

BUDGET SUMMARY

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Adopted Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures					
Personnel Costs	5,187,940	7,020,136	5,653,352	5,602,931	(50,421)
Operations Costs	612,211	862,886	1,285,829	1,237,764	(48,065)
Debt & Depreciation	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlay	0	38,279	0	0	0
Interdepartmental Charges	(144,313)	(146,813)	0	0	0
Total Expenditures	\$5,655,838	\$7,774,488	\$6,939,181	\$6,840,695	(\$98,486)
Revenues					
Other Direct Revenue	6,000	0	0	0	0
Total Revenues	\$6,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Tax Levy	\$5,649,838	\$7,774,488	\$6,939,181	\$6,840,695	(\$98,486)
Personnel					
Full Time Pos (FTE)	70.00	72.00	73.00	72.00	(1.00)
Overtime \$	45,737	176,227	0	0	0
Seasonal/Hourly/Pool	0	0	0	0	0

Department Mission:

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) is committed to making Milwaukee County a leading employer with a high performing, engaged workforce that meets and exceeds business objectives within a supportive, diverse and inclusive workplace. This includes developing programs and practices that establish competitive compensation practices, cost effective yet competitive employee and retiree benefits plans, encouraging a healthy work-life balance, supporting career development, improving internal communications, and rewarding employees for their results and service. DHR also builds management and leadership competency across the County through learning and development initiatives, to ensure leaders have both the skills and the tools necessary to effectively lead employees to success. DHR maintains a balance between employee and management rights and strives to build a culture of accountability for all employees. DHR maintains the County's total rewards strategy which includes pay, career progression, benefits, retirement programs, and employee wellbeing.

Department Description:

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) consists of six (6) service areas: the Director's Office, including Workforce Analytics and Employee Engagement; Total Rewards, including Compensation, Benefits and the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS); Employee/Labor Relations; Talent Acquisition & HR Operations; Learning & Development and Diversity; and Retirement Plan Services.

Major Changes

- The following changes to FTEs are included in the 2026 budget: 1.0 FTE Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Director and 1.0 FTE Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program Manager are transferred from the Director's Office to the Learning & Development and Diversity division within DHR.
- 1.0 FTE Manager Training Development is abolished in the Learning & Development and Diversity division within DHR.
- Milwaukee County established the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 (OBRA) Pension Plan in 1991 to provide retirement coverage for part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees who are not eligible for the County's main pension system. Administered by the Employees' Retirement System (ERS), the OBRA Plan is fully funded by the County, which also precludes paying the employer portion of FICA, offsetting its contributions. Employees likewise do not pay the 6.2% Social Security payroll tax. Most OBRA participants

do not accrue sufficient service to vest in a defined benefit, typically receiving small cash payouts after five years of inactivity or having funds escheated to the State if unclaimed. This structure often results in minimal retirement benefits for covered employees. To improve long-term retirement security, the Department of Human Resources, working with the Offices of Corporation Counsel, Strategy, Budget and Performance, and the Comptroller, is requested to develop a proposal for a “soft close” of the OBRA Plan. This approach would avoid the complexities associated with fully terminating the OBRA Pension Plan to eligible participants. The plan should explore enrolling new hires in Social Security while preserving obligations to current members. A report outlining recommendations, fiscal impact, and implementation steps is requested to be submitted to the County Board no later than the July 2026 meeting cycle.

