

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Human Resources**



**Fiscal Years 2018-2019
Performance Oversight Hearing**

**Testimony of
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**Before the
Committee on Labor and Workforce Development
Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable Elissa Silverman, Chairperson**

John A. Wilson Building
Room 412
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Good morning, Councilmember Silverman and members of the Committee on Labor and Workforce Development. My name is Ventris C. Gibson, and I am the Director of the DC Department of Human Resources (DCHR). Thank you for the opportunity to report on DCHR's Fiscal Year 2018 performance. Providing testimony today brings me great pleasure as the performance of the agency this past year speaks volumes to the outstanding work of DCHR's employees.

Mayor Bowser's Fiscal Year 2018 budget made investments that support our efforts to deliver on the promise of shared DC values. These efforts include creating economic opportunity, making our neighborhoods safer, and providing more effective and efficient government services. We continue that effort as we work each day to fulfill our commitment to provide every District resident a fair shot at opportunity. Specifically, DCHR provides human resource management services that strengthen individual and organizational performance and enable District government to attract, develop, and retain a well-qualified, diverse workforce.

The 21st century human resources (HR) professional is a strategic business partner who is an expert in human resources, is customer centric, mission-focused, and understands the priorities of the District of Columbia government. The HR professional must be innovative and compliance-oriented, as we are entrusted with and mandated to interpret and apply the laws, rules, and regulations that govern human resources management. Our vision is simple, we strive to be the best-in-class human capital organization that puts people first, promotes innovation, and serves as a model for others.



Put People First

For DC Residents: During FY18, DCHR has applied a focused approach to recruiting District residents through specific recruitment programs and events. For instance, in partnership with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) and the Department of Employment Services (DOES), we engaged multiple stakeholders in developing the High School Leadership Institute (HSLI). This program links District students with meaningful work experiences while interacting with professionals who support their growth and development. The program also showcases career opportunities in District government and builds a pipeline for talented District students who will consider the District of Columbia government as an employer of choice while in college and after they graduate and/or earn certifications. HSLI has enrolled and supported 11 interns serving across various agencies.

DCHR also hosted two hiring events with the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to fill specialized vacant positions. We attracted 375 attendees that resulted in 51 offers. Of those 51 offers, 90 percent went to District residents. The second hiring event in May 2018 attracted 183 attendees and resulted in 47 offers of employment, of which 94 percent went to District residents. The second DDOT event also interviewed and successfully established a qualified pool of 42 candidates who would eventually transitioned into career positions. Additionally, in partnership with the DC Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), we attracted 187 attendees that led to 10 offers of employment, of which 90 percent were District residents.



This past April, DCHR hosted its second “DC Hires Vets” event in partnership with the DC National Guard and Mayor’s Office of Veterans Affairs. DC Hires Vets offers veterans the opportunity to connect with District agencies, private sector companies, and service organizations. Since its inception in 2017, DC Hires Vets has attracted more than 150 employers and service organizations and resulted in the hiring of over 30 veterans.

DCHR also participated in several community events around the District to provide information on employment opportunities and professional development resources. For instance, DCHR attended the Department of Human Services’ (DHS) SNAP Employment and Training Career Resource and Employment Fair, the Human Rights Campaign’s Ask Rayceen Community Forum, Temple of Praise Employment Ministry Spring 2018 Job Fair, the Mayor’s Office on Latino Affairs’ Hispanic Heritage Month Kickoff Event, the Department of Public Works’ Truck Touch, and the DC AmeriCorps Job Fair.

For the District’s Workforce: DCHR continues to offer free training programs for District employees in a blended learning approach. This past year, District employees participated in 64 instructor-led courses, completed nearly 28,077 hours of eLearning, and attended 40 agency-specific training events. DCHR conducted the instructor-led and agency-specific training events. We also launched an exciting and innovative training series, “Moving into Management.” This program introduced employees in salary grades nine through 13 to baseline skills they need to transition into management or higher-level strategic positions. Empowering employees to build on their existing skillsets provides the District with the bench strength needed for managerial vacancies, now and into the future. Of course, the District Leadership Program, Capital City



Fellows Program, Certified Public Manager program, and Executive Leadership Development program continue to be attractive to employees. During FY18, we also released a series of videos titled, “5 Minute Facts.” The videos provide general guidance on common employee issues and tips on a range of topics, such as “Understanding Your DC Government Paycheck,” which has accumulated over 22,000 views.

