



2020-2025

PEOPLE STRATEGY

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FROM THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF HOUSTON

I am proud to lead a team of over 21,000 individuals who are dedicated to serving the residents of the nation's fourth largest city. During my tenure as Mayor, I have been impressed by the hard work and genuine concern that City employees have for serving our citizens with respect, efficiency, and expediency. And the Human Resources Department is the doorway through which each must enter. HR not only hires, trains, and facilitates promotional growth, it also ensures fair compensation, affordable benefits and wellness, workplace safety, efficient workers compensation, equal access and employment opportunity, and future workforce development.



HR's strategic plan, the HR One 2020 – 2025 People Strategy, clearly defines the department's roles and responsibilities as well as its plans for the future. It is a reflection of the department's focus on positive evolution through innovation, collaboration, accountability, and transparency. I have witnessed the results of this team's commitment to work in the best interest of our employees and the City by staying true to my vision of controlling costs and maximizing efficiency. Whether it's through tireless negotiations for affordable health benefits costs, reducing accidents and helping injured workers return to work, or moving to a paperless work environment, the department continues to move forward.

I commend Director Cheeks and the HR team for their hard work and vision. I am confident that, as a result of their efforts, the City of Houston's Human Resources Department will be THE national leader in Human Resources excellence.



FROM THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

A flexible approach enables the Human Resources Department to remain responsive to an ever-changing environment and fulfill our determination to enhance our service lines – an aspiration that we can only realize through our employees.

One of the key strategic and transformative initiatives that Human Resources has delivered in recent years is a centralized service model to give economies of scale for the City of Houston. This has allowed us to develop a “one plan” approach to delivering improved services and enterprise-level Human Capital Management solutions, while simultaneously improving overall business performance. To ensure the sustainability of current services alongside the new services we will be introducing, I am setting forth a strategic direction that we refer to as HRONE.

As the City of Houston continues to grow, workforce requirements will evolve. Our ambition is to advance this very important step with an opportunity-driven plan. This People Strategy has a robust vision, mission, and set of goals and values representing the focus and commitment of Human Resources over the next five years.

The basis for our strategy is four pillars, which together define how we envision moving Human Resources to the next level. These are:

- Closing workforce gaps;
- Driving innovation;
- Improving economies; and
- Ensuring quality.

Each pillar is supported by key dimensions that articulate the challenges, opportunities, benefits, and strategies needed to achieve our vision to become universally recognized for Human Resources excellence and as a premier employer amongst city governments.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T. [unclear]', located below the portrait of the Director of Human Resources.



Foreword

Our strategy has been defined, vetted, and accepted by our Human Resources Steering Committee, made up of the senior leadership team. A set of next steps have also been designed to bring this plan to realization. I am passionate about our people, our workforce, and our services. To create and sustain a high-performing department, this road map will direct our journey.

The Human Resources (HR) People Strategy is intended for a variety of audiences, including employees of the HR Departmental, employees of the City of Houston, city departments, elected officials, and members of the public. The plan can be used as follows:

Human Resources employees can use this People Strategy as their workplan for implementing their department's goals and priorities.

City of Houston employees can use this People Strategy to obtain information about the services Human Resources supports for them, including benefits, training and development opportunities, and relevant recruitment activities.

Departmental directors and managers can use this People Strategy to review the services that Human Resources supports understanding service commitments and expanding partnerships, including shared services, organizational development, and customized training.

Elected officials can use this People Strategy to view the department's priorities, ensuring alignment with the Mayor's Priorities, Citywide Strategic Objectives, and Plan Houston.

Members of the public can use this People Strategy to obtain information about the services that Human Resources offers its employees and their families, as well as the services available for potential candidates.





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“Achieving organizational excellence IS the work Of HR”

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Department Overview

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The Human Resources Department is a strategic partner for the city in initiating, implementing, and carrying out change in overall policy direction on human resource management issues and administrative support functions related to the management of employees for city departments. The department has final authority in the areas of HR Operations; Information Management; Benefits; Risk Management; Employee/Labor Relations; the Learning and Development Center; Finance and Accounting; Contract Compliance and Special Projects; Compensation; and Communications. Human Resources also develops and administers training, communications, and systems support to help carry out city programs, initiatives, and directives.

- Aiding those less fortunate through the Combined Municipal Campaign, the city's annual workplace giving initiative.
- Creating work-based intervention programming to help city employees and their families which is known as EAP, the Employee Assistance Program.
- Delivering city employees' benefits with speed, compassion, and accuracy.
- Designing, developing, implementing, and managing all City of Houston compensation programs, including the salary structure and salary ranges for municipal jobs, pay exhibits for classified jobs, job classifications and incentive plans.
- Managing and maintaining employee records and the digitization of these records.
- Managing and supporting positive relationships with three labor unions: the Houston Organization of Public Employees, the Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association, and the Houston Police Officers' Union.
- Monitoring and coordinating portions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the Meet and Confer Agreements and offering labor relations consulting services to all city departments.
- Offering advice and developing programs/processes relating to strategic re-organization, talent management, employee relations, and equal employment opportunities/affirmative action.
- Recruiting and hiring dedicated, qualified employees to serve City of Houston taxpayers.
- Training city employees, citizens, and occasionally foreign dignitaries to upgrade their skills and knowledge base through the Learning and Development Center.



