
Government of the District of Columbia



District of Columbia Department of Human Resources

Testimony of

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*Performance Oversight Hearing on the Fiscal Years 2009-2010 Budgets
for the District of Columbia Department of
Human Resources*

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND THE
ENVIRONMENT

Councilmember Mary Cheh, Chairperson

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John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Room 120
Washington, DC 20004

Good morning Chairperson Cheh and members of the Committee on Government Operations and the Environment. I am Brender Gregory, Director of the D.C. Department of Human Resources (DCHR), and I am pleased to join you today to provide testimony on DCHR's performance in Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010.

DCHR provides comprehensive human resource management services to District government agencies in order to strengthen individual and organizational performance and enable the District government to attract, develop and retain a highly qualified and diverse workforce. These objectives are accomplished as a result of the tireless efforts of staff in the following DCHR administrations: Administrative Services Administration, which includes the Information Technology, Records Management Units and the HR Answers Customer Service Unit; Benefits and Retirement Administration, including the Police and Firefighters Retirement and Relief Board; Policy and Planning Administration, which is comprised of Employee Relations, the Recruitment and Staffing Group, and the Audit Unit; Workforce Development Administration; Compensation and Classification Administration; and the Office of the General Counsel, which includes the Compliance Unit. Our agency provides a full range of personnel services to approximately 23,000 District employees; in addition to benefits services to 12,000 more employees in independent and quasi-independent agencies. We approach our mission with the goal of being an efficient, responsive, accountable and dependable service-driven partner to our customers. I will now discuss some of DCHR's accomplishments during the fiscal year 2009-2010 periods.

During FY 2009-2010, DCHR took several steps to improve services at a number of levels. Though DCHR, like every agency, can continually improve its services and programs,

the changes that were implemented in fiscal year 2009 have helped us reach our goal of providing enhanced services to the clients we serve (both District residents and District government agencies). In doing so, we have strengthened our delivery of services, transitioned hundreds of employees into PeopleSoft; enhanced customer service, improved productivity in several program areas, and implemented cost savings measures to the District government.

Following is an overview of several performance initiatives accomplished in our agency during FY 2009-2010. The first area I would like to focus on is customer service.

Customer Service

In FY 2009, customer service continued to be a focal point in the agency. Based on a determination from the Executive Office of the Mayor, DCHR is in the 97th percentile for customer service, meaning we are exceeding in the four (4) major areas of customer service. The customer service areas measured include responding to constituents via telephonic and mail messages as well as receiving above satisfactory ratings from both employees and managers. In FY 2009, DCHR handled **47,172** telephone calls, serviced **11,032** walk-in customers, and processed **37,302** online applications and **5,082** paper applications. So far in FY 2010, DCHR has received **6,126** telephone calls, serviced **4,739** walk-in customers, and processed **18,471** online applications and **930** paper applications.

Productivity Improvements

Productivity in DCHR was improved in several program areas in FY 2009 as well. Following is detailed information on improvements made in several areas:

- With respect to the delivery of the District's benefits programs and services, DCHR provided services to over 23,000 employees and retirees (pre- and post-October 1, 1987) that are eligible for benefits. We successfully transitioned **8,000** employees from the D.C. Public Schools and the District Department of Transportation/Office of the State Superintendent to the PeopleSoft system; processed **303** retirement incentives, including Voluntary Early Retirement applications;
- DCHR successfully implemented a mandatory online application process for all four (4) Emerging Leaders Programs (ELP). The ELP consist of the Capital City Fellows (CCF) Program, the High School Intern Program (HSIP), the Centralized College Internship Program (CCIP), and the Certified Public Manager Program (CPM). This online application was accomplished with slight modifications to the online job application to accommodate individual program requirements.
- DCHR launched the Language Laboratory, where employees are able to utilize designated computers to learn Spanish using Rosetta Stone's online software; we also secured a contract with Rosetta Stone to provide a self-paced online learning in over 31 foreign languages.
- In FY 2009, DCHR participated in a rulemaking update project, the goal of which is to amend all chapters of the D.C. personnel regulations contained in Title 6B of the D.C. Municipal Regulations. To date, approximately 80% of the chapters have been updated. This was a significant task due to the fact that a good number of chapters had never been updated since they were first written in the early 1980s.
- DCHR implemented ePerformance District-wide. This included policy development, testing, training, communications, customer service, and general administration of the new performance management system.
- DCHR worked with all groups and stakeholders to help successfully procure the classification reform contracts. This included tailoring the Request for Proposal and Statement of Work, conducting vendor meetings, answering vendor questions,

coordinating rating panels, and providing guidance to all stakeholders in the securing of the vendor.

