

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor



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2023 SEP 6 10:31:07
Danny B. Patel
Acting Director of Human Resources

County of Hawai'i
Department of Human Resources

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To: Steven Pavao, Chair, and Members
County of Hawai'i Salary Commission

From: Danny B. Patel, Acting Director of Human Resources

Date: September 6, 2023

Subject: Salary Commission's Inquiry to the Appointing Authorities Concerning
Proposed Salary Adjustments for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Chair Pavao and Members of the County of Hawai'i Salary Commission:

At its August 30, 2023 meeting, the Merit Appeals Board discussed its response to the Salary Commission's inquiry dated July 25, 2023, regarding proposed Salary Adjustments for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Pursuant to that discussion, the Department of Human Resources ("HR") provides the following information:

1. What are the primary duties and responsibilities of the department/agency?

The Department of Human Resources is the central human resource agency for the Hawai'i County, whose functions include administering the civil service laws as they apply to the County. As the central human resource agency for the County, the department has responsibility for strategic planning, workforce planning and employment, equal opportunity, personnel development, compensation and benefits, employee and labor relations, and occupational health and safety.

The general powers and duties as well as the specific duties and powers of the director are codified in Hawai'i Revised Statutes ("HRS"). Pursuant to HRS § 76-12, the director shall:

- (1) Represent the public interest in the improvement of human resources administration in the civil service;

Hawai'i County is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

MERIT BOARD OF APPEALS
COUNTY OF HAWAII
COM. NO. 23-06.01
DATE September 29, 2023

MERIT BOARD OF APPEALS
COUNTY OF HAWAII
COM. NO. 25-07.01
DATE P/September 26, 2025

- (2) Assist in fostering the interest of institutions of learning and civic, professional, and employee organizations in the improvement of human resources standards in civil service;
- (3) Advise the chief executive on policies and problems concerning the human resources program; and
- (4) Make investigations concerning the administration of human resources policies in the civil service, including any matter respecting the enforcement or effect of this chapter or the rules adopted thereunder, or the action or failure to act of any officer or employee with respect thereto.

Additionally, pursuant to HRS § 76-13, the director shall:

- (1) Establish and maintain a roster of all persons in the civil service;
- (2) Appoint employees necessary to assist the director in the proper performance of the director's duties and for which appropriations shall have been made;
- (3) Foster and develop, in cooperation with appointing authorities and others, programs for the improvement of employee efficiency;
- (4) Cooperate fully with appointing authorities, giving full recognition to their requirements and needs, in the administration of this chapter to promote public service by establishing conditions of service that will attract and retain employees of character and capability, and to increase efficiency and productivity in governmental departments by continuously improving methods of human resources administration and maximizing the use of advanced technology;
- (5) Encourage and exercise leadership in the development of effective human resources administration within the several departments and make available the facilities of the director's department to this end;
- (6) Investigate from time to time the operation and effect of this chapter and the rules adopted thereunder;
- (7) Develop and maintain classification systems;
- (8) Make recommendations and advise the chief executive on appropriate adjustments for employees excluded from collective bargaining as authorized under chapter 89C; and
- (9) Perform any other lawful acts deemed by the director to be necessary or desirable to carry out the purposes and provisions of this chapter.

In addition to the statutory requirements listed above, the Charter of the County of Hawai'i, specifically, Article VII, Chapter I, Section 7-1.4 Powers, Duties and Functions, mandates the HR director to be responsible for the human resources management program of the County with two distinct categories of duties. The major duties shall be in the areas of equal employment opportunities, personnel development, personnel deployment, personnel relations and personnel welfare including employee safety and workers' compensation.

The secondary duties of the director shall be the administration of the civil service system and the maintenance of the aims and mechanics prescribed by statute. The director shall be the administrative head of the department of human resources and shall be responsible for the proper conduct of all the administrative affairs of the department and for the execution of the human resources management program prescribed by this charter, ordinances, laws and regulations. The merit appeals board shall function according to statute. The director shall provide technical and clerical staff services to the board.

