

2024 Supplemental Department Questions

Please answer the following questions in a word document and return to Council. The answers to these questions will be provided to council as supplemental information. While not part of the physical budget presentation to Council, departments should be prepared to answer questions Council may have on these supplemental questions. If you feel that you have provided an answer in a previous question, please don't repeat your answer, simply refer to the earlier question/answer.

Strategic Goals

1. Provide your 2024 strategic goals; how are they different from 2023? In what way, if at all, are your strategic changes demonstrated in your budget request?
 - a. *Leaves software implementation. Train departments on software, collect analytics on leave usage. Will help ensure consistency in complying with various leave regulations. This is addressed in our Leaves Software Priority Package as well as the People Analytics Specialist Priority Package.*
 - b. *Leadership training program rollout. This strongly needed training throughout the County will help mitigate risk, create a more strategic and efficient work force, and help in successor planning across the County. This is addressed in our CHR Learning and Development FTE's Priority Package.*
 - c. *Perform. This year we are piloting Perform with the Health Department and Central Human Resources to ensure a smooth rollout in 2024 Countywide. This will be key in making sure that employees are given the feedback and resources to ensure success in the progress of their careers. The rollout planned for this year was modified to a pilot due to software communication challenges to ensure confidentiality.*
 - d. *Ticketing system to track responsiveness and routine questions asked. We can update our SharePoint site to address frequently asked questions. Allowing Central Human Resources to continue to enhance our on-line toolkit to the rest of the Departments in the County.*
 - e. *Convert Personnel files to OpenText to improve employee experience. Employees will be able to access their personnel files without requesting Central Human Resource staff to facilitate access. This will help with transparency and further improve the overall employee experience.*
 - f. *Negotiating Comp/Class is an ongoing priority with labor relations currently negotiating labor contracts which will continue into 2024. This is likely to be a multi-year process.*

National, state, and local landscape:

1. What are the federal, state, and local issues facing your work? What risks or opportunities does that create for you in 2024 and beyond? What is your plan to leverage the opportunity or mitigate the risk? What support do you need?
 - a. *RCW 42.56.250 (HB1533 introduced 2023) providing for some public disclosure protections for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, or stalking.*
 - b. *Mental health, workplace burnout. The CHR Wellness Coordinator is currently working with the Sheriff's department on securing a contract to support the unique challenges first responders experience. In addition, the CHR Wellness Coordinator continues to work with EAP to build additional resources, opportunities, and tools for employees.*
 - c. *Continue to find ways to provide resources for employees growing childcare and elder care concerns. This is an increasing issue and finding tools, resources and support will help address equity and create greater life/work balance for employees.*
 - d. *We anticipate on-going federal, state, and local leave enhancements, union protections and other mandated employee benefits.*

2. What, if any, new mandates do you have impacted your work? Are they funded or unfunded? What is the plan for accomplishing the work?
 - a. *RCW 41.56.035 (HB1200) requires the County to provide to unions all personal and work information monthly for represented new hires and every 120 working days for all represented County employees. CHR staff are creating process and procedures to provide data as required.*
 - b. *RCW 42.56.250 (HB1533) requires verifying eligibility. We created a policy and procedure to establish a process for employees to submit a request to be covered by this RCW and a process to verify eligibility and maintain a list of eligible employees for the public disclosure specialists to review if/when public disclosure requests come in for processing.*

Programs

1. List programs, projects and services within your department funded through federal COVID/ARPA funds. What, if any, of those programs are you recommending ongoing funding for and what is the source of ongoing funding?

NA

2. For programs funded by COVID/ARPA funds, detail the plan to close out and/or transition those programs to an ongoing funding source in 2025 and beyond.

NA

3. What new programs are you launching for 2024? What need or efficiency is that new program addressing? How is that program funded for sustainability? What metrics are in place to determine effectiveness?