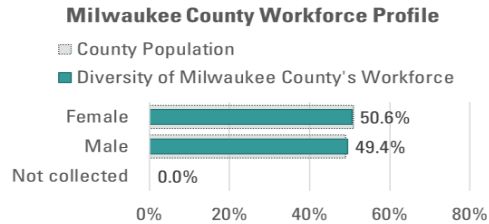
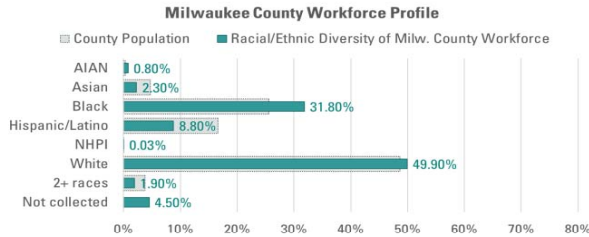
- Milwaukee County and the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) both use the Dayforce payroll platform but currently operate on separate systems. In 2026, the Payroll Division of the Office of the Comptroller, in collaboration with the Department of Human Resources, Department of Transportation, and MCTS, shall evaluate the feasibility of merging MCTS payroll operations into the County’s system. The review shall identify: The estimated costs and potential savings of integration, operational efficiencies that could be achieved through a unified payroll structure, recommendations for implementation, including timelines and any required system or staffing changes. The Comptroller shall present their findings and recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors by the April 2026 meeting cycle.
- The MCSO and CRC face persistent understaffing due to long training pipelines, ordinance requirements related to the hiring, training, and staffing processes, and reliance on mandatory overtime, which creates conditions that contribute to staff burnout and operational instability. While MCSO and the CRC already have established training programs, the current system is constrained by the timing of vacancies. Due to frequent turnover, positions often remain vacant for extended periods because new hires cannot begin training until a vacancy officially opens. This delay exacerbates challenges related to vacancy rates, turnover, and overtime. The proposed training pipeline program would allow for preemptive training for new hires, based on expected vacancies, rather than waiting for positions to open. This approach would help reduce the impact of turnover and better align staffing levels with departmental needs. The Office of the Sheriff and the Community Reintegration Center, in coordination with the Office of Strategy, Budget and Performance, Office of the Comptroller, and Department of Human Resources, shall submit a report to the County Board by the May 2026 meeting cycle with a purpose of collaboratively addressing critical vacancies, extended training pipelines, and excessive overtime within the MCSO and CRC by identifying opportunities for a Staffing Stabilization Initiative beginning in 2026. This report shall be titled “Staffing Stabilization Initiative Report – [Date of Report]” and shall be submitted to the County Board for committee assignment and directly to all County Supervisors, in anticipation that future updates to the report may be requested on a recurring basis depending on the outcomes of information provided in this first report. The report shall: Explore options for proactively recruiting qualified candidates for deputy and correctional officer positions, while examining current and past recruitment resources and methods as well as those used by other law enforcement agencies or detention centers that have experienced better rates of qualified applicants in comparison to total applicants that what Milwaukee County has recently experienced; Explore options for navigating the hiring process and onboarding new deputies and correctional officers prior to FTE vacancies becoming officially vacant, with the goal of reducing staffing shortages, reducing mandatory overtime for other staff, and minimizing overtime costs; Assess funding options and needs within existing departmental resources and ensure alignment with collective bargaining agreements; Report on the minimum and maximum amounts of time needed to complete each part of the recruitment and training processes for each of deputy and correctional officer roles, and identify if they are different between the MCSO and the CRC and if so how; Identify prerequisite steps in the hiring process (for example if a person must pass a background check before they can get an interview, or pass a drug test before they can take a physical fitness test, etc.); Identify which state rules (or law enforcement standards board rules) dictate and affect how and why some of these processes are the way they are, with specificity to which specific statutes or rules are applicable; Delineate which parts of the recruitment and training and hiring processes are carried out by the Department of Human Resources, and if this has historically changed in the last two years and if so, how and why; Identify how many personnel and how much of a budget each of CRC and MCSO (and HR on their behalf) have for recruitment purposes; Identify what percentage of staff in mandatory overtime roles are single parents of children age 12 or below to the extent known; Identify potential options for altering policy or practice to better offer work-life balance for single parents who must work mandatory overtime – especially when it would require second or third shift work when licensed child-care is not generally available; Discuss whether voluntary overtime lists are used with fairness tracking; Identify if there are any schedule models that could be reviewed or implemented for minimal family impact for employees; Identify any prospective possibilities in, or barriers to, creating options for part-time correctional officer and deputy positions for the explicit purpose of relieving staff from too much overtime and burnout; Identify if the county ordinance would need to be changed to authorize hiring and beginning training in excess of authorized FTES and at what level (10%, 15% etc.) would be needed/recommended and why; and consider at what point would the departments need to consider expanding their training class offerings to be more frequently and what resources

would they need for trainers, supplies, or to offer another shift of training options, and when that point is reached, how those needs would be preemptively identified, communicated, requested, or planned for implementation so that a lack of training personnel, facilities, or other resources would not become an unanticipated barrier at a future date to continuing on a successful path to continuing to reduce overtime and implement staffing stability.