PURPOSE OF THE PEOPLE STRATEGY

The 2020-2025 People Strategy was derived from the City of Houston's 10-year Strategic Plan. It is influenced by the many challenges facing municipalities and sets out a forward-looking and ambitious agenda, designed to strengthen the City of Houston.

Specifically, the strategy addresses complex and pressing issues from a position of strength and confidence. It understands that effective governance, leadership, and management of people issues must take place at all levels across the City of Houston.

This strategy illustrates our desire to first stabilize and modernize our infrastructure, then revolutionize core areas to proactively respond to our growing workforce.



Part One: The Future

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The 2020-2025 People Strategy flows directly from our vision, mission and values:

Our **vision**: to become universally recognized for Human Resources excellence and acknowledged as a premier employer.

Our **mission**: to be a strategic partner by providing Human Resources programs that attract, retain, and engage a skilled and diverse workforce.

Our **values**: integrity, customer service, accountability, honesty, and respect.

As part of our drive for excellence, we aim to:

- Create governance systems for continuous improvement and risk management, quantitative operational metrics of performance, and quality assurance.
- Enhance our workforce through giving competitive benefits and services, strengthening strategic partnerships, and increasing organizational ability and automation.
- Maintain an environment that supports innovation for the greater well-being of our employees and deliver outstanding service driven by the employee experience.
- Yield cost-savings by combining and reducing overlapping services, operations, processes, and applications.



STRATEGIC GOAL

We will realize our vision through the goal of exceeding our stakeholders' expectations, by committing to our shared values and achieving the highest levels of customer satisfaction.



TRANSLATING STRATEGY INTO PRACTICE

The 2020-2025 People Strategy translates the City of Houston's Strategic Plan into clear and practical action for the Human Resources Department. It sets out both the direction and the details for achieving the people aspects of our overall strategy. These are presented here in the form of four key themes, which are supported by a series of related key strategies.

Our strategy will be underpinned by a detailed implementation plan, setting out clear actions, timelines, and measures for success.

The successful implementation of this approach will be monitored by the executive leadership team.



Part Two: The Strategic Context

CHALLENGES FACING HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources (HR), as a field, is undergoing a period of intense transformation. This changing reality requires organizations to respond effectively to a range of local and national developments that together represent the most significant challenges to have faced municipalities in recent decades.

Over the last few years, we have undertaken extensive efforts to examine how our programs and the delivery of our services and systems can be improved to better meet the needs of the city's employees and stakeholders. This strategy builds upon these earlier efforts, as we look to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, decrease any risks, and revolutionize the employee experience. This includes offering the best benefits, world-class training and professional development, and a focused approach to retaining talent.

Our continued exchanges with departmental directors, employees, managers, and supervisors confirms what HR professionals know all too well—we work in a complex environment characterized by a network of divisions, services, and silos rather than one unified structure.

Several factors further complicate this environment:

- Disparities in tools and resources;
- Heavy reliance on manual processes and transactions;
- Historical under-investment in talent and technology;
- Inefficient service delivery and insufficient investment; and
- Lack of consistent processes.



These drivers need organizations to embed effective models of governance, leadership, management, and organizational development within their operations. Doing so gives a foundation for operating successfully in a highly volatile and competitive market.



Part Two: The Strategic Context

THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Recently, Forbes defined key trends which will drive outcomes and sustainability for Human Resources. The time to shift from employee engagement to employee experience is now.

Employee Experience

This is defined as “an ecosystem that integrates three core dimensions: engagement, culture, and performance management.”

Race to Digitize HR

“An important corollary to improving the employee experience through analyzing employee data is the digitization of the workplace itself.”



People Analytics Entering Organization Structures

This entails “developing models and dashboards that will bridge communication gaps between team leaders and senior management. Governance teams will be erected to ensure the security and privacy of employee data.”

The “Gig Economy” Redefining the Workplace

“Talent sourcing practices need to build speed and agility to quickly identify work in need of attention, source employees with the required skills, and staff project teams that can quickly perform the necessary task.”

In short, Forbes concluded: “With this as a solid foundation for progress, 2018 promises to have some radical changes to the HR landscape.”

Sources: Forbes (2018) and Harvard Business Review (1998)

“Achieving organizational excellence
is the work of HR.”

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Part Two: The Strategic Context

INFORMATION AND CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

Complex decision making, complex business processes, and complex technology are driving the need for changing HR practices. Moreover, we must continue to hire talent with specific ability in order to keep pace with ever-changing technology. The twin challenges of inefficient service delivery and insufficient investment in transformational change noted above translates into less flexibility than we need.

Current and accurate employee data is required to effectively manage the workforce. Siloed data and disparate systems create some of the biggest challenges facing the City of Houston. More robust systems are needed to support fact-based decision-making by senior leadership, as well as the acquisition and identification of talent.

