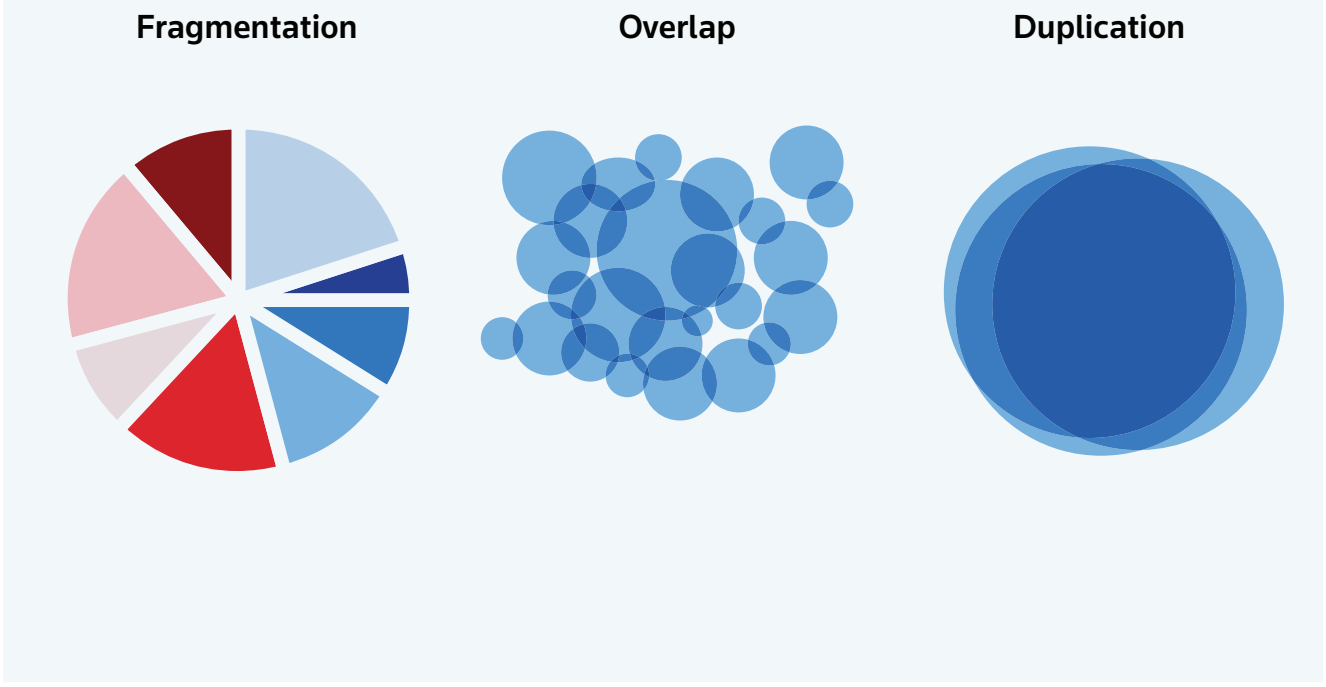
D.C. Personnel Operations Need Greater Coordination, Cohesion

January 30, 2026

A report by the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor



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D.C. Personnel Operations Need Greater Coordination, Cohesion

This audit examined possible duplication and opportunities for efficiencies and cost savings in D.C. government human resources operations, using a framework developed by the U.S. Government Accountability Office. ODCA focused on human resources because there is some inherent fragmentation in District personnel operations and a more efficient and effective human resources system could improve service delivery government wide.

Among the findings are the need for more systematic workforce planning, strategic use of recruitment and retention incentives, and development of cross-agency hiring pools.

Recommendations include focusing on improvements, planning, and technology enhancements in human resources management and accountability, recruitment, and training.

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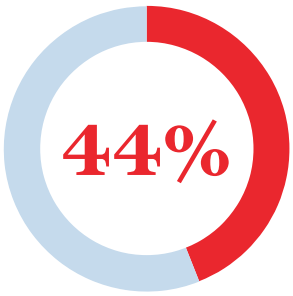

Percentage of employees whose personnel actions are supervised by DCHR.

11

Number of D.C. agencies that have been granted independent personnel authority agencies by statute since 2015.

MORE THAN 3.7B

Dollars D.C. spent in local funds on regular salaries and wages, extra pay and overtime, and fringe benefits for its 36,000 employees in FY 2024.

57 OF 103

Amount of D.C. government entities (agency, board, commission, or fund) with an appropriation in the District's FY25 operating budget that were under DCHR's authority, while **46** had independent personnel authority.

78 TO 95 DAYS

Increase in number of days on average it took to fill a position government-wide between FY21 to FY24.

ODCA
Office of the District of Columbia Auditor

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Executive Summary

Office of the District of Columbia Auditor

Why ODCA Did This Audit

This audit examined possible duplication and opportunities for efficiencies and cost savings in D.C. government human resources operations, using a framework developed by the U.S. Government Accountability Office. ODCA focused on human resources because (1) there is some inherent fragmentation in District personnel operations and (2) a more efficient and effective human resources system could improve service delivery government wide. The audit was initiated on a discretionary basis.

What ODCA Found

The D.C. government's human resources system shows a significant and growing degree of fragmentation. The central human resources office, the D.C. Department of Human Resources (DCHR), supervised personnel actions for only 44% of District employees in FY 2025. Since 2015, the human resources system has become more fragmented because elected officials granted independent personnel authority to 11 agencies by statute.

Centralized and decentralized systems of personnel management each have pros and cons, but more scrutiny is needed of any future requests for independent personnel authority. Many agencies awarded independent authority since 2015 were small and may lack the capacity to manage human resources operations effectively.

ODCA identified the need for more systematic workforce planning, strategic use of recruitment and retention incentives, and development of cross-agency hiring pools. Severe fragmentation among D.C. government job sites and design flaws in DCHR's job site, careers.dc.gov, also hamper recruitment.

Renewing a partnership between DCHR and the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) could increase the quality and cost-effectiveness of DCHR's workforce training programs. There is also a strong need for systematic training of the human resources professionals who help recruit, classify, compensate, and train the D.C. government workforce.