2. How many employee's does the department/agency employ?

Thirty-five (35) positions including permanent civil service positions, a temp Equipment Operations Instructor, a Student Helper, and the director and deputy director; 10 intern positions; 20 workers compensation positions; and 20 temporary on-call positions. Eighty-five (85) total.

3. What is the department/agency organizational structure?

The HR department is separated into eight (8) different divisions:

1. Classification and Pay. Promotes equal pay for equal work in the development and maintenance of the County's position classification plan. Major responsibilities include advising departments on organizational changes, position classifications and pay-related matters including the development of new classes of work. Collaborates with department heads/deputies and mid-level managers to develop a productive work force and serves as liaison with human resource agencies from other jurisdictions.
2. Labor Relations. Promotes a positive and effective labor relations program which enhances the workplace environment. Major areas of responsibility include contract negotiations and contract administration, including grievance processing and advisories to departments and agencies. This division works effectively with County employees, supervisors, managers, and executives, and with Union officials and representatives.

3. Personnel and Organizational Development. Develops partnerships with department clientele to improve both individual and human systems effectiveness through personnel development, organization development, and executive coaching. Personnel development includes training needs assessment, skills inventory, formal classroom training, individualized leadership development for supervisors and alternative dispute resolution and mediation. Organizational development provides services in organizational diagnosis, strategic planning, organizational change management, performance management, team building and organizational conflict resolution. Executive coaching supports senior management in areas of complex organization problem solving and the development of a combination of skills and human capacities. These skills and capacities may include coaching, leadership and organizational skills, implementation of strategic goals, motivation and commitment to action, analytical and innovative thinking, and social and communication skills.
4. Equal Opportunity and ADA. Develops policies and programs to ensure the County of Hawai'i's compliance with all Federal and State Civil Rights laws. The division oversee, manages, and provides training on the County's Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy, the Policy on the Use of Mobility Devices, the Procedures for Providing Reasonable Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities, and Procedures for Requesting Modifications to County of Hawai'i facilities, Programs, or Services.
5. Administrative Services. Promotes employees' awareness of available benefits by coordinating employee benefit plans, including employees' retirement, health benefits, deferred compensation, and flexible spending plans. Other responsibilities include administration of the Leave Sharing Program, compensation standards and procedures, and personnel records.
6. Recruitment and Examination. Promotes public service and the merit system principle in attracting qualified applicants for County civil service vacancies. The division oversees and administers the recruitment and examination program for the County of Hawai'i and provides guidance and technical assistance to departments in the filling of their civil service positions. The division also serves as liaison between the central human resource agency and educational, employment and other community agencies to promote the available employment opportunities in the County of Hawai'i.

7. Health and Safety. Works with County employees, supervisors, managers, executives, and unions, to promote positive and effective safety and health programs for the County workforce. Major area of responsibility includes coordinating and/or conducting all phases of safety training programs, policies and procedures. The Division is also responsible for the coordination of Call Center staffing for the Civil Defense Emergency Operations Center in emergency events.
8. Workers' Compensation. Administers the County's self-insured workers' compensation program, by providing management and oversight of all workers' compensation claims made by employees who become ill or injured as a result of, or in the course of, their employment. Determinations are made regarding compensation benefits, necessary treatment, and expenses related to the injury or illness, in accordance with Hawai'i Workers' Compensation law. The division works with all departments to minimize lost time due to employee injuries and facilitates return to work as soon as practicable.

(Please see attached Organizational Chart.)

4. What is the department/agency operating budget and funding encompass?

The HR department is responsible for managing three separate annual budgets.

1. Human Resources Budget: \$3,796,168
2. Cooperative Vocational Education Program (CVE): \$52,650
3. Workers Compensation Budget: \$5,957,289

5. What major challenges does the department/agency face?

The major challenges (and goals) that the HR department faces going forward are as follows:

1. To provide names of qualified individuals to hiring departments on a timely basis for the filling of their civil service vacancies.
2. To provide a classification and pay system that ensures an equitable compensation system.
3. To provide timely advice and assistance to all County agencies consistent with applicable laws affecting human resource management.