The Human Resources Department is committed to acting as a strategic partner by giving strategic, innovative, and flexible policies, practices, programs, resources, and services that:

- Attract, develop, reward, and keep a diverse and talented workforce;
- Foster a productive work environment where employees feel empowered and valued;
- Create an environment of open communication and collaboration; and
- Respond to the changing nature of the workplace.



Part Two: The Strategic Context

THE STRATEGY

The 2020-2025 People Strategy is aligned with our mission, vision, values, and goals, and is tightly integrated into our performance plans and budgets. Four pillars form the foundation of the strategy:

Workforce

Closing WORKFORCE gaps in skills, knowledge, and competency

Innovation

Driving INNOVATION and increasing communication across the organization to enhance knowledge management and service delivery



Economy

Reducing costs and improving efficiency in an unpredictable, ever-changing ECONOMY

Quality

Ensuring QUALITY through addressing redundancies and risks through continual improvement

These four pillars will be elaborated in more detail in Part Three.



Part Two: The Strategic Context

STRATEGIC ENABLERS

In 2018, the Human Resources Department chose four themes that reinforce our purpose, drive, and commitment. Those themes are as follows:



"The act of working with someone and sharing knowledge and/or resources to successfully accomplish a task."



"A lack of hidden agendas and conditions, accompanied by the availability of the full information required for collaboration, cooperation and collective decision-making."



"Gaining the knowledge needed to make future improvements or advances, through the study of historical data to understand trends and arrive at insights."



"The quality of reacting or replying quickly and positively to a suggestion, initiative, or change."



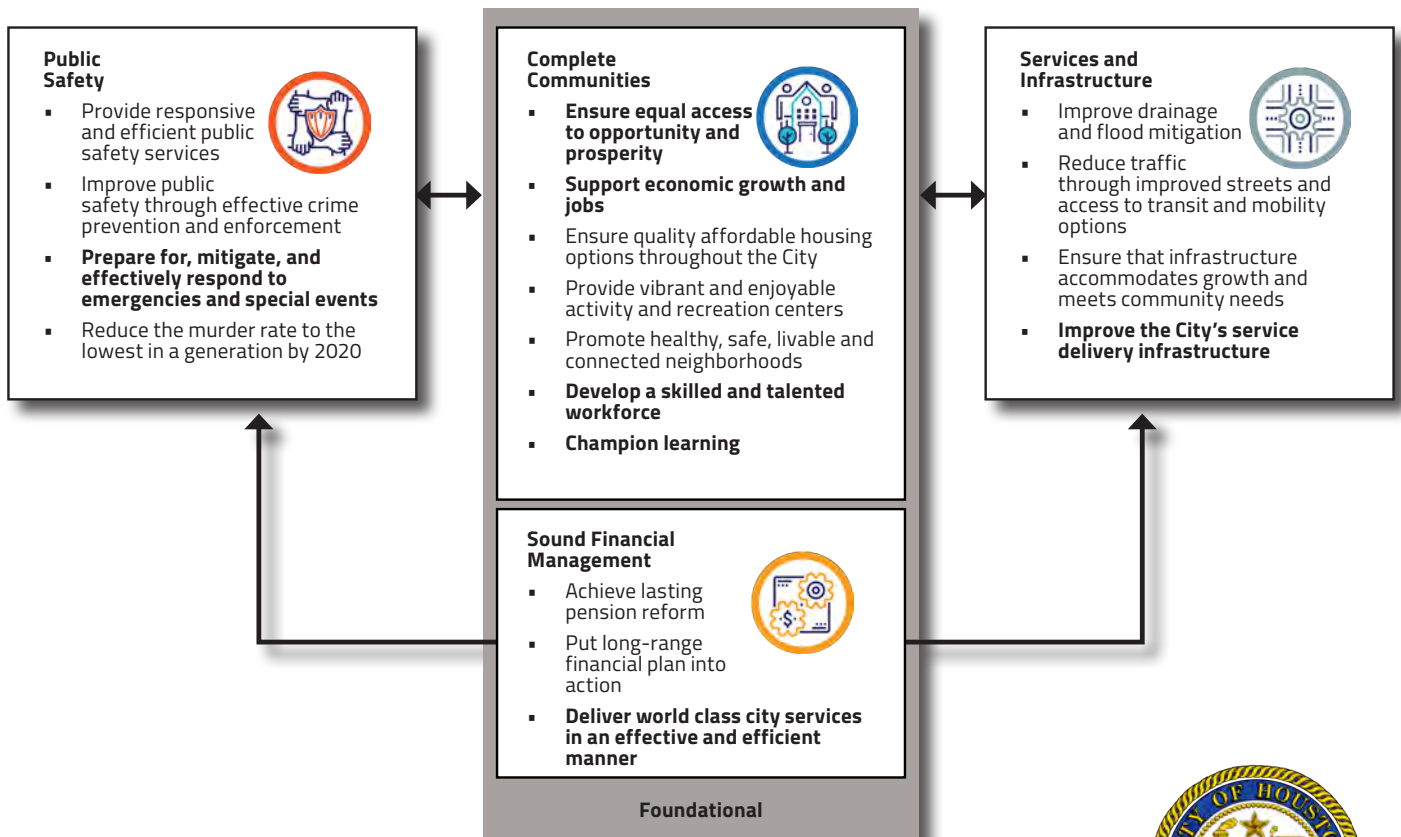
STRATEGIC ENABLERS

The Mayor's Priorities for the City of Houston are Complete Communities, Public Safety, Services & Infrastructure and Sound Financial Management. These priorities are drawn from Plan Houston and guide the strategic direction of the city under Mayor Turner's administration. Accompanying the Mayor's Priorities are goals to each priority and outcomes to ensure these goals are achieved. The 2020-2025 People Strategy aligns with Mayor Turner's priorities.