What ODCA Recommends

Recommendations on human resources management and accountability include:

- The D.C. Council should require an agency to submit a written plan demonstrating how it will administer personnel functions effectively and efficiently before approving any new statutory grants of independent personnel authority.
- DCHR should set standards for timeliness and quality of its services to client agencies and include the standards in its MOUs.

Recommendations on recruitment include:

- DCHR should implement a workforce planning process that identifies current and potential critical skill and knowledge gaps.
- DCHR should test the feasibility of creating central registries of individuals who apply for positions needed by multiple agencies.
- DCHR, working with the Office of the Chief Technology Officer, should modernize careers.dc.gov and link it to other D.C. government job sites.

Recommendations on workforce training include:

- DCHR should design and launch training for all HR professionals by the end of FY 2026.
- DCHR and UDC should form a partnership allowing D.C. government employees to access continuing education classes at UDC.

Background

This audit represents an effort to adapt the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO)'s duplication and cost savings project to the D.C. government.[1] GAO began this project in 2011 after Congress required the office to identify programs, agencies, offices, and initiatives with duplicative goals and activities, and to report findings annually with recommendations to reduce duplication and its costs.[2] Pursuant to this mandate, GAO issued its 15th annual report in May 2025 on ways to save money and reduce fragmentation, overlap, and duplication in the federal government.[3] The report outlined 148 steps in 43 topic areas that Congress and the executive branch could take to save $100 billion, when coupled with open recommendations GAO previously made.

GAO's annual duplication and cost savings report is based on a methodology outlining how to (1) identify fragmentation, overlap, and duplication in government programs and agencies, (2) document and validate the potential effects of fragmentation, overlap, and duplication, and (3) identify options to increase efficiency and to reduce or better manage fragmentation, overlap, and duplication.[4] The methodology recognizes that fragmentation, overlap, or duplication may be beneficial in some cases, such as when the specialized expertise of multiple agencies is needed to address a complex problem or issue.

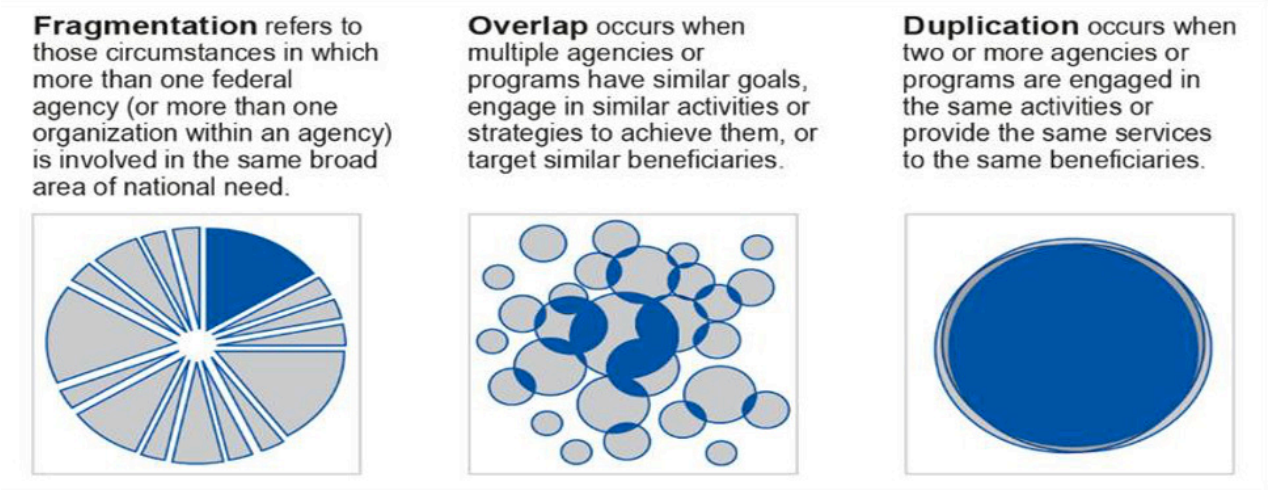
GAO defines fragmentation, overlap, and duplication as follows:

- Fragmentation occurs when more than one agency, or more than one organization within an agency, is involved in the same broad area of need.
- Overlap occurs when multiple agencies or programs have similar goals, engage in similar activities or strategies to achieve them, or target similar beneficiaries.
- Duplication occurs when two or more agencies or programs are engaged in the same activities or provide the same services to the same beneficiaries.

Figure 1 provides a graphic illustration of fragmentation, overlap, and duplication.

1 For more information about GAO's duplication and cost savings project, see http://www.gao.gov/duplication-cost-savings.
2 This requirement was effected by Public Law 111-139, § 21, 124 Stat. 8, 29 (2010), codified at 31 U.S.C. § 712.
3 This report is titled, Opportunities to Reduce Fragmentation, Overlap, and Duplication and Achieve an Additional One Hundred Billion Dollars or More in Future Financial Benefits, GAO-25-107604, May 2025.
4 This methodology is detailed in U.S. Government Accountability Office, Fragmentation, Overlap, and Duplication: An Evaluation and Management Guide, GAO-15-49SP, April 2015.

Figure 1: GAO Definitions of Fragmentation, Overlap, and Duplication



Source: U.S. Government Accountability Office. Reprinted with permission.

ODCA chose D.C. government human resources operations as a test case of the duplication and cost savings framework for several reasons. First, there is considerable fragmentation in D.C.'s human resources operations. The D.C. Department of Human Resources (DCHR) serves as the main personnel office for the D.C government, but many agencies have statutory authority to conduct personnel actions on their own. Second, a more efficient and coordinated human resources operation could improve services across the board — from classroom instruction and police patrols to foster care services and trash pickup — by helping agencies recruit, retain, train, evaluate, and promote high-performing employees. In turn, the D.C. government would get more value from its investment in its approximately 36,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees (FY 2024 data). In FY 2024, the District spent more than $3.7 billion in local funds on regular salaries and wages, extra pay and overtime, and fringe benefits.