- The Office of Corporation Counsel (OCC) and the Department of Human Resources are requested to develop a Code of Conduct for County Board review and approval, based on the principles outlined in Milwaukee County General Ordinance (MCGO) § 1.29, Decorum of supervisors in committee meetings. The Code of Conduct shall define prohibited conduct for County Board Supervisors and establish a fair and transparent process for receiving and resolving complaints. The Code of Conduct shall propose proportionate sanctions with associated voting requirements and align with state law, County Board Rules, and existing ethics, harassment, and workplace policies. OCC and the Department of Human Resources are requested to provide a report and draft ordinance to the County Board no later than the March 2026 meeting cycle.

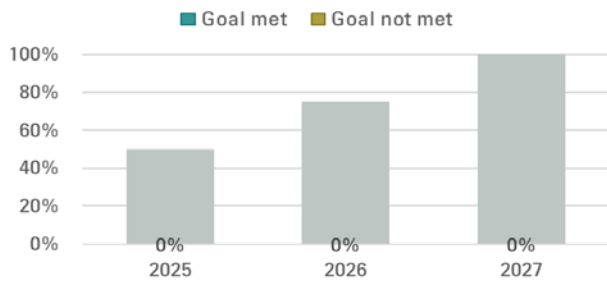
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGIC GOALS

Milwaukee County's workforce reflects the diversity of Milwaukee County residents.



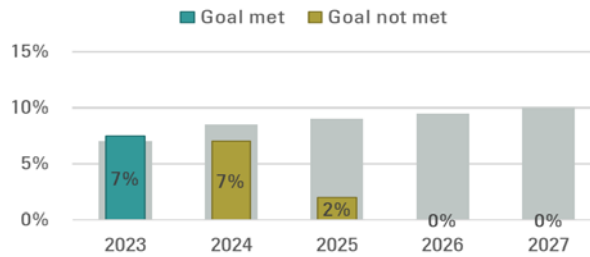
Milwaukee County aims to have our workforce reflect the diversity of ideas, culture and thinking in Milwaukee County. The charts above present a comparison as of 4/9/25. Note that AIAN = American Indian/Alaska Native, NHPI = Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

100% of Departments Have A Documented Onboarding Processes



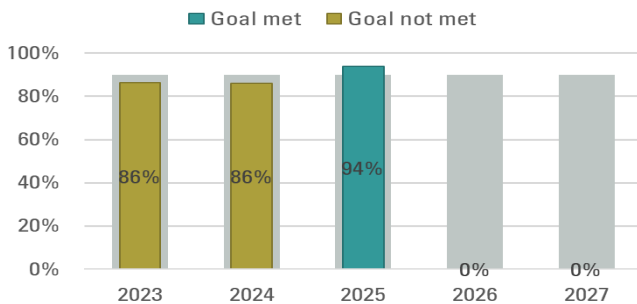
This project will begin in 2025.

Increase Rate of Internal Promotions



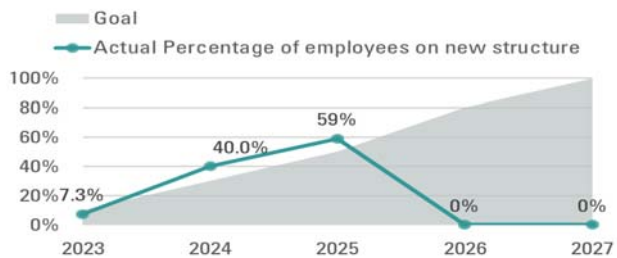
Measuring the percentage of Milwaukee County employees who have been promoted internally indicates progress on creating opportunities for employee growth. 2025 data is as of 6/5/25.

Increase Employee Retention Rate



Rates are for full-time employees. 2025 data is as of 6/5/25.

100% of Job Families Align to New Compensation Structure



Excludes public safety union members. 2025 data is as of 6/10/25.