In October 2023 we launched our Leadership Development program with monthly trainings relevant to supervisors and managers. The first training in the series will be Employee Relations. These trainings will be held each month, year over year, with a focus on HR related topics: Leaves, Wellness, Labor and Employee Relations, Talent, Benefits, Compensation and Classification, etc. CHR will send surveys to participants to get participant feedback and track effectiveness and value added and adjust as appropriate to keep content relevant and provide value to leaders.

E-Learning: Instructional designers are paramount in the ongoing development of E-Learning content. We requested an Instructional Designer in our CHR Learning and Development FTE's Priority Package to assist departments in creating content including interactive e-learning courses, videos, and SharePoint website pages for the Learn platform, webinars and in-person trainings. In addition to our countywide training enhancements addressed above, these customized trainings will allow departments to tailor trainings to their unique needs while keeping the approach and structure consistent across the County.

4. If different than #3, what are your areas of significant investment? What are you not doing because of that investment?

Central Human Resources is putting significant investment of time into the compensation and classification process. The compensation and classification team are establishing procedures and processes to ensure appropriate, effective, and timely processing of classification changes. Labor relations is in process of negotiating labor agreements with compensation and classification study results being a major topic in bargaining.

Internal Operations

1. What is your department doing to streamline processes or deliver services in a new way? How do your budget allocation requests play into these innovations? Are there ways which a different budget approach, e.g., several departments sharing a resource, could achieve the same or better results in a more cost-effective way?

Central Human Resources continues to further build the Department as a strategic resource for the County's various Departments. We are expanding our training resources for employees and leaders. We continue to leverage technology resources to improve both the employee experience and supervisory resources and tools. We continue to emphasize the importance of consistency for both the employee experience, but also as a mitigation of risk.

2. What, if any, hiring challenges are you experiencing? How is that affecting your level of service or internal operations? How are you mitigating those operational challenges and/or what is your plan for recruitment?

No current hiring challenges within Central Human Resources. We are fully staffed except for a project position that we have vacant as a result of the incumbent employee recently transferring to our HRBP Senior, Benefits position.

3. To help inform Council on experiences around hiring and retention, please provide a list of all vacant position titles, position codes, FTE amount (1.0, 0.5, etc.), date vacated, and date first posted. Template spreadsheet attached for convenience and conformity; if already tracking information in another format, that is acceptable as well. Please list each vacancy separately.

No vacant regular positions. One project position has intentionally been left vacant with the employee transferring to an internal vacancy within Central Human Resources. This project position ends December 31, 2023.

4. What effect has the increase of inflation and/or supply chain issues had on your department? What, if any, services, or projects have you had to adjust to accommodate for this? (i.e., moving to outside contracted services, delaying of project starts and/or purchasing, redistribution of workload, etc.)

No significant issues impacting Central Human Resources.

5. When was the last time your department implemented a fee increase? Do you have any plans to increase fees?

N/A

6. Do you have any plans to do a rate/fee study? Are your current fees established based on a full cost recovery model?

N/A

Successes

1. Take this opportunity to share one significant success in your department over this past year. What made it a success?

We are very proud of the success we had working with Finance to get the AFSCME and non-represented COLA and corresponding retro payments processed in our aging systems in what would ordinarily be an unobtainable timeline. We are also very proud of the Leadership training, Employee Relations

training, and other enhanced training options we have been able to put out to our partner Departments. What we are most proud of in the last year, is the relatively seamless integration of the Health District into the County. While this was an incredibly heavy lift on our Department, the Finance, and IT departments also share in this incredible achievement. Additionally, OpEx acted as the project manager for the Health Department integration. In a matter of only about six months, we were able to fully negotiate all 5 collective bargaining agreements, modify code and get all the employees from the former Health District fully integrated into the County, including enrollment in benefits without any lapse of coverage and being able to by large keep the employee's whole. A large shout-out should go to the leadership in the former Health District too as they provided us with more grace than we probably deserved. In retrospect, it truly is amazing what a giant project was accomplished in such a short period of time. We could not have done this without our partners, but I want to especially provide a large public thank you to all our staff in Human Resources. They truly excelled in this situation.