As Donald Kettl, Patricia Ingraham, Ronald Sanders, and Constance Horner stated in Civil Service Reform: Building a Government That Works:

> Government's performance can only be as good as the people who do its work. When it fails to recruit, retain, and reward the best possible people — or when it subjects good people to bad systems — government's performance inevitably suffers and taxpayers lose.[5]

Comprehensive Merit Personnel Act of 1978

The main body of D.C. personnel law, the District of Columbia Government Comprehensive Merit Personnel Act (CMPA) of 1978, as amended, applies broadly to D.C. government agencies although some provisions are tailored to specific agencies (such as the University of the District of Columbia and the Metropolitan Police Department) and occupations (such as teachers, police officers, and firefighters).[6]

5 Donald Kettl, Patrica Ingraham, and Ronald Sanders, and Constance Horner, *Civil Service Reform: Building a Government That Works* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1996), pp. 2-3.

6 D.C. Law 2-139, the "District of Columbia Government Comprehensive Merit Personnel Act of 1978," took effect on March 3, 1979, and is codified as Title 1, Chapter 6 ("Merit Personnel System"), D.C. Official Code § 1-601.01 et seq.

The personnel rules set forth in Title 6-B of the D.C. Municipal Regulations and the electronic District Personnel Manual provide D.C. government agencies with guidance on how to implement the CMPA.

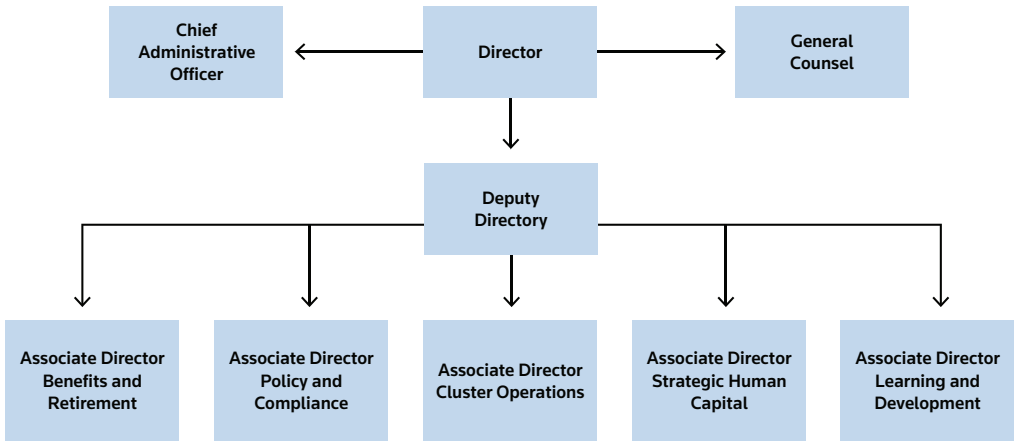
Although the CMPA authorizes DCHR to implement personnel policy on behalf of the Mayor, a growing number of agencies have statutory authority to administer human resources independently of DCHR.[7] ODCA examined the personnel authority for the 103 D.C. government entities (agency, board, commission, or fund) with an appropriation in the District's FY 2025 operating budget and found that 57 were under DCHR's authority while 46 enjoyed independent personnel authority.

D.C. Department of Human Resources

DCHR is led by a Director who is appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council. Because the DCHR Director exercises personnel authority on behalf of the Mayor, DCHR plays a central role in the D.C. government's human resources operations. DCHR's mission is "to strengthen individual and organizational performance and enable the District government to attract, develop, and retain a highly qualified, diverse work force."

Charles Hall, Jr., became the DCHR Director in 2023 after serving in human resources management positions at Under Armour, Baltimore City Schools, and Baltimore City College. DCHR's organizational structure, depicted in Figure 2, includes a deputy director, general counsel, chief administrative officer, and five associate directors. In FY 2025, DCHR had a $21.9 million operating budget and an FTE authorization of 158.

Figure 2: D.C. Department of Human Resources Organizational Structure, 2024



Source: D.C. Department of Human Resources.

7 The CMPA defines personnel authority as "an individual with the authority to administer all or part of a personnel management program..." See D.C. Official Code § 1-603.01(14). D.C. government agencies or officials that have received statutory grants of independent personnel authority since 2015 include the Statehood Delegation, Office of the Attorney General, Criminal Code Reform Commission, State Board of Education, State Athletic Commission, Rental Housing Commission, Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Ombudsperson for Children, and the Real Property Tax Appeals Commission.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Objectives

The objectives of this audit were:

1. Identify fragmentation, overlap, and duplication in D.C. government human resources operations.
2. Identify potential effects of fragmentation, overlap, and duplication in D.C. government human resources operations.
3. Identify options to increase efficiency; reduce or better manage fragmentation, overlap, and duplication; and generate cost savings in D.C. government human resources operations.

These objectives are adapted from the GAO's duplication and cost savings project methodology.

Scope

The audit focuses on human resources operations administered by the D.C. Department of Human Resources and agencies with independent personnel authority from January 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. The report also presents historical data and information on D.C. government human resources operations to highlight relevant trends and explain how policies and practices developed and changed. Data and information from after June 30, 2024, were also included when available.

Because human resources in the D.C. government spans such a broad range of activities (the CMPA includes more than 50 subchapters and the District Personnel Manual comprises more than 25 chapters), the project team focused on key functions reflected in DCHR's organizational structure. These functions include policy and compliance, recruitment, classification, benefits and retirement, learning and development, and strategic human capital management.[8]

Methodology

To collect, understand, and interpret the data and information needed for the audit, ODCA engaged in extensive document review and interviewed 25 current or former D.C. government officials involved in human resources policy and administration. The project team then used the data and information gathered to perform the key steps in the GAO duplication and cost savings methodology.