To ensure that District government provides employees with financial security toward retirement, and in keeping with the District’s efforts to ensure that every resident has a pathway to the middle class, the Mayor introduced the “Deferred Compensation Program Enrollment Amendment Act of 2018.” This legislation, which the Council passed, established automatic enrollment of eligible new employees in the voluntary 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan. Newly-hired employees will have five percent of their base salary automatically contributed to the 457(b) retirement plan. Further, we implemented the three percent match for the City Council, Office of the DC Auditor, and the Advisory Neighborhood Commission.

Also, in FY18, DCHR processed over 12,000 employee benefits changes and hosted eight open enrollment fairs where over 2,500 employees attended to learn more about their benefits. Further, to promote health and wellness, we coordinated 114 wellness events across 25 agencies that included flu shots, blood donations, and more.

For the District’s HR Workforce: DCHR’s Human Resources Certification Program includes a track-specific program focused on enhancing the core body of HR knowledge for the District’s community of HR practitioners. Courses include qualifications analysis, position classification,



recruitment, and employee relations. Twenty-five HR professionals are in the first cohort. Further, 12 HR professionals are participating in the Emerging HR Leaders program. To remain cognizant of state and local government HR issues, DCHR participates in Council of Government events, state and local government HR forums, and local HR conferences. To ensure that we build on our technical skillsets, each month, nearly 100 HR professionals from across our government attend DCHR's HR Advisors meeting.

Promote Innovation

As an agency, we work hard to help the District remain competitive as an employer. To that end, we procured and implemented CompAnalyst, a compensation data and analytics platform that offers employer-reported market data. This software allows us to consistently run market salary reports to ensure we remain competitive in relevant markets. DCHR used this software for salary survey and pay increase requests, collective bargaining unit negotiations, and job content comparisons. We also implemented an automated monthly executive dashboard that displays HR metrics such as time-to-fill, District residency, and number of new hires. The interactive dashboard updates daily to allow us to filter data by various timeframes.

In FY18, DCHR implemented the addition of Medicare (Part C) Advantage plan offerings for District retirees, which keeps the District aligned with other employer offerings and closes the coverage gap experienced by many seniors. Medicare Advantage plans combine original Medicare with additional benefits typically provided by employee healthcare programs and/or medigap insurance so that retirees have more comprehensive coverage. Retirees also have lower



premiums through Advantage plans than they would if they secured equivalent levels of coverage independently.

Serve as a Model for Others

DCHR also works diligently to lead in the human resources arena. In FY18, in partnership with the DC Department of Employment Services, DCHR deployed the U.S. Department of Labor's State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES). SIDES is an electronic tool used to help employers quickly, easily, and accurately respond to state unemployment insurance requests. This automation increased reporting accuracy in the District and reduced response times which, in turn, reduced payment of ineligible unemployment insurance claims by approximately 50 percent.

In January, the District became one of only a few jurisdictions nationwide with a broad domestic violence policy. The new policy outlines workplace-specific signs of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking to create a work environment where all employees feel supported and safe. The policy will result in increased training of DC government employees and ensure that more employees are equipped to identify suspected abuse and able to direct victims and survivors to support services. This coming year, my focus for the organization will be on Trauma Informed Care, reducing the time it takes to fill positions, streamlining position classification, and centralizing processing and records.



Conclusion

I could not sit here today and speak about DCHR's accomplishments without bringing to your attention the wonderful and talented team I work with in DCHR. DCHR's accomplishments this year are the result of our passionate and innovative staff. I am always humbled by the sheer volume of work that we accomplish together. What a joy and honor it is to serve as the District of Columbia's Director of Human Resources.

In closing, I want to thank Mayor Bowser for the opportunity to serve a dynamic workforce who serves the residents of this great city. Thank you and the Council for your support. We appreciate the opportunity to share our accomplishments and plans for continuous improvement and look forward to continuing to work with the Committee. This concludes my testimony. Thank you, I welcome taking your questions.