Strategic Program Area: Director’s Office

Service Provision: Mandated

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	583,841	1,082,170	752,270	569,725	(182,545)
Revenues	6,000	0	0	0	0
Tax Levy	577,841	1,082,170	752,270	569,725	(182,545)
Full Time Pos (FTE)	5.00	6.00	6.00	4.00	(2.00)

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Employees Surveyed Biannually as Fully Engaged	N/A	61%	N/A	64%

Strategic Overview:

The Director's Office develops and drives the overall long-term vision for the Department of Human Resources (DHR), while ensuring effective execution of all DHR service delivery areas. Functional duties include administering human resources programs, leading key Milwaukee County workforce initiatives, developing and implementing strategies to improve employee engagement, and developing and launching the County's diversity, equity and inclusion strategies and programming. This office partners with executive leaders on developing human capital solutions, including overall workforce planning and talent management. In addition, the Director's Office is responsible for the HR staff's achievement of goals, professional development, and overall service to Milwaukee County.

Strategic Implementation:

As part of its strategic planning process, the Department of Human Resources (DHR) identified three (3) focus areas, including Employee Experience, Total Rewards, and Leader Development and Support. These focus areas help to frame the actions DHR will take in the coming years to achieve the overall objectives of improving the employee experience and becoming an employer of choice. There are a total of ten (10) goals across these focus areas including ensuring the County's workforce represents the diversity of ideas, culture, and thinking represented in Milwaukee County.

Building on the successes in 2025, Milwaukee County now has more than 200 employees actively involved in its Network Resource Groups (NRG's) and approximately 30 employees engaged in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Council. In 2026, DHR will continue to work on advancing its strategic plan and initiatives aligned with the core focus areas. Our work will continue to be grounded in enhancing the workplace culture and experience for county employees, strengthening systems to improve employee onboarding and retention, and equipping leaders, at all levels, with the tools and training needed to be successful. As we work to advance our five (5) current goals, DHR will use an equity lens to attract, support and retain a diverse and talented workforce at every level of county government. To measure our progress, DHR will initiate the 6th All-Employee Engagement Survey. This biennial survey has been conducted since 2016 and helps Milwaukee County understand the workforce's connection to their work and to Milwaukee County, and to improve the overall employee experience. DHR will also elevate the monitoring and measuring of critical workforce analytics providing actionable insight to help us drive smarter decision-making and better business outcomes. Employee-focused DEI work will strengthen the commitment to equity, inclusion and collective growth by expanding the DEI Council initiatives, increasing participation of the NRG's and further embedding restorative practices and the Culture Statement into the daily work of Milwaukee County. In addition, as part of its 2025-27 strategic plan, DHR is launching an assessment to evaluate the current state of onboarding approaches across all Milwaukee County departments and agencies. The purpose of this assessment is to identify and share best practices, identify opportunities for improvement and to ultimately make onboarding more consistent and effective for all new Milwaukee County employees. An effective employee onboarding process is crucial for improving engagement, retention, and creating a culture of high performance.

1.0 FTE Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Director and 1.0 FTE Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program Manager are transferred to the Learning & Development and Diversity division within DHR. The division's funded FTEs decrease by 2.0 FTE from 6.0 to 4.0.

Additional Program Details:

The Employee Engagement Survey is a biennial survey, and no data is available in odd numbered years.

Strategic Program Area: Employee Relations

Service Provision: Administrative

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	1,349,217	1,829,103	1,631,677	1,635,543	3,866
Tax Levy	1,349,217	1,829,103	1,631,677	1,635,543	3,866
Full Time Pos (FTE)	21.00	21.00	21.00	21.00	0.00

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Number of Workplace Investigations completed by DHR staff	25	33	25	35

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Turnover Rate - Non Retirement Separations divided by Full-Time FTE Count	14%	11%	15%	10%

Strategic Overview:

The Employee Relations Division is a strategic partner to employees, leaders and people managers, dedicated to fostering a high-performing and inclusive workplace culture. Our team provides expert guidance and proactive support to drive employee, team and organizational success.