The project team reviewed D.C. personnel law, regulations, and policy guidance issued by DCHR, and a broad range of relevant documents, records, and data. This evidence included annual performance plans and reports prepared by DCHR and other agencies; agency responses to performance oversight questions from D.C. Council committees; legislative records; organization charts; budgets, contracts, and memorandums of understanding; and program plans and summaries.

8 Strategic human capital management entails data and analytics, best practices research, and business process improvements.

To better understand the objectives, operations, and outcomes of human resources activities and programs in the D.C. government, ODCA interviewed 35 individuals currently or formerly involved in personnel policy or management at DCHR or other D.C. government agencies. The interviewees included members of DCHR's executive team, officials from agencies with independent personnel authority, and officials from the Office of the City Administrator, Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments, Office of Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining, Office of the Chief Technology Officer, Office of the Attorney General, and Office of Employee Appeals.

Using the information gathered from the document review and interviews, the project team identified possible instances of fragmentation, overlap, and duplication in human resources operations by examining the goals and outcomes, beneficiaries or customers, and key benefits, services, or products of human resources programs and activities. The project team then sought to identify positive and negative effects of such fragmentation, overlap, and duplication by examining the implementation and outcomes of human resources programs and activities and reviewing preliminary findings with stakeholders.

To identify options to increase efficiency and to reduce or better manage fragmentation, overlap, or duplication, the project team reviewed the ideas proposed by interviewees as well as options suggested by GAO, such as (1) restructuring outmoded organizations and operations, (2) implementing process and technology improvements, (3) improving coordination and collaboration within and across agencies, and (4) engaging in performance management activities. In addition, the project team examined leading practices in human resources administration and public management identified by organizations such as the GAO, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, National Academy of Public Administration, and the Society for Human Resource Management.

This report was drafted, reviewed, and approved in accordance with the standards outlined in ODCA's Policies and Procedures Manual.[9]

9 See Office of the D.C. Auditor, Policies and Procedures Manual (March 2025), available at https://dcauditor.org/about-odca/odca-policy-documents/.

Audit Results

The D.C. government's human resources system exhibits a significant and increasing degree of fragmentation. Since 2015, policymakers have amended D.C. law to grant independent personnel authority to 11 D.C. government agencies, shrinking the share of the workforce under the authority of the District's central personnel office, the D.C. Department of Human Resources (DCHR).

The findings presented in this report indicate that the fragmentation of personnel authority is accompanied by gaps in performance measurement and accountability, as well as missed opportunities for coordination and collaboration in recruitment, staffing, and workforce development, spanning DCHR and the many agencies with independent personnel authority. For example, separate job sites operated by multiple agencies such as DCHR, D.C. Public Schools, Metropolitan Police Department, and Office of the Chief Financial Officer may create confusion and missed opportunities for job applicants and hinder efforts to expand the pool of well-qualified applicants. At the same time, the audit identifies DCHR initiatives in areas such as workforce planning and employee development that could be expanded to harness the power of personnel policies and programs to enhance service delivery throughout the government.

The D.C. government's personnel management system is fragmented. Although the D.C. Department of Human Resources (DCHR) is the central personnel authority for the D.C. government, DCHR exercises personnel authority for only 44% of D.C. government employees.

A longstanding debate in government personnel policy concerns the appropriate degree of centralized oversight and control. In the 1990s, government reform advocates strongly supported shifting authority from central human resources offices to agencies and their managers because centralized systems were seen as overly rigid, complex, and oriented toward control rather than helping agencies achieve their missions. A proponent of this view was Vice President Al Gore, whose National Performance Review concluded in 1993 that, "Thousands of pages of personnel rules prompt thousands of pages of personnel forms," and recommended that "most personnel management be delegated to agencies' line managers at the lowest level practical in each agency."[10]

Reflecting the cyclical nature of many public management debates, decentralization has also been faulted for undermining accountability and transferring important human resources functions to agencies that lack capacity to perform them effectively. Experts have noted that there are inherent tradeoffs in the assignment of personnel authority in the public sector, as summarized in Figure 4 . Moreover, centralization and decentralization are not discrete choices; for example, a central human resources office can grant agencies varying degrees of authority in how they screen, evaluate, classify, and compensate employees. As early as 1996, public management experts Donald Kettl, Patricia Ingraham, Ronald

10 Vice President Al Gore, *From Red Tape to Results: Creating a Government That Works Better & Costs Less. Report of the National Performance Review*. Washington, DC: Office of the Vice President, 1993, pp. 21-22.

Sanders, and Constance Horner concluded that, "Neither strong central control nor unbridled devolution can work."[11]

The District of Columbia Government Comprehensive Merit Personnel Act (CMPA) of 1978, as amended, reflects tradeoffs between centralized and decentralized personnel authority and incorporates aspects of each approach. The CMPA invests the Director of DCHR (formerly known as the "Director of Personnel")[12] with broad power and responsibility, stating that, "The Mayor may delegate his or her authority under this chapter, in whole or in part, exclusively to the Director of Personnel," while also calling for "uniform systems for personnel administration" and "efficient administration of this personnel system."[13] At the same time, the CMPA tries to avoid a hierarchical, control-oriented approach by emphasizing the need for a "modern flexible system of public personnel administration."[14]

Figure 4: Strengths and Weaknesses of Centralized and Decentralized Human Resources Systems

Centralized	Decentralized
Strengths: ■ Equitable treatment of employees and job applicants due to consistent implementation of rules ■ Prevention of favoritism and political patronage ■ Greater efficiency through economies of scale ■ Potential for better service delivery by HR staff with necessary expertise, resources, and oversight	**Strengths:** ■ HR services that focus on agency mission rather than rules and procedures ■ Greater ability to innovate and improve recruitment, classification, compensation, performance evaluation, and discipline ■ Potential for faster and better service delivery by in-house HR staff who understand agency programs, services, and goals
Weaknesses: ■ Slow service delivery due to cumbersome rules and procedures ■ Focus on compliance rather than helping agencies achieve missions ■ Difficulties in recruiting, retaining, and promoting talented employees ■ Slow and ineffective process to discipline and remove poor performers	**Weaknesses**: ■ Greater opportunities for inequitable treatment of employees and job applicants ■ Greater opportunities for favoritism and political patronage ■ Less ability to capture economies of scale ■ May emphasize speed at the expense of compliance with laws, regulations, and policies.

