plan?

Upward Mobility Programs



Several organizations expressed that they had a limited amount of positions that required upward mobility plans. One director said that, "Individual Development Plans (IDP's) should be the opportunity to help with career growth and the plan should show a full career progression."

While directors expressed support for upward mobility plans, there was not a lot of discussion around this topic. When HR managers were present in the interview, directors often looked to them to respond to this question.

***Question #14.
Do you have
other thoughts
or suggestions
for how CalHR
can better serve
your
organization?***

Question #14 was included to provide directors with the opportunity to provide feedback regarding how CalHR can better serve their needs in general. Most directors appreciated that CalHR was meeting with them and open to feedback. Most organizations said CalHR needs to improve their responsiveness and customer service. CalHR is aware of these particular concerns and the department now has a strategic plan goal specifically focused on “Superior Customer Service.” Another concern is organizations do not receive written responses for decisions or issues. One department said, “we look for guidance and direction from CalHR. We need firm and clear decisions.” Most organizations expressed empathy for CalHR as “resources are stretched thin”; and some departments also asked how they can support CalHR. Several departments said CalHR lacks expertise and that they receive inconsistent answers to their questions. This is another topic that has been added to CalHR’s strategic plan, with a new strategic goal focused specifically on developing an internal “Team of Experts.” This issue has been identified in CalHR’s workforce plan and the department is addressing the gap by implementing a variety of initiatives to build and maintain a high performing workforce. Some organizations said they have noticed a change in CalHR, including the shift to a more “customer service oriented” organization. One director said, “CalHR’s reputation has changed and we are impressed. Your department is full of ideas and is more than willing to share.”

Conclusion and Next Steps

CalHR is using the results of these interviews to create a Statewide Workforce Plan. Similar to department workforce plans, the Statewide Workforce Plan will include an Action Plan, listing statewide strategies and initiatives to address workforce challenges that are common to multiple state organizations.

The information below describes some of the topics that will be included

in the Statewide Workforce Plan. As noted, many of the findings in this report are already being addressed by CalHR and/or CSI statewide initiatives. It is essential for all organizations to continue collaborating with CalHR to solve the significant civil service workforce challenges facing the state. CalHR will continue to serve in a lead role to plan, develop and implement strategies to make California the employer of choice for our current and future workforce.

CalHR is grateful to all the organizations that provided feedback for this report. The director interview process provided a unique opportunity to learn about the state's civil service workforce challenges directly from executive leaders. In the future, we will collect similar information by annually reviewing all department workforce plans. CalHR will remain available to all organizations seeking support in addressing workforce challenges.

Topics for Inclusion in Statewide Workforce Plan

WORKFORCE PLANNING

A small percentage of organizations have successfully created and implemented strategic workforce plans. These organizations have a comprehensive view of their current and future workforce issues and demands, thereby enabling them to take thoughtful proactive steps to ensure they continue to successfully build and maintain a strong capable workforce. CalHR regularly collects information about the status of department workforce plans and, when available, obtains and shares copies of the plans.

With the help of CSI teams, CalHR recently updated its workforce planning model and associated planning tools. CalHR also developed and successfully implemented its own workforce plan. The new CalHR workforce plan is yet another model that other organizations can follow in creating their own workforce plans. As additional departments create workforce plans, there will be more examples to consider. As departments seek to find more efficient ways to conduct workforce planning, they should consider leveraging and tailoring other plans to meet their organization's needs.

CalHR is creating a new series of workforce planning workshops that will walk departments through every step of the process of creating a

workforce plan. The workshops will specifically call attention to the importance of succession planning, including knowledge transfer strategies that will ensure that state maintains its institutional knowledge. More importantly, the workshops will focus on assisting departments in creating workforce plans that are operational, with workplans to ensure actual outcomes and results. Along with the workshops, CalHR is building the capacity to provide departments with hands-on workforce planning guidance and consulting. Departments are encouraged to attend CalHR's Quarterly Statewide Workforce Planning meetings to learn more about what CalHR, and other departments, are doing to create and implement effective workforce plans.

RECRUITING

Recruiting and attracting top talent to state jobs is a topic that needs a statewide solution. CalHR, through CSI efforts, is developing tools, resources, training and guidance to help departments implement more effective recruiting strategies, including leveraging social media as a recruiting tool and implementing tactics to conduct focused recruitment of specific demographics (i.e. recruiting women into male dominated occupations). New statewide marketing and outreach efforts are being undertaken to help brand the state as the "employer of choice." In order to create a pipeline of highly qualified job candidates, the next generation workforce needs to understand the value and benefits of a civil service career. As part of the CSI initiative, CalHR is focused on improving the processes associated with hiring and onboarding talented individuals with the competencies and experience needed to be successful in public service jobs. CalHR is also actively involved in providing the state with compensation surveys that are used in labor negotiations and the data helps to demonstrate how state job total compensation packages compare with other public and private organizations. This salary information is useful to state recruitment and retention strategies.

TRAINING

Most state organizations are struggling to keep pace with workforce turnover. Organizations have less time to develop the skills of the employees that will need to successfully perform the duties of the outgoing workforce. CalHR's Statewide Training Center is working to create new innovative solutions to quickly and effectively develop the workforce competencies that department directors described as being

essential to all state employees including, but not limited to; communication, collaboration, analysis/solution mindset, digital fluency, diversity awareness, entrepreneurial mindset, and adaptability. CalHR is expanding its training class offerings to more regions across the state in order to provide more departments with affordable and relevant training. Additionally, agencies can work directly with CalHR to build tailored training calendars with classes offered to specific departments. CalHR is also working with the California Department of Technology on Learning Management System (LMS) alternatives for departments.

SUCCESSION PLANNING & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Departments are concerned their current leaders lack sufficient experience, and they question whether they have the ability to develop a deeper bench of future leaders through succession planning. The topic of leadership development was one of the initial focuses of the CSI campaign and continues to be a high priority. CalHR has hired a Statewide Leadership Development Program Coordinator to work on developing an integrated approach to progressively developing the state's civil service leaders. Through GovOps, CalHR and CSI efforts, a new statewide leadership philosophy and values were adopted and revised leadership competencies are being developed. With the passing of Senate Bill (SB) 848 (Chapter 35, Statutes 2016), there are now new requirements for supervisor, manager and executive leadership development. CalHR is developing guidance on these new requirements, as well as consistent standards of training offerings to help departments develop all levels of leadership. CalHR's Statewide Workforce Planning and Recruitment Unit has developed a new workforce and succession planning model and training is being created to educate departments on how to create and implement an effective succession plan.

RETENTION

Departments are facing unique retention challenges. Along with a significant portion of the workforce reaching retirement age, the new generation is entering the workforce with concerns they will not stay in the same job for a long period of time. Recognizing the mobility of the new workforce, departments need to be proactive about how they go about getting the most value out of an employee for the duration of employment. This means effective onboarding, setting clear expectations, and timely training and development. CalHR, in

partnership with CSI teams, developed new statewide onboarding tools and resources to help ensure new employees are productive and well integrated from day one on the job. CalHR is also leading the CSI class consolidation initiative, which will better define career and promotional opportunities for current and prospective employees. CalHR is focused on helping departments improve employee performance and retention by offering new tools, resources and strategies for increasing workforce engagement, such as the new CalHR employee recognition toolkit. CalHR will conduct reoccurring engagement surveys to measure the state workforce on various engagement indicators and provide departments with guidance on how to improve engagement.