The Employee Relations Division delivers leader coaching, employee counseling, and performance management strategies that build leadership capital and support continuous growth. We develop, implement and sustain employee-facing policies and lead initiatives that enhance the overall employee experience. We do this while promoting best practices that reduce employment-related risk and advance the county’s vision to becoming the healthiest county in the state of Wisconsin. The work that we do supports a respectful and equitable work environment that allows and encourages employees to thrive. Through the following efforts, the Employee Relations Division serves as a trusted advisor that aligns people strategies with the County’s vision:

- Partnering with leaders and people managers to coach and counsel on complex employee-relations matters,
- Leading fair, thorough and timely workplace investigations,
- Supporting performance management practices that are consistent and equitable,
- Collaborating with the Office of Corporation Counsel (OCC) to mitigate legal risks through proactive strategies,
- Resolving workplace concerns through conflict resolution and effective problem-solving,
- Administer labor relations and lead collective bargaining efforts to strengthen our partnerships with represented employees.

Strategic Implementation:

The Employee Relations Division continues to serve as strategic thought partners throughout Milwaukee County and continues to build and maintain systems that support employee development at every level. We work tirelessly to coach, counsel, support, and guide leaders and people managers to ensure people strategies align with organizational goals thus creating an environment that is fair, equitable and inclusive. These strategies reflect our ongoing commitment to excellence, equity and accountability ensuring every employee has the foundation needed to thrive and contribute to the vision of Milwaukee County.

In 2026, the Employee Relations Division will continue to focus on strategic objectives aligned with the DHR’s strategic plan and department goals by:

Continuing to promote psychological well-being among employees to ensure they are supported to do their best work which boosts moral and engagement,

Continuing to create and advocate for continuous learning opportunities that will close skill gaps and create career pathways for employees which will support retention and performance,

Continuing to strengthen transparency and clarity through effective communication which helps reduce conflict and increase collaboration,

Continuing to coach and guide leaders and people managers to address employee relations matters timely and effectively to improve employee satisfaction, decrease turnover and ensure legal compliance,

Continuing to keep equity top-of-mind in all employee-related matters to safeguard our high-performing workplace and to continue to advance the county's vision.

Additional Program Details:

*For Turnover, the percentage is non-retirement separations divided by employee count of full/part-time staff not including contingent (hourly, temporary, seasonal, intern) staff.

Strategic Program Area: Talent Acquisition and HR Operations

Service Provision: Administrative

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	1,174,554	1,426,104	1,417,634	1,387,056	(30,578)
Tax Levy	1,174,554	1,426,104	1,417,634	1,387,056	(30,578)
Full Time Pos (FTE)	11.00	11.00	12.00	12.00	0.00

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Applications Processed	41,891	40,116	43,500	43,500
Background Checks	1,856	2,154	2,000	2,000
Job Requisitions	2,052	1,991	2,500	1,900
New Employees Oriented	974	854	1,050	1,000
Open Records Request	190	270	250	250
Pre-Employment Health Screens/Drug Tests	1,194	819	1,250	1,000

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Cycle Time (Days)	164	68	115	65
Racial Diversity in Manager Applicant Pools (Minimum Percentage of Target Numbers)	51.8%	64.0%	58.0%	68.0%

Strategic Overview:

Through strategic partnerships and collaborations with hiring managers, the Department of Human Resources (DHR) Talent and Operations teams identify, engage, support and recruit the needed talent to envision Milwaukee County’s mission of public service. The Talent Acquisition (TA) team is focused on creating and building a comprehensive outreach plan that develops relationships with and hires the best possible talent to serve the community and carry out the services provided by Milwaukee County. This effort includes sourcing candidates, attending recruitment events, posting job vacancies, assessing applicant qualifications, developing and administering applicant performance tests, and providing a diverse and qualified candidate pool to department heads and hiring managers. The DHR Operations team provides key strategic functions that serve the workforce of Milwaukee County. DHR Operations coordinates and facilitates weekly New Employee Orientations, which is a critical step in welcoming new employees. Other workforce operations include preemployment activities, managing public inquiries, and processing and responding to open records requests.

Strategic Implementation:

In 2026, the TA team will continue to optimize and scale the Hiring Event model, with an emphasis on operational efficiency, enhanced coaching and mentoring for hiring authorities on best practices, and a strong focus on improving the candidate experience. These efforts will support the county’s strategic objective of being recognized as an employer of choice. Key initiatives for the year include:

Youth Workforce Development: Launching targeted workshops to equip young individuals with essential job readiness skills, including resume development and interview preparation,

Employer Branding: Strengthening the county’s 'Changemaker' employee brand through integrated social media and digital marketing strategies to increase visibility and engagement with top talent,

Talent Acquisition Toolkit: Developing and deploying a comprehensive toolkit to support hiring managers and streamline recruitment processes,

Diversity Recruitment: Expanding outreach strategies with a goal to increase the diversity of the applicant pool by 15% in 2026,

Requisition Management & Retention: Reducing the number of open job requisitions by effectively filling vacancies and enhancing new hire retention through improved onboarding and candidate matching.