Source: Jerrell Coggburn, "The Benefits of Human Resource Centralization: Insights from a Survey of Human Resource Directors in a Decentralized State, *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 65, No. 4, July/August 2005.

11 Donald Kettl, Patrica Ingraham, and Ronald Sanders, and Constance Horner, *Civil Service Reform: Building a Government That Works* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1996), p. 11.

12 Mayor's Order 2007-61, "Re-Designation of the D.C. Office of Personnel as the D.C. Department of Human Resources," effective February 28, 2007 re-designated the "D.C. Office of Personnel" to the "D.C. Department of Human Resources" and re-titled the head of that office accordingly. The D.C. Code often still refers to the former departmental name and title.

13 See D.C. Official Code § 1-604.02 and § 1-601.02, respectively.

14 See D.C. Official Code § 1-601.02(a).

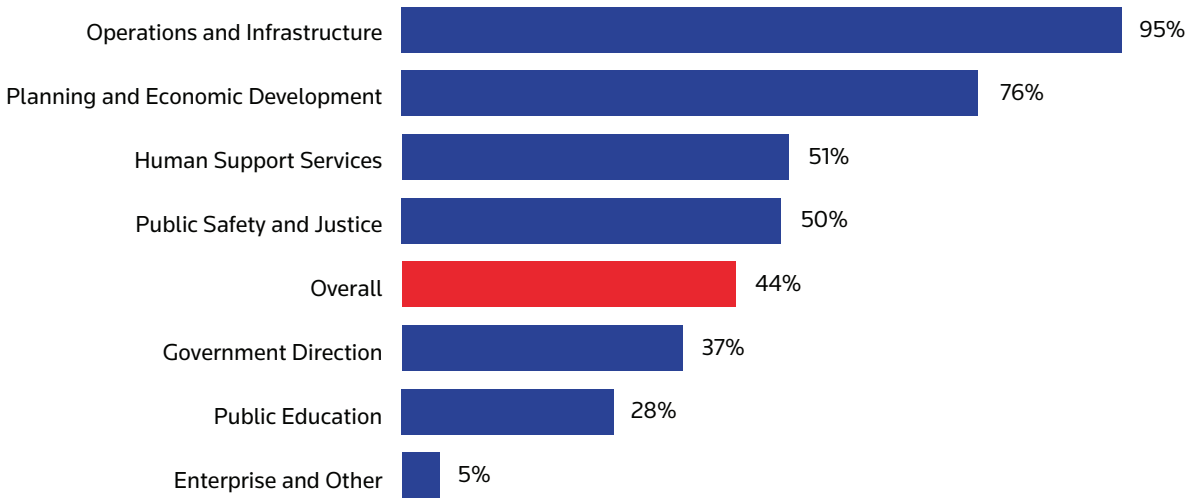
Reflecting the multiple and sometimes conflicting pressures facing human resources offices to ensure fairness and accountability while remaining responsive and efficient, the CMPA further states that:

> It is the intent of the Council that the District's personnel management system provide for equitable application of appropriate rules or regulations among all agencies. Further, it is the intent of the Council that the rules, regulations, and standards issued by the personnel authorities under this chapter should be as flexible and responsive as possible and reflect an awareness of innovation in the fields of modern personnel management and public administration.[15]

While recognizing that there is no "right" answer to the question of how much authority DCHR should have over agency human resources activities, ODCA finds that the D.C. government has been slowly but steadily shifting toward a decentralized system and that a more balanced approach is needed to promote efficiency and accountability, as explained below.

ODCA calculated that DCHR exercises personnel authority (the authority "to administer all or part of a personnel management program") for only 44% of the D.C. government's employees, measured in full-time equivalents (FTEs) in FY 2025 and encompassing the legislative and executive branches and independent financial staff. As shown in Figure 5, ODCA also found wide variation in the scope of DCHR's personnel authority by agency cluster, ranging from 5% of FTEs in agencies in the "Enterprise Fund" group in the D.C. government budget to a high of 95% of FTEs in agencies in the "Operations and Infrastructure" group.

Figure 5: Percentage of D.C. Government Full-Time Equivalent Employees Under DCHR's Personnel Authority, Fiscal Year 2025



Source: ODCA calculations based on D.C. Code analysis, information from DCHR, and FTE authorizations for D.C. government agencies from Government of the District of Columbia, *FY 2025 Approved Budget and Financial Plan*, Volume 1, Executive Summary.