- We have also implemented the enterprise content management system FileNet. This system of digitizing 17,234 OPFs has enhanced the mission of the agency by making employee OPFs more accessible to the staff in an effort to more efficiently service our customers. Previously, any information in an employee's OPF had to be retrieved by hand from the Records Room -- now it can be reviewed on the screen in real time via PeopleSoft. The OPF is a critical document as it contains historical information on the employee's employment, some of which must be retained for the life of the employee.

In reference to the HSIP addressed above, I would like to take a moment to tell you about one particular student, who is a junior at Ballou Senior High School. She joined the HSIP in FY 2009. Since joining the program, she has increased her Grade Point Average (GPA) from a 2.1 to a 3.5, and has applied to several universities. She has been accepted to Virginia State University, Maryland University at Eastern Shore, and is waiting to hear from Georgetown University. When asked about her experience as an intern, our student said that she is more focused and determined than ever, that the program was a good experience, and that she would love to come back.

In addition, another 11th grader from Luke C. Moore Academy, located in Ward 5, was a participant in the program. He came into the HSIP with some added challenges as he also took on the responsibility of caring for his mother who was ill. This was in addition to his school work and the added responsibilities associated with the HSIP. Through the program, not only was he afforded the opportunity to gain the experience needed to develop professionally, but the

funds he earned from the program provided extra help to his family. So, as you can see, Chairperson Cheh, our HSIP program is having a positive impact upon young peoples' lives.

In this area, and in keeping with Mayor Adrian Fenty's Green Initiative, DCHR ushered in a paperless system for handling benefits, with **4,149** benefits elections changes in 2009, and **5,298** benefits elections changes in FY 2010, all handled electronically. This new method allowed employees in our client agencies to easily submit these changes to DCHR. In addition, the time-consuming process of providing hardcopy District Personnel Manual updates to agencies was also improved as we moved from hardcopy distribution of all issuances (i.e. changes to regulations, instructions, bulletins) to dissemination of issuances solely by electronic means through the official implementation of the Electronic-District Personnel Manual (or E-DPM) issuance system.

Cost Savings

As previously mentioned, DCHR implemented significant cost-savings measures in FY 2009. Specifically, DCHR generated \$1.5 million in savings on the United Health Care contract; and experienced a reduction in the costs for the Certified Public Manager Program contract with George Washington University from \$264,384 to \$188,837 (a savings of \$75,547). The cost per participant was also reduced from \$12,017.45 to \$8,719.86. Further, DCHR in partnership with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer was instrumental in creating a savings through the elimination of pay stub mailing, resulting in a reduction in postage and paper costs.

Additional DCHR Program Accomplishments

Because DCHR has oversight for several program areas, I would also like to provide you information on some of the additional accomplishments that occurred within the agency in FY 2009:

- DCHR conducted **593** exit interviews for employees separating from the District government;
- DCHR drafted and/or adopted **40** chapters contained in Title 6B of the DCMR; and issued **52** E-DPM instructions and bulletins;
- DCHR managed the administration of **2,055** drug and/or alcohol tests; **4,058** criminal background checks; **314** adverse referral investigations; and initiated residency law enforcement;
- Formulated a settlement agreement protocol; conducted training of legal staff and Police and Firefighters Retirement and Relief Board (PFRRB) staff regarding ethics, the questioning of witnesses and case decisions;
- Introduced the debit card for the Flexible Spending Account benefits program;
- Successfully procured two new benefit offerings, those of (1) commuter benefits, offered through ADP and (2) indemnity insurance, offered through AFLAC;
- Upgraded Aetna Quality Point of Service (QPOS) to a PPO plan;
- Trained **6,750** District government employees, an increase from 6,006 employees in FY 2008; and
- **3,962** District government employees utilized online courses, an increase from 1,180 employees in FY 2008.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I want to reiterate that DCHR takes its mission of providing the human resource management services to District government agencies very seriously. We understand this vital service enables the District government to attract, develop and retain a well-qualified and diverse workforce. Know that we will continue to do so in this and in upcoming years. Chairperson Cheh, I look forward to continuing to work together with you and the Committee. Again, thank you and I am happy to answer any questions that you may have at this time.