Through these initiatives, the TA team will drive impactful workforce outcomes and ensure alignment with the county's broader talent and inclusion objectives.

Strategic Program Area: Learning & Development and Diversity

Service Provision: Administrative

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	471,026	574,708	723,036	832,831	109,795
Tax Levy	471,026	574,708	723,036	832,831	109,795
Full Time Pos (FTE)	5.00	5.00	5.00	6.00	1.00

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Leadership Excellence/ Management Development Programs (MDP) - BIPOC Participation	48%	27%	50%	50%
Leadership Excellence/ Management Development Programs (MDP) - Female Participation	52%	73%	65%	75%
Training Courses Completed – Instructor Led	78	60	85	70
Training Participants – Instructor Led	1,416	1,314	2,000	1,450
Training Participants – Online	53,938	54,616	54,500	54,500

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Mandatory Training Compliance (minimum Percentage of Target Numbers)	90%	91%	91%	92%
Overall Program Satisfaction Leadership Excellence Program - Course (Minimum Percentage of Target Numbers)	0	95	95	96
Overall Program Satisfaction Leadership Excellence Program - Instructor (Minimum Percentage of Target Numbers)	0	98	98	98
Overall Program Satisfaction Management Development Program - Course (Minimum Percentage of Target Numbers)	88%	91%	91%	92%
Overall Program Satisfaction Management Development Program - Instructor (Minimum Percentage of Target Numbers)	97%	98%	98%	98%

Strategic Overview:

Through strategic partnerships and collaboration, Learning & Development and Diversity (L&D) identifies, develops, supports, and delivers high-quality learning while fostering a work environment of employee engagement, equity, and excellence. L&D is committed to fostering a workforce development focus at Milwaukee County that creates career growth, engagement, and opportunity by encouraging employees and leaders to develop their skills and abilities. L&D serves as a strategic partner and resource to leadership that enables positive organizational change and the development, retention, and engagement of employees across the county.

This area develops, coordinates, and facilitates a variety of employee learning opportunities through online learning, classroom sessions, certificate programs, and ad hoc training opportunities. The team also administers the Learning Management System (LMS), which maintains hundreds of learning sessions available to employees.

Strategic Implementation:

L&D will continue its ongoing work with each department's leadership team throughout 2026, to suggest/build out specific upskill/developmental programs for their staff predicated on modules that comprise the Management Development Program (MDP) and Leadership Excellence (LEx) programs. Training support will also be geared at building racial equity capacity, transparency, and support for Milwaukee County people managers and employees.

In 2026, the L&D team will continue to expand the course catalog within the LMS, providing the county's workforce with a broad selection of learning opportunities. L&D will continue its partnership with subject matter expert (SME) departments on the instructional design of content that empowers our people managers with a knowledgebase to navigate workplace safety, compliance, and systems platforms as well as workplace optimization and engagement for all county staff.

1.0 FTE Manager Training Development is abolished in the Learning & Development and Diversity division within DHR. With the addition of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Director to the division there may be a redundancy with the Training Development Manager.

1.0 FTE Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Director and 1.0 FTE Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program Manager are added to Learning & Development and Diversity division within DHR.

Strategic Program Area: Total Rewards

Service Provision: Administrative

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	846,734	1,033,987	1,162,924	1,152,658	(10,266)
Tax Levy	846,734	1,033,987	1,162,924	1,152,658	(10,266)
Full Time Pos (FTE)	11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00	0.00

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Customer Service Calls	4,350	3,927	4,000	4,000
Customer Service Emails	10,000	11,500	8,000	9,000
Life Status Events Processed	2,076	2,376	2,000	2,200
Position Action Forms Approved	6,698	3,573	4,550	800
Positions Reclassed/Reallocated	261	110	100	100

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Response to Initial Benefit Inquiries within 1 Business Day	99%	99%	98%	98%
Unique Position Titles	950	1,026	775	775
Unique Salary Ranges	271	561	60	60
Wellness Participation	60%	72%	65%	70%

Strategic Overview:

The Total Rewards Division is committed to designing and delivering competitive compensation, benefits, and wellness programs that support Milwaukee County’s ability to attract, retain, and engage a diverse, high-performing workforce. By aligning these programs with organizational goals and employee needs, the division ensures that resources are used strategically to maximize value for both employees and taxpayers. Through continuous evaluation, innovation, and collaboration, Total Rewards strengthens the County’s position as an employer of choice while supporting the overall health, equity, and success of its workforce.