15 See D.C. Official Code § 1-604.01.

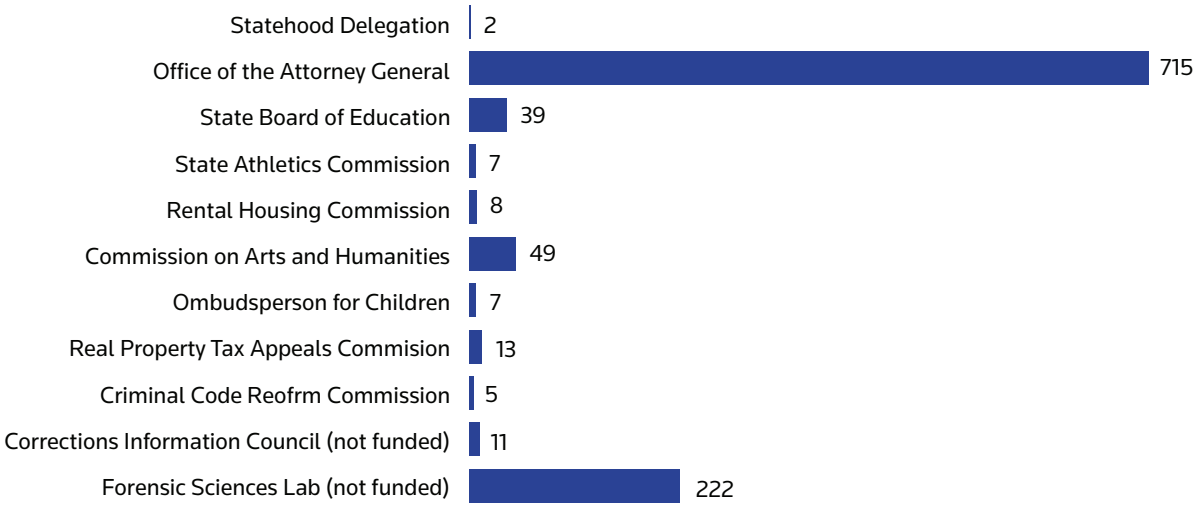
Moreover, DCHR exercises personnel authority for only 50% of the D.C. government employees in agencies that report directly to the Mayor (sometimes called "subordinate agencies"), also measured in FY 2025 FTEs.[16] This data point indicates that the District has strayed from the CMPA's vision of a DCHR Director who exerts central authority on behalf of the Mayor. Although ODCA identified only six agencies under the Mayor's authority that exercise independent personnel authority (D.C. Public Schools, Metropolitan Police Department, Department of Behavioral Health, Child and Family Services Agency, Department on Disability Services, and Office of Contracting and Procurement), this group includes the two D.C. government agencies with the highest authorized FTE levels for FY 2025: DCPS (10,052 FTEs) and MPD (4,891 FTEs).[17] DCPS and MPD combined for 14,943 authorized FTEs in FY 2025, more than one-third the total (41,032) authorized for the entire D.C. government that year.

Through a series of isolated decisions, elected officials have slowly but steadily authorized more agencies to implement human resources activities independently of DCHR. In an analysis of legislative changes to D.C. personnel law since 2015, ODCA identified 11 new statutory grants of independent personnel authority and no rescissions of independent authority. As shown below in Figure 6, many of these agencies are small: five of the 11 entities that gained independent personnel authority during the past decade had fewer than 10 authorized FTEs in FY 2025. Nevertheless, the District has been moving toward a more decentralized and fragmented human resources system. Independent personnel authority for one of the 11 entities, the Department of Forensic Sciences, has not yet taken effect because the fiscal effect of the authorizing legislation has not been accounted for in the District budget — but DCHR's span of authority will shrink further if DFS's more than 200 FTEs are no longer under DCHR's purview.

16 Subordinate agencies are defined in D.C. Official Code § 1-603.01(17) as those "under the direct administrative control of the Mayor," including but not limited to agencies listed in that paragraph of the Code.

17 Although agencies subordinate to the Mayor are under his or her personnel authority, which can be in turn delegated to the DCHR Director, all of these agencies except MPD are the subject of other statutory language granting them independent personnel authority. Mayor's Order 2012-28, dated February 21, 2012, delegates personnel authority for MPD to the Chief of Police, citing authority found in Title 5 (Police, Firefighters, Medical Examiner, and Forensic Sciences) of the D.C. Official Code.

Figure 6: D.C. Government Agencies Granted Independent Personnel Authority by Statute Since 2015 and Full-Time Equivalent Positions Authorized in FY 2025



Source: ODCA analysis based on D.C. Code, D.C. Council's Legislative Information Management System, and Government of the District of Columbia, *FY 2025 Approved Budget and Financial Plan*, Volume 1, Executive Summary.

ODCA's review of the legislative history for the 11 statutory grants of independent personnel authority since 2015 did not uncover detailed rationales for the changes; in some cases, ODCA did not identify any relevant legislative history. Nevertheless, in six of the 11 cases — the Statehood Delegation, State Board of Education, State Athletics Commission, Rental Housing Commission, Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and the Department of Forensic Sciences — the committee report on the legislation emphasized an overall purpose to effectuate, clarify, or enhance the independence of the agency from the Mayor's authority or from agencies under her supervision. Independent personnel authority was only one of multiple policy changes made to increase agency independence.

ODCA also notes that four of the 11 grants of independent personnel authority were part of annual, omnibus budget support acts which included dozens of provisions and exceeded 100 pages of statutory changes. That practice makes decisions to grant independent personnel authority less likely to be subject to discussion or scrutiny than if the changes were made in a stand-alone bill.

Still, the statutory change within the past 10 years that removed the largest number of FTEs from DCHR's authority — the granting of independent personnel authority to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) in 2015 — was distinctive because of its rationale and scope. OAG was authorized to employ 715 FTEs in FY 2025, as shown in Figure 6, far more than any other agency that gained independent personnel authority since 2015. The statutory change followed a major change in D.C. governance: implementation of a District Charter amendment, approved by voters in 2010, that changed the attorney general from an appointed position to an elected position.[18] Karl Racine took office as the District's first elected attorney general on January 2, 2015.

18 Before the charter amendment took place, the Attorney General was appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council.

In light of this change, the Council's Committee on the Judiciary reasoned that the OAG merited independent personnel authority because:

> Elected officials in the District of Columbia, including the Mayor, the Council, and State Board of Education typically have independent personnel authority. In fact, independent personnel authority is granted even to agencies that are not directly elected, but are expected to operate independently like the Board of Elections, the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, and the Board of Library Trustees.[19]

ODCA examined the personnel authority for the 103 D.C. government entities (agency, board, commission, or fund) with an appropriation in the District's FY 2025 operating budget and found that 57 were under DCHR's authority while 46 had independent personnel authority. Nevertheless, DCHR exercised personnel authority for only 44% of the District's full-time equivalent personnel because, as mentioned earlier, some agencies with independent personnel authority (such as DCPS and MPD) are very large. The Appendix lists the 57 entities under DCHR's authority as well as the 46 entities with independent personnel authority.

It was difficult to compare the effectiveness and efficiency of human resources operations overseen by DCHR and by agencies with independent authority for several reasons. First, as discussed in the next finding, the D.C. government started but has not sustained efforts to establish and report on standard measures of human resources performance. DCHR publishes annual performance plans and reports, but there is very little data about the human resources performance of agencies outside DCHR's purview. Although efficiency comparisons — such as the ratio of HR staff to total FTEs at DCHR and at agencies with independent personnel authority — might seem feasible, they are confounded by a number of factors.