4. To identify County training needs and provide training and personnel development programs that will enhance the skills of County employees, provide a safe working environment, and ensure compliance with applicable laws affecting human resource management.
5. To recognize County employees for their accomplishments.
6. To support the Merit Appeals Board and the Salary Commission with their duties and functions.
7. To develop, implement, and maintain appropriate policies, procedures, and reports required by law or by operational needs.
8. To negotiate and provide adjustments in wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment for County employees.
9. To identify and pursue appropriate changes in law, rules, contracts, policies and procedures affecting human resource management.
10. To identify and reduce/eliminate unsafe and hazardous working conditions and work practices in an effort to reduce the number of workplace injuries and illnesses.
11. To process workers' compensation claims with respect and compassion for injured workers, the ultimate goal of which is to return employee to his or her regular full employment as a productive worker.
12. To ensure departments and agencies are in compliance with applicable laws affecting human resource management.
13. To assist, encourage, and insure, County compliance with laws, rules, and policies relative to equal opportunity and employment.

6. Are there any overtime requirements of the department/agency?

Yes. HR's overtime budget has increased significantly from \$3,075 to \$83,075 in FY 23-24. Some reasons for overtime follow:

1. Historically, HR has been responsible for responding to and managing the County of Hawai'i Emergency Operations Call Center at Civil Defense every time the EOC is activated due to a natural disaster or emergency. More recently, HR's role with EOC operations has evolved and our Health & Safety Division manager now performs duties of an EOC 'Safety Officer' when activated.

2. Nationwide, private and public employers have had recruitment issues that started during the COVID-19 public health emergency and continues today. HR has changed its recruitment efforts to a more active strategy. This results in overtime for staff, who in addition to their regular workload and schedules, partake in college and community-based recruitment events typically occurring after-hours and on weekends.
3. HR is responsible for ensuring mass pay adjustments pursuant to collective bargaining negotiations are properly entered the County's HRIS/payroll system. Due to the timing of increases, mass pay adjustments have resulted in HR having to amend one to two years of personnel actions. In addition, our Transactions section has been facing staffing challenges. This has resulted in increased overtime.
4. The HR department hosts the County Employee of the Year Recognition Program which takes place annually. This program is usually held afterhours at a designated County facility.
5. The County is in the process of selecting a new municipal enterprise resource planning system. This new system will replace the current software used for financials, human resources management, payroll, utility billing, and other functions. HR anticipates a significant overtime burden to implement the new system. This will involve configuration of the software and creating new workflows related to human resources management.

The highest paid subordinate to the director and deputy director of HR may be paid overtime (which the director and deputy director are not entitled to). With overtime, said position can make more than the director and deputy director.

7. What is the recommended salary adjustments and the rationale for these adjustments?

On August 30, 2023 the Merit Appeals Board voted to recommend a minimum of a twenty percent (20%) raise for the HR director. The board discussed the following points in arriving at its recommendation for a salary increase:

- HR is a small department in comparison to other Hawai'i County departments. However, as the central human resource agency for the County, HR works closely with all other County departments and agencies in fulfilling their human resources needs and ultimately serving all residents of Hawai'i County.
- Hawai'i County covers an area of approximately 4,028 square miles and is home to over 200,000 residents.
- Hawai'i County has approximately 2,700 employees.
- The salary for Hawai'i County's HR director should be equitable and maybe a little more than that of other county human resources directors within the

Chair Steven Pavao and Members
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State, when comparing the size of Hawai'i County, as well as the size of
Hawai'i County's HR department and scope of its responsibility.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide input for this very important matter.
As always, please feel free to contact me at 961-8361 if you have additional questions
or concerns.