Benefits Administration:

The Benefits area of the Total Rewards Division administers all non-pension benefit plans, including:

- Active and retiree medical and life insurance,
- Dental,
- Supplemental disability,
- Wellness programs.

Responsibilities include benefit plan design, regulatory compliance, enrollment management, and ongoing employee support. Benefits staff also conduct regular audits to ensure data integrity, with fiscal impacts primarily reflected in Employee Fringe Benefits.

To ensure market competitiveness and affordability, the county strategically negotiates vendor agreements and adapts benefit offerings. In 2025, Benefits secured a multi-year cost-neutral contract extension with Delta Dental for the next five (5) years. This effort reduces financial volatility while ensuring service continuity.

2026 continues the success of three on-site health clinics. The goal is to expand access to high quality, no cost care for employees. These clinic locations include: Vel R. Phillips, Courthouse, and Wilson Senior Center.

RxBenefits Integration:

To further improve employee experience and reduce pharmacy costs, Milwaukee County introduced RxBenefits as its pharmacy benefits optimizer effective January 1, 2025. RxBenefits works in partnership with UnitedHealthcare and OptumRx to:

- Provide personalized pharmacy customer support,
- Reduce out-of-pocket medication costs,
- Remove mandatory mail order prescriptions,
- Secure an additional \$2 million in pharmacy rebates.

Together, these vendors streamline prescription management and increase employee satisfaction.

- Clinic Utilization Trends:

Over 7 months, there were 379 total visits, averaging about 54 visits per month. As outreach expands and word of mouth grows, further increases in volume are likely.

Workplace clinics reduce ER and Urgent Care usage.

- Estimated savings per visit:

ER visit: \$1,200+ per average visit

Urgent Care: \$150–\$250 per average visit

- Referrals & Patient Satisfaction:

More than 15 Primary Care and Specialty Referrals

100% satisfaction rate

Patients would have otherwise used Urgent Care or Specialist clinics

- Patient Demographics:

70% female, 30% male

Age distribution concentrated in the 30–59 range (65%)

Majority enrolled in County health plan (97%)

Top services: BP/medication management, respiratory illness treatment, biometric screening

The Workplace Clinics are proving to be a cost-effective, high-value enhancement to employee healthcare, supporting the County's vision of becoming the healthiest county in Wisconsin.

Wellness Enhancements:

To foster engagement and healthy habits, Milwaukee County expanded wellness offerings by:

Promoting Wellbeats, a free online fitness platform

Launching new wellness challenges to encourage physical activity and well-being.

Compensation:

The Compensation area supports Milwaukee County's talent strategy by administering competitive, equitable, and compliant pay practices across all departments.

Total Rewards Compensation area continues to:

Lead all classification and compensation initiatives,
Collaborate with HRBPs and department leaders,
Ensure compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations.

Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) Transition:

Effective January 1, 2025, under Act 12, all new Milwaukee County employees were enrolled in the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS), replacing the legacy Employee Retirement System (ERS) for new hires.

Key WRS Details:

Eligibility: Employees expected to work =1,200 hours/year and =1 year

Contribution: 7.2% of pensionable wages (general employee share in 2026)

No opt-out option once eligibility is met

Act 4: Classifies correctional officers (jailers) as Protective Status under WRS with a 60-day opt-out period.

Strategic Implementation:

Milwaukee County's vision is "By achieving racial equity, Milwaukee will be the healthiest county in Wisconsin." Recognizing that many of the employees live, work, and play in Milwaukee County, the county is working to build policies, practices and a culture that ensures positive health outcomes for its employees and residents.