First, as of February 2025, DCHR had entered into memorandums of understanding (MOUs) to provide human resources services, for a fee, to 26 of 46 entities with independent personnel authority. These MOUs vary in scope because agencies can choose from the following menu of services: benefits and retirement processing, recruitment and staffing, classification and compensation, legal review and consultation, policy advisement, employee relations, and performance management services.[20] Second, DCHR's Benefits and Retirement Administration offers the same benefit choices and retirement plans to most agencies, and DCHR's policy and legal guidance also benefits all agencies.[21] Finally, DCHR bears some overhead costs — such as administering the human resources information system (PeopleSoft) used across the government and providing agencies with data dashboards — that independent agencies do not have to incur. Therefore, there is no clear demarcation between the services provided by DCHR and the functions performed by agencies with independent authority.

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19 Committee on the Judiciary, "Report and Recommendations of the Committee on the Judiciary on the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget for Agencies under Its Purview," May 12, 2015, p. 157.

20 For example, the Criminal Code Reform Commission's FY 2025 MOU with DCHR covers benefits and retirement, classification and compensation, recruitment and staffing, and employee relations services.

21 Although DCHR offers benefits and retirement services to agencies with independent personnel authority through MOUs, these services concern functions such as the processing of retirement benefits and counseling — not the benefit and retirement options that are broadly available through DCHR.

Even though the relative merits of centralized personnel authority supervised by DCHR and independent personnel authority are not always clear-cut, research has suggested that very small agencies lack the capacity and human resources expertise to implement personnel policy effectively. Professor Jerrell Coggburn warned that:

> [S]tates or other jurisdictions that are contemplating reforms to decentralize HR need to seriously consider the special circumstances of small agencies. To do otherwise risks overwhelming the limited resources that small agencies possess, thus inviting trouble. In an environment where public employers often find it difficult to compete with private-sector employers for talent and where the legal risks of HR mismanagement are high, it is imperative to address the HR capacity needs of small agencies.[22] (emphasis in original)

Small D.C. government agencies with independent personnel authority frequently turn to DCHR for assistance. In examining 10 D.C. government agencies that had independent personnel authority and an authorized FTE level of less than 10, ODCA found that eight had MOUs in place with DCHR for human resources services as of February 2025.[23]

To improve performance throughout the District government's human resources system, promote balance between centralized and independent personnel authority, and meet the needs of small agencies, ODCA recommends that policymakers involve DCHR in discussions of any proposals for new grants of independent personnel authority. This approach could help ensure that DCHR understands agency needs and that it addresses problems identified in human resources policies and programs.

ODCA also identified an outlier among the agencies with independent personnel authority: the Office of Contracting and Procurement, which is one of six agencies that report to the Mayor but can conduct human resources transactions on their own. The five other agencies (DCPS, MPD, DBH, CFSA, and DDS) are all direct-service agencies that recruit employees with very specialized skills; by contrast, OCP is an internal service agency that may not have as strong a case for independence. Other internal service agencies, such as the Department of General Services, Office of Risk Management, and Office of the Chief Technology Officer, are under DCHR's authority.

Finally, the Mayor and Council Committee on Executive Labor and Administration should review OCP's independent personnel authority because it may be inefficient. As of January 2025, OCP employed five full-time human resource staff members to serve OCP's 209 authorized FTEs, a ratio of one human resources professional per 41.8 FTEs, which is relatively high. Human resources associations and experts typically recommend ratios as low as 1 human resources professional per 100 employees. In one planning exercise, DCHR used a ratio of one human resources employee for 70 FTEs, which it cited as a median ratio for the human resources profession.

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22 Jerrell Coggburn is professor and chair of public administration in the Department of Public and International Affairs at North Carolina State University. See Jerrell Coggburn, "The Benefits of Human Resources Centralization: Insights from a Survey of Human Resources Directors in a Decentralized State," *Public Administration Review*, July/August 2005, p. 432.

23 The eight agencies with fewer than 10 FTEs that had MOUs with DCHR were the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, Public Employee Relations Board, Rental Housing Commission, Judicial Disabilities and Tenure Commission, Criminal Code Reform Commission, Sentencing Commission, Judicial Nomination Commission, and State Athletics Commission. The two agencies with fewer than 10 FTEs that did not have MOUs with DCHR were the Statehood Delegation and the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children.

Recommendations

1. The D.C. Council should require a written plan from an agency being considered for independent personnel authority that demonstrates how the agency would administer this function effectively and efficiently. The D.C. Council should also request DCHR's feedback on the agency's plan.
2. The D.C. Council Committee on Executive Administration and Labor should review the independent personnel authority of the Office of Contracting and Procurement and determine whether to bring OCP under DCHR's authority, similar to other internal service agencies.

D.C. government efforts to implement agency-level performance measures for human resource operations are incomplete, depriving decision makers of information about the performance of different parts of the HR system and where improvements may be needed.

D.C. law, as well as principles of effective public management, emphasize the importance of performance measurement as a tool of accountability and improvement. The Government Managers Accountability Act (GMAA) of 1995, as amended, requires agencies to develop and submit to the Council annual performance plans stating measurable, objective performance goals for all significant activities, as well as annual performance reports indicating actual performance compared to the stated goals in the performance plan.[24]

Leading practices also indicate the importance of going beyond an agency-level focus in performance measurement to evaluate the collective impact of initiatives that cross agency lines or span the government. For example, the federal government requires performance measures for high-priority, multi-agency initiatives as well as management services such as human capital, procurement, and information technology.[25] In D.C., the Office of the City Administrator has also sought to monitor performance for internal services by instituting standard measures for all agencies to track, but these efforts have not been sustained.

After several short-lived efforts to implement human resources performance measures for all agencies, dating as far back as FY 2017, D.C. government agencies included the following standard measures for HR operations in their FY 2025 performance plans: (1) % of employees who are D.C. residents, (2) % of new hires who are D.C. residents, and (3) % of new hires who are D.C. residents and who graduated from a D.C. public high school (traditional or charter). This approach does not follow leading practices in performance measurement or comply with D.C. law for the reasons described below.

