



BOARD MINUTES  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF VENTURA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SUPERVISORS STEVE BENNETT, LINDA PARKS,  
KATHY I. LONG, PETER C. FOY AND JOHN ZARAGOZA  
August 11, 2015 at 8:30 a.m.

COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE – Approval of Responses to 2014-2015 Ventura County Grand Jury Reports: "County Project Management - A Case Study", "Foster Care and Adoption Process in Ventura County" and "Ventura County Hiring Processes" for Submittal to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court in Accordance with State Statute; and Receive and File the Response from the Auditor-Controller to the Grand Jury Report "County Project Management - A Case Study".

- (X) All Board members are present.
- (X) The following person is heard: Matt Carroll.
- (X) The following document is submitted to the Board for consideration:  
(X) Document: Revised Exhibit 1.
- (X) Upon motion of Supervisor Foy, seconded by Supervisor Bennett, and duly carried, the Board hereby approves staff recommendations as stated in the Board letter.

I hereby certify that the annexed instrument is a true and correct copy of the document which is on file in this office.

Dated: **8-14-15** MICHAEL POWERS  
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
County of Ventura, State of California

By: *M. Pelliciano*  
Deputy Clerk of the Board

By: *Brian Palmer*  
Brian Palmer  
Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board



Response to FY 14-15 Grand Jury Report Form

Report Title: Ventura County Hiring Process

Report Date: June 12, 2015

Responding Agency/Dept. Board of Supervisors

Response Prepared by: Shawn Atin

Title: Director, Human Resources

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the findings numbered: FI-01, FI-06 FI-08
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: FI-05, FI-06, FI-07, FI-09  
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the findings that are disputed;  
include an explanation of the reasons therefore.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered R-01, R-02 have been implemented.
- Recommendations numbered R-03 have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ require further analysis.
- Recommendations numbered \_\_\_\_\_ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.

Date: 8-11-15


Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Kathy Long - Chair Board of Supervisors

Number of pages attached: 5

ATTEST: MICHAEL POWERS  
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
County of Ventura, State of California

By: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Deputy Clerk of the Board



## EXHIBIT 3

### FY 2014-2015 GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

#### RESPONSES TO FINDINGS (FI) AND RECOMMENDATIONS (R)

Report Number (& Date)	Report Title	Respondents (With FI and R #)
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**REPORT NO. 03 June 12, 2015**

Title: **Ventura County Hiring Processes**

Required  
Respondent: **Board of Supervisors**  
(FI-01, FI-05, FI-06, FI-07, FI-08 and FI-09 plus R-01, R-02 and R-03)

Requested  
Respondents: **County Executive Officer**  
(FI-01, FI-05, FI-06, FI-07, FI-08 and FI-09 plus R-01, R-02 and R-03)

**Human Resources Director**  
(FI-01, FI-05, FI-06, FI-07, FI-08 and FI-09 plus R-01, R-02 and R-03)

NOTE: Requested departmental responses are incorporated within Board of Supervisors' response.

## Responses to 2014-2015 Grand Jury Final Report

### Ventura County Hiring Processes

The Human Resources Division (HRD) of the County Executive Office is dedicated to serving the community by focusing on Strategic Goal 1 as set forth in Focus Area # 2 of the County of Ventura Strategic Plan which states: "Attract, hire, develop and retain an effective, diverse, professional, dedicated and responsive team of employees." Recruitment is a key component of this Strategic Goal. HRD has utilized the Lean Six Sigma methodology to enhance the efficiency of the recruitment process so that upon receipt of a request to fill a position, most recruitments (and any related examinations) are completed in 35-days or less in accordance with the County's Merit System, which ensures a fair and legal process.

### Grand Jury Findings

**FI-01. The County's 28 agencies and departments are so highly diverse that managing their multifaceted human resources responsibilities is extremely complicated and demanding.**

Agree. Each County agency and department has a distinct mission in its service to the community, which at times requires the recruitment of talent with specialized Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs). HRD partners with County agency and department subject matter experts (SMEs) to gain job specific functional knowledge in order to conduct successful recruitments in an efficient and timely manner to meet the critical mission needs of County agencies and departments.