Sincerely,





Danny B. Patel, Acting Director
Department of Human Resources

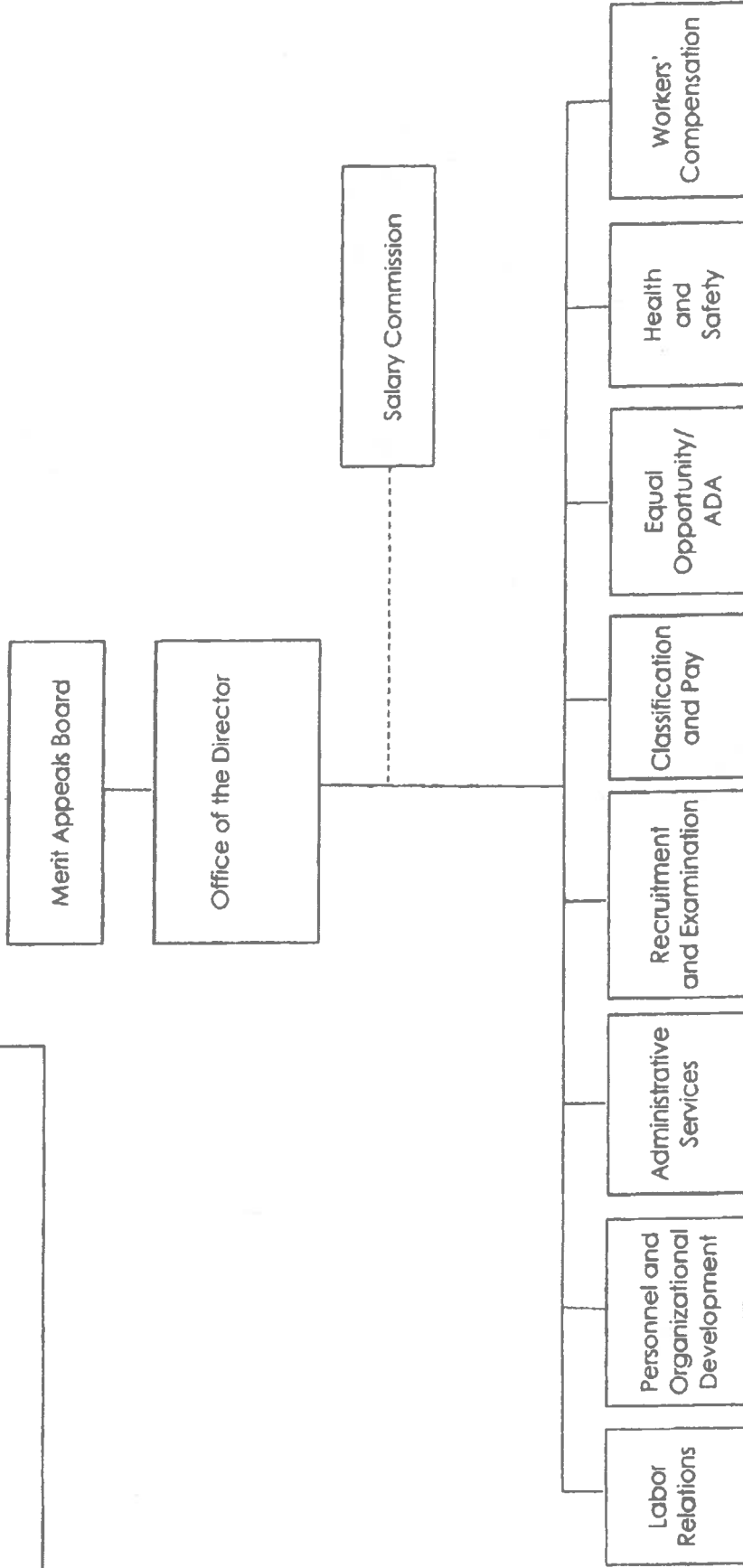
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Attachment

