



## RACIAL EQUITY BUDGET TOOL

Date Submitted: 6/30/20

Department: House of Correction

*Please note: each response field below has a 2,500 character limit.*

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE CATEGORY 1: DIVERSE & INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

#### **What activities are you doing to attract and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce in your department? What are the associated costs of these activities?**

The House of Correction has taken several steps to attract and retain a diverse workforce such as re-evaluating our Backgrounds and Recruitment department. We placed two new investigators and recruiters in the Backgrounds department who are minority (African American) that new recruits of a diverse background may feel more comfortable with, and less intimidated. We also placed a minority Captain (African American) to supervise the area. The perspective and voice of the new members have immediately been noticed in our recruitment diversity. We eliminated the unnecessary requirement and barrier from our JEQ that Driver's Licenses are required to apply for the position of Correctional Officer. We realized that requiring a Driver's License has a dis-proportionally adverse impact on minority applicants and discourages otherwise qualified applicants from applying. We also lessened our approach and restriction that those in arrears of child support may not be eligible for employment; being in arrears regarding child support, ultimately has no bearing whether perspective hires would or would not be a good officer, and subsequently that restriction also had a negative impact on otherwise qualified minority applicants. We consulted with the State DOJ (who lists this restriction for the position) and they agreed that they would not decertify an officer due to failure to pay child support. The State is now looking at changing the administrative code to reflect this. In other words, Milwaukee County (HOC) would be leading the way to allow more diverse candidates throughout the State to seek and obtain employment and be able to provide for their children and families.

The HOC placed a focus on advertising in locations they are easily accessible and viewable to minorities. To attract and inform more Hispanics, we advertised in the Spanish Journal in April, May, and June. We purposely designed a new HOC feature photo to have a diverse group of officers, including black, Hispanic, and Hmong, that's being advertised on the Milwaukee County and Racine bus lines that are primarily used by minorities. Our recruitment team, participated in the Goodwill Workforce Center Job Fair in February of 2020, and in 2019 on Juneteenth Day, spent all day enlightening and recruiting potential applicants at the festival. Total advertising budget is \$34,000 a year or less.

We eliminated the necessity that individuals carry car insurance at the time of application if they owned a vehicle

#### **How do you use professional development and advancement opportunities to advance equity in your department's workforce? What resources are used to support these opportunities for professional development and advancement?**

Until recently, promotions were based on a one-time in person interview. The candidates were interviewed by one or two supervisors, graded and then the Superintendent selected who he thought was the best candidate with the interview score the greatest influence.

Recently, the somewhat "dictator-style" selection process has been revised. For Sergeants, as an example, all 33 supervisors above that rank are asked for input regarding their top 5 selections. This is an important factoring method, as our 33 supervisors represent a diverse grading element. See accompanying chart. With that, an applicant's disciplinary record is included as a variable as is a required essay with a specific grading rubric. That rubric is graded by a group representing diverse backgrounds. The final grade is tabulated. This ensures a more cooperative and racially diverse approach in creating future leaders at the HOC.

When Leadership training is announced each year, the HOC ensures minorities are included in the recommendations. Recently, an Accounting Supervisor of color was promoted into a supervisory role and attended training. This will help ensure more diverse leadership in the County going forward.

HOC leadership encourages professional development and funds are set aside in the budget each year.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE CATEGORY 2: PEOPLE-FOCUSED DESIGN

### **How and when have service users, particularly users of color, and other key stakeholders been engaged to inform decisions about your requested budget (Who was involved, what was the forum, what were the results)?**

The HOC is using our Racial Equity Ambassadors to help make informed decisions about budget initiatives. For example, last year, the Ambassadors approved of a recommendation to increase the use of Electronic Monitoring of our Huber inmates due to transportation issues faced by employed inmates at HOC. Most of the HOC's inmates are minority. Many have limited access to personal transportation, and there are no readily available bus lines to HOC to get back and forth from work easily each day. This affects their ability to get to work, look for employment, as well as get to treatments or medical appointments.

The HOC also sends several leaders to the town halls about the budget that have been held each year by County administration at various locations around the County. This provides HOC management with some opinions and things to consider on budget initiatives.