**FI-05. The County's structured and consistent hiring process is intended to avoid the fact and appearance of any bias, thereby tending to preclude legal actions based on alleged discrimination. Sometimes, however, such a tightly structured process results in bypassing well-qualified candidates. This clearly happens in Fire Department lotteries, and it can also occur if minimum qualifications are very narrowly worded.**

Partially Agree. The County Personnel Rules and Regulations (PR&Rs) conform to all legal requirements and are intended to produce a highly qualified pool of candidates to meet the County's needs in a fair and unbiased process. HRD establishes Minimum Qualifications (MQs) for recruitments after collaboration, and in partnership with County agencies and departments based on the conduct of a Job Analysis. MQs set a bar of the lowest possible KSAs required to perform a job.

Desirable qualifications, which are Bona Fide Occupational Qualifications (BFOQs) established by a Job Analysis, are utilized in the application evaluation/review process to distinguish the most qualified candidates from those who only meet the MQs.

In Fiscal Year 2013-14 the County received approximately 37,000 applications for 1,500 job openings. At times, the number of applicants for a recruitment can be so voluminous that it becomes necessary to limit the number of applicants so that a timely and cost-efficient recruitment can be conducted while still providing an abundant pool of qualified candidates. For example, in the case of the most recent recruitment for Firefighter Trainee, the County received 3,378 applications for only 21 projected job openings. As advertised in the job announcement, the County accepted applications for twelve days and then randomly selected 600 applicants who met the minimum qualifications (MQs) for continuance in the examination process.

It should be noted that other public entities have utilized similar methodologies to enhance testing efficiencies while providing an abundant pool of qualified candidates. Clearly, this methodology does eliminate some qualified applicants, but on the balance it can be an effective tool given the volume of applicants for specific job openings.

**FI-06. Establishing minimum qualifications is a critical step in the recruiting/ hiring process, because an entity's satellite HR staff or its central HR analyst will use these qualifications to cull ineligible candidates from all the applications received. Hiring authorities and other SMEs do not review applications until a candidate is a finalist.**

**In preparing job descriptions, which include minimum qualifications, hiring authorities are often asked to list qualifications of the "ideal" candidate as opposed to the "acceptable" candidate. If these qualifications are not carefully worded, viable candidates may be excluded. Some potentially good hires do not get through the application-screening step because qualifications are too narrowly expressed. For example: "Must have Lean Six Sigma experience" could exclude applicants with similar "Quality Circles" experience; "Must have public-sector management experience" could eliminate excellent managers from the private sector. Such equivalent or supplemental experience is not considered if core qualifications are not met.**

Agree. As noted above, Job MQs are calibrated to applicants with at least the minimum level of experience, education, and training possible who can perform the job. Additional desirable qualifications ensure that the most qualified candidates enter into the County's workforce. HRD agrees that only Bona Fide

Occupational Qualifications (BFOQ) qualifications should be included in the recruitment process, and that equivalent or supplemental experience should be, and in fact is, considered in our screening process precisely because we want a broad pool of applicants and value private sector experience.

**FI-07. Other rules intended to prevent bias mandate that the same person cannot take part in more than one of three crucial steps: helping to prepare the oral exam, rating the oral exam, or serving on the hiring-interview panel. This can mean that the person who knows the job best—often the one who has been performing it—has very limited input. Especially for technical/specialized positions, such restricted participation by the key SME may constitute a major challenge to hiring the best candidate.**

Partially Agree. The County's Personnel Rules & Regulations create a separation of duties that at times can be cumbersome but are intended to prevent bias and promote a fair hiring process. In the absence of the current checks and balances prescribed by the Personnel Rules & Regulations, it is feasible that the County would experience additional hiring appeals alleging inappropriate or non-merit bias. It has been our experience that while the rules do at times pose a short term logistical challenge, we have been able to find a sufficient number of experts to successfully accomplish each recruitment.