"It is vital to offer a highly distinctive work experience to recruit the very best talent from around the world."

MAYOR SYLVESTER TURNER'S PRIORITIES

A welcoming city that works for all.



Part Three

STRATEGIC PILLARS

As noted in an earlier section, our strategy is founded upon four main pillars, or priorities:

Workforce

Closing WORKFORCE gaps in skills, knowledge, and competency

Innovation

Driving INNOVATION and increasing communication across the organization to enhance knowledge management and service delivery

Economy

Reducing costs and improving efficiency in an unpredictable, ever-changing ECONOMY

Quality

Ensuring QUALITY through addressing redundancies and risks through continual improvement

Each of these pillars is associated with a set of strategies for fulfilling our guiding vision of human resource excellence.



PILLAR I: WORKFORCE

This pillar refers to our ability to make meaningful progress toward closing mission-critical skills, knowledge, and competency gaps/deficiencies. This signifies to leaders and managers across the organization that we can effectively manage people, maintain continuity of leadership, and sustain a learning environment that drives continuous improvement in performance.

Strategies to Attract

1. Establish and implement market-based compensation programs and practices.
2. Implement an applicant tracking system to deliver a positive applicant and recruiter experience and provide robust information management and reporting with increased visibility to all stakeholders.
3. Promote the attractiveness of working for the City of Houston through an expanded use of social media to attract the highest caliber of candidates.
4. Support new hires through tailored on-boarding processes, to enable them to quickly become effective in their new roles.



Part Three: Strategic Pillars

PILLAR I: WORKFORCE

Strategies to Retain

1. Build on models of good practice to increase diversity in leadership roles.
2. Create an environment which encourages cross-disciplinary thinking, ideas, and proposals through employee development.
3. Develop a flexible mentoring framework to support staff across all areas of the organization and extend coaching programs to support management styles that foster our ethos and culture.
4. Ensure fair compensation practices and equity in our salary policies through equal pay for equal work and regular reviews of processes.
5. Foster a climate where all our activities are highly valued, by producing best practice guidance on how to recognize and reward excellence.
6. Promote a culture whereby all employees feel connected to the organization and pursue a healthy work/life balance.

Strategies to Develop

1. Broker strategic partnerships between departments and divisions as well as with other municipalities.
2. Define career paths linked to professional development needs and individual development plans, as well as to the performance management process.
3. Drive increased high-impact knowledge exchange and engagement.
4. Embrace modern technologies as part of enhancing the workplace experience.
5. Ensure career transitions are made smoothly, with an emphasis on supporting new supervisors and managers.
6. Equip all managers with the skills needed to deliver prompt and effective assessment and feedback as well as open communication.

“A unified strategy to ensure employees are positioned for optimal service delivery.”





City of Houston

HUMAN RESOURCES



Vision

To be universally recognized for Human Resources excellence and as a premier employer.

Values

Integrity, Customer Service, Accountability, Honesty, Respect

Mission

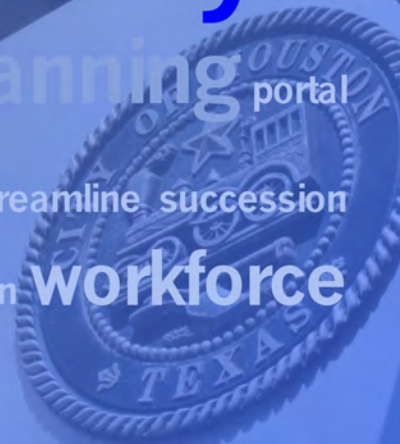
To be a strategic partner by providing Human Resources programs that attract, develop, retain, and engage a skilled and diverse workforce.

Goal

To exceed the expectations of our stakeholders by committing to our shared values and by achieving the highest levels of customers satisfaction.

HR ONE

administration analytics applicants attendance **benefits** business capital
compensation education **wellness** employee
employment epay esign ess fieldglass fmla **hr** human intelligence
transparency mss
interfaces learning management **planning** portal
notifications offboarding onboarding organizational performance
communications risk safety **service** streamline succession
records reports system **talent** tracking verification **workforce**