The HOC envisions further work being done in the future to engage employees in budget development and decisions before they are made. Some assistance with best practices to handle their involvement -- given budget targets / necessary potential cuts can create sensitive issues -- would be beneficial. +

### **What are the multi-lingual needs of your department's service users? How do you use your budget to meet these language needs?**

The HOC has not yet fully identified the multi-lingual needs of all of our service users. However, the HOC has been able to develop an ad-hoc system to help users through the HOC's own diverse workforce; a good percentage of HOC staff has the ability to communicate in more than one language. In our recruitment process, we seek out multilingual candidates. When necessary, we have used a translation system through an interpreter services contract. The HOC also provides bi-lingual church services that are free as they are conducted by volunteers from the community. The budget provides funding for the interpreter services contract, as well as Graphics orders, such as HOC signage, in multiple languages.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE CATEGORY 3: EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE

### **Our employees can be a great resource for innovation and knowing what is working well and what needs work. Have you engaged a diverse group of frontline employees to inform decisions about your proposed budget changes? If yes, how was input solicited, who was involved, and what were the results?**

We have regular meeting with the Employee Engagement Committee. The committee is comprised of a diverse set of Officers. Items discussed with the committee in previous meetings have included the issues of employee retention, turnover and pay. The committee was very much involved in retrieving information about employee dissatisfaction about low pay and its correlation to a high turnover rate. They were in communication with the previous Chairperson of the County Board and had demonstrable input on the raises given to officers this past fiscal year.

They have had discussions with our recruitment team on how to best spend our funds to attract a diverse and talented group of officers. This includes the Spanish Journal, social media ads etc.

Our Racial Equity ambassadors, in an interview in December of last year, approved of a recommendation of increased use of Electronic Monitoring with our Huber inmates due to transportation issues faced by employed inmates at HOC. Our inmates are mostly minority, have limited access to personal transportation and there are no bus lines to HOC. This affects their ability to get to work, look for employment, get to treatments or medical appointments. +

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE CATEGORY 4: IMPROVED PERFORMANCE & EQUITABLE PRACTICE

### **Describe ways in which racial and economic data was used to prioritize resource distribution. (Data can include sources found in the resources section of this tool, department collected data, or any other relevant data from other sources.)**

The HOC has collected racial and economic data on inmates participating in various programs. It has mainly been used to support programming, such as electronic monitoring, Day Reporting Center, and female reentry programming. Thus far, it has not been used in any systematic way to prioritize resource distribution. In the future, the HOC could use some assistance developing tools or processes that would assure resources are distributed based on the RE data.

**What are the positive or negative racial equity implications of your proposed budget changes? For reference departments may refer to the “Form 1 – Major Changes” tab of your Supplemental Forms 2021 spreadsheet. Any change with identified impacts should be described.**

The HOC is not recommending that programming be cut in order to make tax levy. In the past, the Day Reporting Center and Benedict Center programs were potential cuts. In fact, the HOC is in the process of expanding the use of the Day Reporting Center (DRC). Currently, the DRC use is African American 54.5%, Caucasian 31.5%, Hispanic 12.8%, Native American 1%, and Asian 0%. The DOC inmates that the program is being expanded are mostly minorities that will really benefit from being in Milwaukee County and getting services from the DRC to help prepare them for when they can be released back into the community.

The HOC also plans to keep the Huber dorms closed and continue to instead put eligible inmates on Electronic Monitoring. This helps them find and keep jobs since they can stay in the community and do not have the transportation issue of getting to work from the House of Correction; there is very limited bus service into the city of Milwaukee from the HOC's rural Franklin, WI location.

**What are the expected benefits and potential unintended consequences to disadvantaged communities of your proposed budget changes?**

**a. What analysis did you do to determine the expected benefits and potential unintended consequences?**

Benefits are discussed above. No unintended consequences are known.

**b. What will your department do to mitigate unintended consequences resulting from your proposed budget changes?**

The HOC understands that conducting surveys in the future could help us identify unknown consequences that may actually exist but are unknown to us at this time.