**FI-08. The HRD has committed to continuous process improvement and “Service Excellence.” The County’s Strategic Plan reflects this commitment. Some HR analysts and managers have taken Lean Six Sigma courses and applied the process to recruitment and hiring with impressive success.**

Agree. HRD is committed to continuous process improvement and service excellence as demonstrated by the achievement of streamlining the recruitment process thereby meeting, in significant measure, the 35-day “recruitment open to list certification” goal. Also, HRD was a key participant in our Health Care Agency’s (HCA) Lean Six Sigma recruitment process study, that resulted in a reduction in the number of approvals required and the development of an automated requisition and hiring approval routing system which, when fully implemented in HCA, will substantially reduce the overall recruitment timeframe for the County largest agency.

**FI-09. Limited public knowledge of available student-worker positions gives a possible advantage to those who manage to become aware of them. Over time student workers can acquire on-the-job training, agency contacts who can be used**

**as references, and knowledge of the hiring process. This can benefit them when applying for future posted positions.**

Partially Agree. Student Worker jobs are generally not subject to the County's Civil Service Rules; however, they are, "organized" and represented by SEIU Local 721. Departments hire students on an as-need and "at-will" basis, subject to budgetary realities, meritorious performance, and on the condition they provide documentation that they are enrolled in school (college students must be enrolled in at least 9 units; post graduate students must be enrolled in at least 6 units).

Until March of 2015, students were allowed to work an unlimited number of hours per year, and (assuming all conditions were met) could be a student worker for an unlimited number of years. Recent changes to the SEIU Memorandum of Agreement limit Student Workers to a total of two (2) years with a maximum of 1040 "workable" hours in each year. This action, specifically initiated by the Board of Supervisors, will likely mean that as Student Workers reach their hour maximum, additional opportunities exist for new students to be hired into the County.

## **Grand Jury Recommendations**

**R-01. The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors direct the HRD to review current recruitment/hiring processes to include more applicants and to determine if the processes can be made less restrictive, especially in the early stages. The aim of such a review would be to discover other fair and legally tenable applicant-filtering techniques.**

Will be partially implemented. HRD is committed to continuous improvement and service excellence; and as noted, several HRD analysts and managers have taken Lean Six Sigma courses and applied the process to recruitments. HRD will continue to apply the Lean Six Sigma methodology with the aim of continuous improvement of the recruitment process, including suggestions targeting the applicant selection process which is primarily within the jurisdiction of the hiring agency/department; however, the County receives a volume of qualified applicants for some recruitments which are far in excess of job openings and a process is required, which provides highly qualified candidates in a time and cost efficient manner. We anticipate and recommend the continued prudent use of such techniques, including the lottery when the number of qualified candidates far exceeds job openings; as was the case with 3,378 Fire Fighter Trainee applicants for 21 job openings.

**R-02. The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors direct the HRD to expand its use of Lean Six Sigma methodology to analyze parts of the recruiting/hiring process. Examples: (1) Agencies/departments could hold Kaizen**

**events on what happens after they receive a list of screened candidates from HR. (2) HR could arrange for anonymous surveys of people who have recently been involved in the recruitment/hiring process: new employees, unsuccessful candidates, hiring authorities, SMEs, interview-panel members, and other stakeholders.**

Has been and will continue to be implemented. HRD is a strategic business partner and provides meaningful support to County agencies/departments throughout the recruitment process. The Lean Six Sigma methodology will be utilized where it continues to yield significant returns. HRD is committed to working with agencies and departments in identifying specific areas where additional focus will yield a great benefit. Additionally, HRD is committed to providing an excellent customer experience, and as such will conduct customer surveys, as recommended by the Grand Jury, with the intent of soliciting actionable feedback.

**R-03. The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors direct the HRD to broaden the recruitment of student workers by posting those positions online.**

Will be implemented. Student Worker jobs are comparatively few. Over the last year there have been some bi-weeks when there have been less than 100 Students working; the most recent bi-week showed 162 students to be active. It is acknowledged that providing an online posting could be beneficial for creating public awareness. As such, staff is currently devising a process to post Student Worker jobs online. It is anticipated that this process will be in place no later than October 2015.