Part Three: Strategic Pillars

PILLAR II: INNOVATION



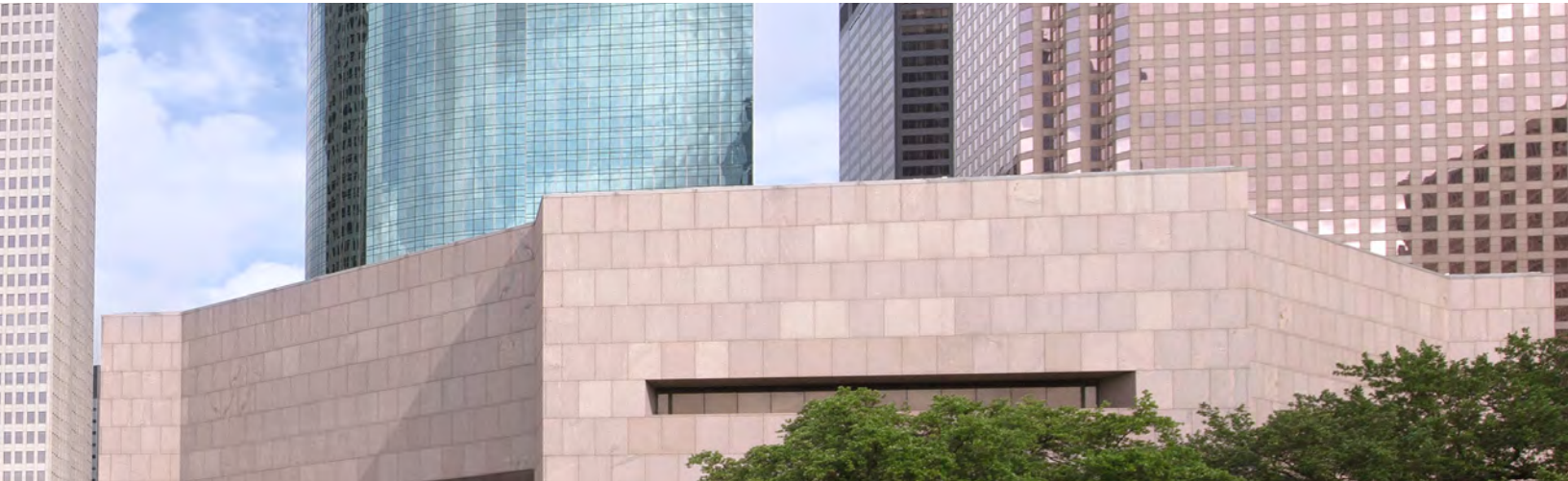
This pillar refers to collaboration across the organization, focused on the implementation of innovative ideas and the enhancement of service delivery. We continue to seek innovative ways to carry out our work and have a record of accomplishment of generating exceptional results. Our role in organizational design helps create a work culture across the City of Houston that supports innovation.

Strategies for Service Delivery Excellence

1. Clean existing HR data and set up processes/policies that define standards to reduce errors and help ensure better data is available for decision making.
2. Create “one-stop-shop” operations to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and expand employees and managers self-service capabilities.
3. Implement collaborative solutions that will give easy access to all data, information, and systems that individuals may access, while using strong controls needed to ensure information security.
4. Implement shared case management solutions that give case tracking, reporting, and workflows.
5. Support the integrity and consistency of background investigations through innovative technology and practices.
6. Yield cost-savings by combining and reducing overlapping services, operations, processes, and applications.



PILLAR III: ECONOMY



This pillar focuses on giving insights to help reduce costs by driving improved efficiency and quality.

Strategies for Transparency

1. Create and implement budget development guidelines based on performance-based budgeting principles.
2. Enhance ability to actively monitor the budget and objectively appraise the short- and long-term financial implications of all major decisions.
3. Find and effectively manage all material resources with strengthened financial controls.
4. Strengthen financial controls and reporting for spending transparency across funding types and programs.
5. Utilize responsible and transparent fiscal practices for financial resiliency through a multi-faceted and proven approach.

“Excellence in service delivery through continual improvement and decreased risk.”



Part Three: Strategic Pillars

PILLAR IV: QUALITY

This pillar focuses on the systematic process of understanding, evaluating, and addressing risks and inefficiencies to maximize the chances for achieving the city's goals. Benefits reaped from the successful implementation of this strategy will help catalyze enhanced oversight, governance, and better practices for managing risk, and decision-making informed by both the available evidence and a deep knowledge of our staff and their context.

Strategies for Quality

1. Build a solid foundation of quality infrastructure that supports human resources programs, activities, and citywide initiatives.
2. Create proactive engagement between safety personnel and employees to foster more interactive inter-departmental relationships.
3. Create value-added services using fewer resources.
4. Deploy effective and efficient management strategies for Employee Assistance and Wellness Programs, which will include proactive communication, support, and assessment.
5. Raise awareness about the risks of working in specific environments (such as outdoors) using clear guidance and training.

"The Human Resources Department is passionate about its approach to driving great business value for both internal and external stakeholders for the City of Houston."





THE FRAMEWORK

Aims

- Create governance systems for continuous improvement and risk management, quantitative operational metrics of performance, and quality assurance.
- Enhance our workforce through giving competitive benefits and services, strengthening strategic partnerships, and increasing organizational ability and automation.
- Provide an environment that supports innovation for the greater well-being of our employees and deliver outstanding service driven by the employee experience.
- Yield cost-savings by combining and reducing overlapping services, operations, processes, and applications.