The 2026 Total Rewards strategy integrates compensation, benefits, wellness, and retirement into a single, strategic framework. Through thoughtful implementation, Milwaukee County continues its commitment to equity, fiscal responsibility, employee engagement, and becoming the healthiest county in Wisconsin.

Strategic Program Area: Retirement Plan Services

Service Provision: Administrative

How We Do It: Program Budget Summary

Category	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	2025/2026 Variance
Expenditures	1,230,467	1,828,417	1,251,640	1,262,882	11,242
Tax Levy	1,230,467	1,828,417	1,251,640	1,262,882	11,242
Full Time Pos (FTE)	17.00	18.00	18.00	18.00	0.00

What We Do With It: Activity Data

Activity	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Group Education Events & Sessions	37	22	30	24
Individual Member Counseling	169	169	200	150
Member Contacts	25,227	19,982	25,000	20,000
New Retirees Receiving Benefits	188	182	220	150
Number of Retirees Receiving Benefits	7,885	7,721	7,900	7,700
Percent of Active Members Attending a Presentation	14.2%	13.1%	20.0%	15.0%

How Well We Do It: Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target	2026 Target
Percent of Calls Answered and Completed (Peer average = 96.3%)	81.9%	77.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Turnaround Time for Pension Estimates (in Days) Peer average = 12 days	108	82	30	28

Strategic Overview:

Retirement Plan Services (RPS) administers Milwaukee County's two defined benefit pension plans under the direction of the 10-member Milwaukee County Pension Board. The two pension systems are The Employees' Retirement System (ERS) and the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act 1990 Retirement System (OBRA). RPS does not administer the Wisconsin Retirement System which covers eligible employees hired after December 31, 2024.

In order to serve the needs of the 20,000 members of ERS and OBRA, the RPS team includes an information technology and systems function, a customer service function, a fiscal function, an auditing function, and a communications function.

The team has the following responsibilities:

- Pension plan recordkeeping and administration
- Issuing approximately \$20 million in payments each month (pension contribution withdrawals and monthly pension payments)
- Member communication and education (i.e. retirement counseling)
- Customer service support by phone, walk-in, fax, email, and mail
- Perform pension benefit calculations and initiate pension payments
- Compliance reporting, internal auditing, and policy/procedure documentation
- Individual member accounting and investment accounting
- Financial and tax reporting
- Maintain a pension administration system
- Maintain a member self-service site for active and retired members

Pension Board trustee and meeting support

Engage technical experts to provide actuarial and investment consulting services.

Strategic Implementation:

The RPS team prepares a strategic plan that balances the fiduciary responsibilities of administering the pension system and Milwaukee County's mission. The 2025-2027 RPS Strategic Plan was approved by the Milwaukee County Pension Board in January 2025. Collectively, the initiatives in the 2025-2027 RPS Strategic Plan aim to modernize operations, enhance service quality, and ensure long-term organizational sustainability.

Key initiatives in the plan center around digital transformation and communication, including reducing reliance on paper through expanded e-delivery options, implementing secure messaging and live chat, and enhancing member self-service tools. To support efficiency, RPS is streamlining internal processes through the digitization of records, adoption of automation technologies, and the integration of artificial intelligence to improve member communications and internal workflows. System and data optimization efforts are also underway to improve usability and reliability of the pension administration system and self-service portal while also ensuring accurate, accessible data for both members and staff. Additionally, RPS is strengthening financial controls and reporting through improved documentation, automation of reporting functions, and upgraded accounting software to support fiscal accountability. To improve the member experience, the team is simplifying communication channels, improving accessibility of information, and expanding both in-person and online support resources. Finally, RPS is committed to building a high-performing and engaged workforce through ongoing staff development, team-building activities, succession planning, and specialized training programs.

Given the shifting responsibility from administering an open pension plan to a closed one, RPS is focused on being responsible stewards for the remaining members in the plan. Improving the quality of pension system records, identifying efficiencies, and managing administrative costs will be primary focuses in the near term.

Additional Program Details:

Per 2023 Wisconsin Act 12: January 1, 2025, was the first day newly hired employees became part of the WRS. Prior to this date, employees were enrolled in the ERS of Milwaukee County. In the coming years and decades, the membership in the ERS will decrease from its current amount of approximately 13,000 members. The OBRA retirement system is unaffected.