06/30/23

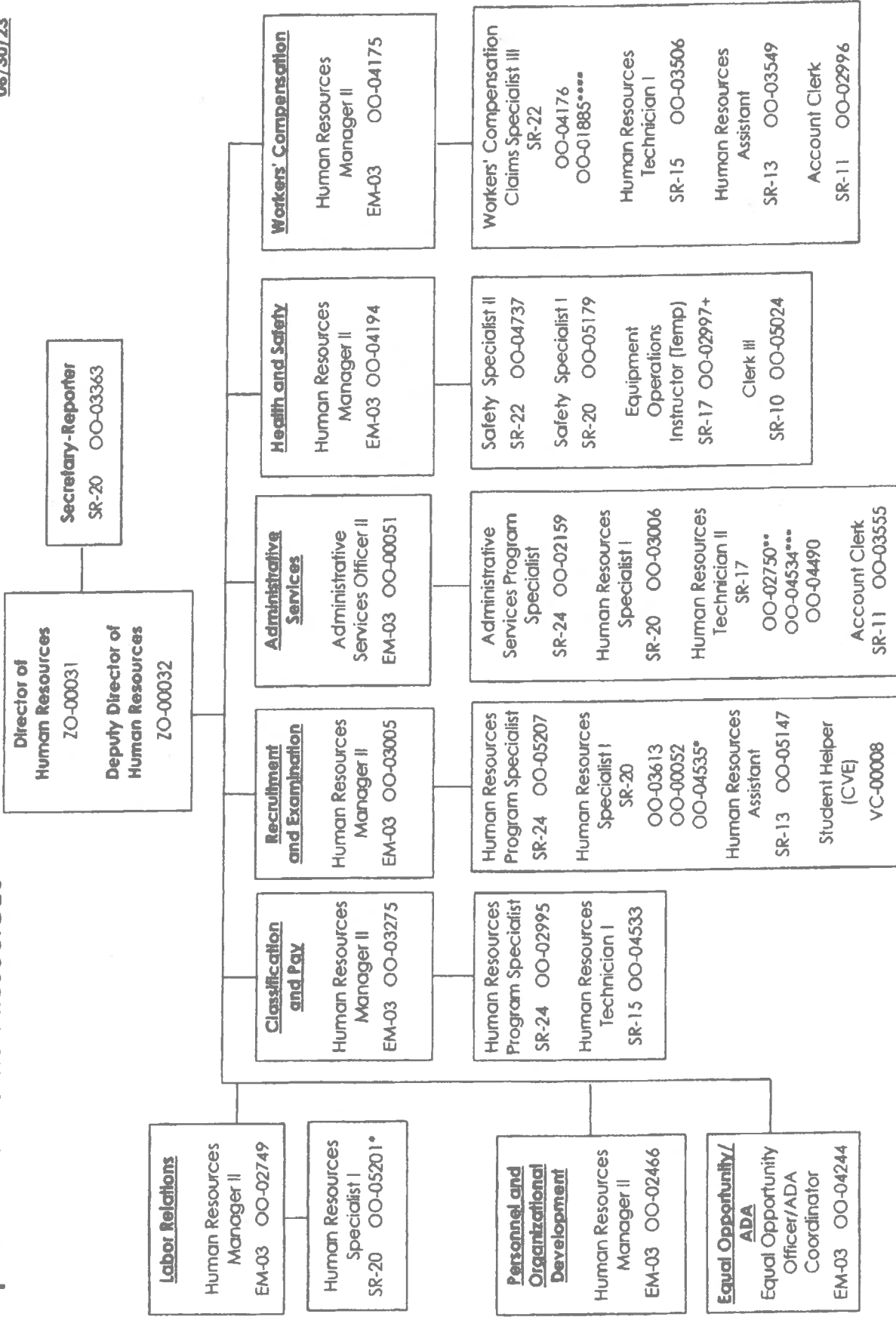
COUNTY OF HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Submitted by:		6-16-23	Date
Approved by:		6/19/23	Date
Managing Director			



Department of Human Resources

06/30/23



* Temp reallocation to Human Resources Technician II, SR-17
 ** Temp reallocation to Human Resources Technician I, SR-15
 *** Temp reallocation to Human Resources Assistant, SR-13
 **** Temp reallocation to Professional Trainee I, SR-16
 + Vacant/unfunded