Guiding Principles

- Create an environment that fosters creativity and innovation in our ideas, initiatives, and the solutions we offer.
- Embrace a culture of continuous improvement.
- Encourage the highest standards of integrity and professional conduct in our approach to our work and the service that we provide to all.
- Ensure that the values of equity, fairness, and transparency shape and reflect our policies, practices, and processes.
- Exhibit an inclusive outlook in our approach to shaping our talent agenda.
- Value and celebrate differences while upholding the highest standards of equality and opportunity for all.



Part Four: Human Resources Department

THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

This office handles overseeing all financial and administrative activities for the Human Resources (HR) Department. It gives guidance and develops HR policies for all city departments as well as directing the activities of the Civil Service Commission. It also oversees HR Operations; Information Management; Benefits; Risk Management; Employee/Labor Relations; the Learning and Development Center; Finance and Accounting; Contract Compliance and Special Projects; Compensation; and Communications. In HR, our core beliefs in accountability, customer service, and transparency help us to continually exceed the expectations of our stakeholders and the wider community. The department will continue to create sound partnerships across the city to bolster training, staffing, fair labor practices, analytics, and affordable healthcare benefits.

Objectives

- To continue to act as a strategic partner for other city departments in attracting, keeping, and managing the city's workforce.
- To educate employees about their role in the city's service structure and to guide them in carrying out the city's goals and priorities.
- To inform employees about their benefits, the civil service system, available training opportunities, and how to use these programs and services wisely.



Part Four: Human Resources Department

HR OPERATIONS

The HR Operations Division is a combined entity that initiates and leans on Human Resources practices and objectives. The division fosters an employee-oriented, high-performance culture that emphasizes goal attainment, team spirit, superior customer service, quality work, high efficiency, and productivity. Sections within Operations include Client Relations, Employee Relations, Shared Services, Staffing, Classified Testing, Employee Relations, and Employee Resources and Services.

Objectives

- To administer and implement city and departmental policies and procedures, process Family Medical Leave Requests and various personnel actions timely, and ensure that practices comply with Federal and State regulations and laws.
- To aid the Houston Police Department in the delivery of Class A promotional examinations within the time frames of the Meet and Confer Agreement.
- To attract and keep a diverse workforce for client departments.
- To deliver Houston Fire Department promotional exams within the time frames of the Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association (HPFFA) Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- To plan, develop, implement, and monitor various strategic HR initiatives, activities, programs, and systems in order to meet the department's needs.
- To streamline processes, develop metrics, and find opportunities for improvement.
- To support all City of Houston departments with reliable and responsive HR services, and align programs with each overall department's HR goals and priorities.

Client Services

The Client Relations section, made up of ten Client Relations Managers (CRMs), is the command center of HR Operations. CRMs act as immediate first-contact resources for department directors, designees, and liaisons for all matters relating to hiring, administration, and employee relations. Additionally, CRMs oversee the daily operations of their respective groups, ensuring that the HR business needs of each client department are met.

Classified Testing

The Classified Testing section develops and administers promotional examinations to classified personnel in the Houston Fire Department as mandated by Chapter 143 of the Texas Local Government Code and any recognized labor agreements. The section also



Part Four: Human Resources Department

HR OPERATIONS

provides assistance, as needed, on promotional examinations to personnel in the Houston Police Department as mandated by Chapter 143 of the Texas Local Government code and any recognized labor agreements.

Employee Relations

The Employee Relations section provides professional Human Resources support in coordinating and directing Employee Relations activities which include Grievances, ECRPs, EEOC Complaints, Disciplinary/Corrective Actions, Medical Separations, Employee Counselling, etc., and ensures that all employee relations activities are compliant with applicable city policies/procedures, Code of Ordinances, federal, state, local laws and regulations. It is also the city's agent for sustaining effective employment relationships in the workplace.

Onboarding and Verification Services

Onboarding and Verification Services gives a broad range of services to ensure that applicants, candidates for employment, and current City of Houston employees are aware of the policies and procedures relating to application submissions, and employment eligibility requirements. An integral function of the division is the certification and maintenance of information and processes which confirm whether an employee has followed city, state, and federal employment guidelines as their careers begin and throughout their tenure.

Physical Exams and Drug Testing

The Physical Exams and Drug Testing section provides citywide drug and alcohol screening services for new hires and employees for random checks, post-accident review, and for reasonable suspicion.

Staffing

The Staffing section handles staffing the city's departments with top talent. It provides recruitment of high-level candidates for client departments through comprehensive postings and the sourcing and high-level screening of applicants.

Shared Services

The Shared Services section handles the effective processing of personnel actions that result from employment status changes, such as promotions, transfers, terminations, salary increases, and leaves of absence. Other services provided by Shared Services include the requisitioning of temporary employees, the administering of Family Medical Leave and the processing of retirements. Shared services teams work collaboratively with their client(s) to provide clear communication, transparent practices and a well-regulated partnership.



Part Four: Human Resources Department

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The HR Information Management Division is the hub and go-to resource for all matters of systems enhancements, data exchange, employee data, and project management. This team's key focus is to drive innovation and transform processes that help lead the organization into the future. Sections include Employee Records and Contingent Workforce Services.

Objectives

- To provide a system that enhances communication and workflow between users and reduces duplication of tasks with legacy systems.
- To provide accurate HR data for data analytics, improving the quality of business decisions.
- To respond efficiently to subpoenas and public information requests, employment, and salary verification requests from third parties.
- To utilize electronic workflows and approval routing to increase automation and standardization of business processes.

Employee Records

The Employee Records section is responsible for the maintenance and management of the official HR personnel records, approximately 40,000, for all active and inactive employees. They are also responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and codes; as well as providing wage, employment and service verifications and assisting with public information requests.

Contingent Workforce Services

The Contingent Workforce Services section handles hiring contractual, temporary personnel. It is a vital part of the city's staffing strategy for peak loads, pilot programs, grants, citywide events, and special needs. Temporary employment agencies source contingent workers qualified in healthcare, professional/technical, IT, administrative, and service/maintenance fields.



Part Four: Human Resources Department

BENEFITS

The Benefits Division is formed of three sections. Sections within Benefits include Strategic Benefits Planning and Design, Employee Wellness, and Employee Assistance.

Objectives

- To develop and maintain a competitive health benefits program that is fiscally sound and provides employees and retirees with some financial protection against life's uncertainties, including catastrophic illnesses, accidents, death, and physical or mental disabilities.
- To educate employee groups about stress management, violence in the workplace, managing conflict in the workplace, depression, and other topics.
- To establish and maintain employees' and retirees' eligibility and cost-sharing for benefits plans.
- To establish and promote health and well-being initiatives that improve the health of city employees.
- To inform employees about their benefits and the tools necessary to use them effectively through a professional communications program.
- To promote integrated wellness and mental health initiatives.
- To support a productive workforce by helping employees to find the causes of their problems and develop effective coping strategies, training supervisors to recognize potential risks, and encouraging a drug-free workplace.



BENEFITS

Planning and Design

The Planning and Design section develops and make recommendations for the strategic direction of the Benefits Program, which includes the Healthcare Delivery System and other employee welfare plans. This team designs, facilitates procurement for, implements, maintains, communicates, administers, and monitors all benefits plans, with responsibility for comprehensive oversight of the Healthcare Delivery System that has an annual budget exceeding \$300 million for 66,000 active and retired employees and covered dependents. The Benefits Program includes medical, dental, vision, long-term disability, life insurance, dependent care and healthcare flexible spending accounts, accrued leave donation, and other benefits and services.

Wellness

The Wellness section concentrates on health improvement processes to measurably reduce health risk factors for high- or medium-risk individuals while creating an environment of health and well-being for both at-risk individuals and healthy individuals. Specifically, the program focuses on initiatives such as Employee Wellness Engagement, Lifestyle Management Programs, and department-centric health programs.

Employee Assistance

The Employee Assistance section provides confidential assessment, referrals, and short-term counseling to employees with personal concerns that may adversely affect their work performance. It serves as a leader in following the Drug-Free Workplace Act and provides consultation and education for supervisors and managers.



Part Four: Human Resources Department

RISK MANAGEMENT

Per Administrative Procedure 2-21: Employee Safety and Health, the Risk Management Division handles general oversight, including process standardization and promotion, of the accident prevention activities within departments. It is also responsible for departmental compliance with city safety policies and procedures, except where conflicts occur with currently-accepted officer safety and training policies, procedures and provisions of Chapter 143 of the Local Government Code. The \$19 million, self-insured workers' compensation program includes a contracted third-party administrator to decide injured employee claims.

Sections within the Risk Management Division include Safety, Physical Exams and Drug Testing, and Workers' Compensation. In 2019, the Risk Management Division absorbed Safety and Workers' Compensation functions previously performed and managed by the Houston Public Works and Fire Department.

Objectives

- To coordinate workers' compensation and salary continuation entitlements for employees, while focusing on the proper treatment of injuries and returning employees to work as soon as possible.
- To give timely medical evaluations for new employees and promotional candidates.
- To improve efficiency and lower costs; and continue the established safety program which partners HR safety personnel with the safety units of several other departments.
- To make sure departments are following federal, state, and local safety and environmental health policies and procedures.
- To manage the Hazard Communications Program to ensure the safe purchase, use, storage, and disposal of chemicals.
- To minimize the city's liability for Workers' Compensation by developing and actively promoting effective accident prevention plans and educating employees on workplace safety.
- To process prompt and maintain confidential drug testing (including new hire, post-accident, random, and reasonable suspicion).



Part Four: Human Resources Department

RISK MANAGEMENT

Safety

The Safety section has the responsibility of establishing and maintaining a safe and healthful workplace in accordance with Texas statutes. These laws include, but are not limited to, the general duty clause from the Texas Labor Code, Title 5. Texas Workers' Compensation Act, Chapter 411.103, "Duty of Employer to Provide Safe Workplace." To this end, the safety officers and other senior safety professionals within the departments audit current safety programs to determine which programs need to be enhanced to maintain the city's status as one of the safest municipalities to work for in the US.

Workers' Compensation

As outlined in Executive Order 1-33: Work Ability Guidelines, the Workers' Compensation section handles establishing procedures to ensure full compliance with the Texas Workers' Compensation Act and all federal, state, and local laws relating to employees injured on-the-job. The Workers' Compensation team conducts in-depth case management review to achieve a shorter claim cycle and return the employee to work in a pre-injury condition.



Part Four: Human Resources Department

CIVIL SERVICE & EEO

The The Civil Service and EEO Division serves all city departments by providing City of Houston employees with a forum to address issues and concerns and by giving information, advice, and training to prevent workplace problems.

The division coordinates the activities of the Municipal Employees' Civil Service Commission; the Fire Fighters' and Police Officers' Civil Service Commission; and the Police Officers' Civil Service Commission. It also promotes compliance in areas such as: Equal Employment Opportunity (including federal government reporting requirements); the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Texas Local Government Code; the City Charter; and other relevant federal, state, and local laws.

OFFICE OF TALENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The mission of the Office of Talent and Organizational Development is to build a world-class, responsive, and results-oriented workforce. The division is a strategic partner that addresses departmental needs by developing programs that attract, develop, retain, and engage a skilled and diverse workforce. In addition to its signature professional development training programs, the Organizational Development program gives consultation services, custom-designed improvement programs, and results-based solutions. This program is designed to address topics such as workforce development, succession management, knowledge transfer and retention, employee engagement, performance management, and change management.

Objectives

- To aid departments with their organizational development needs by providing consultation services, custom-designed improvement programs, and results-based solutions.
- To enhance employees' efficiency and productivity through quality learning programs.
- To provide training and staff development programs that meet the needs of city departments in six areas: leadership, management/supervisory skills, professional development, technology, compliance, and safety.



FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING

The Finance and Accounting Division supports all other divisions within the Human Resources Department with buying, managing, and planning for expenditures of the funds necessary to carry out strategic decisions. The division handles the recording and reporting of all HR's financial transactions as well as ensuring that proper internal controls are in place. It also collaborates with managers in preparing budgets and forecasts to analyze and monitor financial performance.

Objectives

- To provide information and transparency by delivering timely, thorough, and accurate financial analysis that aids managers in making sound strategic decisions.
- To enhance compliance by ensuring that internal and external policies and regulations are adhered to.
- To safeguard assets by ensuring that all assets are recorded and inventoried.

COMPLIANCE AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

The Contract Compliance and Specials Projects Division handles Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance as well as departmental MWBE and Pay or Play compliance. Special projects include the Grow Your Own Workforce initiative, which administers the Summer Jobs Program and hosts an annual Career Day Expo for high school students, as well as other programs designed to expose students to municipal careers. The section is also responsible for coordinating special events and coordinating facility renovations.



Part Four: Human Resources Department

COMPENSATION

The Compensation Division manages the city's corporate classification and compensation programs to attract, maintain, and retain an experienced, competitive workforce.

Objectives

- To assess, report and recommend appropriate base pay policies and positioning in our various relevant markets.
- To conduct job audits and ensure appropriate classification.
- To maintain the official record of job classifications.
- To respond efficiently public information requests.



Part Four: Human Resources Department

COMMUNICATIONS

The City of Houston's central employee communications office publishes three award-winning employee newsletters, a series of benefits open enrollment materials, a communication campaign for the city's highly recognized wellness program, information about the Risk Management, Safety, and Workers' Compensation program and many other annual and as-needed publications for more than 22,000 employees and over 9,000 retirees. The team also coordinates employee recognition and other special employee programs, develops communication campaigns to educate employees about wellness initiatives and engagement, and supports the Mayor's office with specific communication strategies.

Objectives

- To communicate to employees their valuable role in the organization, to foster teamwork, and to improve employee morale.
- To coordinate the Combined Municipal Campaign, the city's workplace giving drive that lets employees help those less fortunate.
- To develop and implement a comprehensive communication campaign that informs and encourages employees to take part in the city's Wellness Program.
- To develop, publish and distribute all-inclusive information about the Healthcare Delivery System and Workers' Compensation Program.
- To publicly recognize employees' exceptional achievement, dedication, and hard work.
- To publish high-quality, accurate and informative online and hard-copy employee publications that will educate and influence employees to accomplish the city's goals and priorities.



FEDERAL LAW, STATE STATUTES, CITY CHARTER/ORDINANCE(S) OR MEET AND CONFER AGREEMENTS

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967

American Disabilities Act of 1990

Civil Rights Act of 1991

Civil Service Commission Appeals and Administration

Classified Testing Services

Code of Ordinances - Chapter 14

Combined Municipal Campaign for Charitable Donations

Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986

Contingent Workforce Services

Contract Compliance

Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988

Employee and Labor Relations

Employee Assistance Program

Employee Concerns and Resolution Program

Employee Records and Retention

Employee Safety and Health

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Equal Pay Act

Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938

Family Medical Leave Act of 1993

General Accounting Standards Board

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

Meet and Confer or Collective Bargaining Agreements for Municipal, Houston Fire Department, and Houston Police Department employees

New Hire Reporting (Pre- and Post-Employment)

Other Post-Employment Benefits

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010

Pregnancy Discrimination Act

Section 503 Rehabilitation Act as amended in 2013

Texas Open Meetings Act

Texas Public Information Act

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Veterans' Employment and Training Service

Workers' Compensation





HUMAN RESOURCES

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