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24 D.C. Law 11-16, the "Government Managers Accountability Act of 1995," took effect on May 16, 1995, and is codified in D.C. Official Code § 1-614.11 - § 1-614.14.

25 These cross-cutting performance measures are required by Public Law 111-352, the "GPRA Modernization Act of 2010." See 124 Stat. 3866 (2011).

First, the three standard measures of human resources performance focus exclusively on employment of D.C. residents. Providing opportunities for D.C. residents and increasing their representation in the government workforce is a high priority for D.C. policymakers, reflected in many aspects of D.C. personnel law, but does not reflect the broader range of core human resources activities which encompass hiring, classifications, benefits, performance evaluation, and training. Second, these measures of HR performance are not accompanied by performance targets, which are not only required by the GMAA but are essential for accountability and improvement.

As the National Performance Management Advisory Commission stated in its 2010 report, *A Performance Management Framework for State and Local Government: From Measurement and Reporting to Management and Improving*:

> Performance management begins with setting objectives and targets that are relevant to stakeholders' needs and expectations. It focuses the organization's resources and effort toward achieving results that will provide the greatest benefit to the jurisdiction and its stakeholders.[26]

A more balanced set of standard human resources performance measures, coupled with performance targets and tracking, could offer policymakers, managers and the public a more complete view of collective performance. The Office of the City Administrator could choose standard agency HR performance measures from DCHR's key performance indicators and require their use by client agencies that prepare personnel actions for DCHR's review and approval as well as agencies under the Mayor's authority with independent personnel authority.

Figure 7 displays select DCHR key performance indicators for FY 2025 that could serve as standard agency human resources measures. These measures covers a range of important human resources outcomes, including but not limited to the hiring of D.C. residents.

Figure 7: Select Key Performance Indicators for the D.C. Department of Human Resources, FY 2025

Key Performance Indicator	Program or Activity	FY 2025 Target
Percent of new hires who are D.C. residents	Staffing	65%
Average number of days to fill position from post to offer acceptance	Staffing	60 days
Percent of employees participating in deferred compensation program	Retirement Benefits	65%
Percent of employee performance evaluations completed	Employee Evaluation	91%

Source: D.C. Department of Human Resources, "Proposed FY 2025 Performance Plan," April 2024.

26 National Performance Management Advisory Commission, A Performance Management Framework for State and Local Government: From Measurement and Reporting to Management and Improving, (Chicago: National Performance Management Advisory Commission, 2010), p. 4.

DCHR would play a key role in helping agencies track and report the data because it administers the D.C. government's human resources information system, PeopleSoft, and employs measurement, analysis, and planning specialists in its Strategic Human Capital Administration who can compile and analyze the data.

Recommendation

3. The Office of the City Administrator should require agencies to set targets and report performance on standard human resources performance measures aligned with DCHR's key performance indicators and require that DCHR help agencies gather the relevant data.

DCHR has not issued and publicized standards for the quality and timeliness of services it provides to client agencies, depriving DCHR and the agencies of a tool of accountability and service improvement.

GAO's duplication and cost savings work emphasizes that related programs and agencies should have strategic agreements in place to help achieve outcomes, and that responsibilities of related agencies and programs should be clear.[27] DCHR recognized the importance of clear service standards when it worked on a shared services model early in the Bowser administration that would have converted HR staff at client agencies to DCHR employees. A core element of this model, which was not implemented, were service-level agreements (SLAs) that would define the responsibilities of DCHR and its client agencies while setting service standards.

As of this writing, DCHR had not issued and publicized standards for the timeliness and quality of services it provides to client agencies, which encompass agencies under DCHR's personnel authority as well as independent agencies that receive services from DCHR under an MOU. DCHR's customer service portal, HR Desk, provides employees with an expected time frame for DCHR's response to inquiries and requests, but this feature — while valuable — does not constitute service-level agreements between DCHR and its client agencies. Moreover, HR Desk and the service standards it incorporates are not very visible. Employees have to log in to HR Desk to request assistance and may not be aware that it is available as a resource.[28]

DCHR's core services include position classifications, job postings, candidate selection, desk audits, retirements, drug and alcohol checks, and criminal background checks. Representatives of DCHR's client agencies interviewed by ODCA stated that DCHR's services were sometimes inconsistent and inefficient, often depending on the person assigned to a task. These criticisms applied to classification, recruitment and staffing, leave, and retirement benefits processing. Interviewees further stated that DCHR's lack of clarity about expected time frames created additional problems because they did not know when personnel actions would be completed or receive information to share with employees.

27 U.S. Government Accountability Office, Fragmentation, Overlap, and Duplication: An Evaluation and Management Guide, GAO-15-49SP, April 2015, p. 16.

28 When an ODCA employee typed in "HR Desk" to the search function on the DCHR home page (http://dchr.dc.gov) in August 2025, the search results did not include any links to HR Desk.

Testimony at a DCHR performance oversight hearing held by the D.C. Council Committee on Executive Administration and Labor on March 6, 2025, highlighted the need for clear service standards that help officials monitor and improve performance while clarifying expectations for client agencies and employees. David Hoagland, President of Local 36 of the International Association of Firefighters (which represents D.C. government firefighters), described "frustrating delays" in the review of applications for paid family and medical leave benefits that leave union members without a decision when their child is born or adopted, or when they begin caring for a family member with a serious medical condition.[29] He said retired firefighters wait more than 90 days after their last day of work to get their first retirement check and that DCHR advises employees not to apply for retirement benefits until 60 days before their intended retirement date. Later in the hearing, DCHR Director Charles Hall stated that the agency recommends that employees initiate the process at least 90 days before their retirement date.

Client agency officials generally agreed that service-level agreements would help them and their employees know what to expect and plan better while also holding DCHR more accountable. DCHR has already developed service standards for classification services (see Figure 8) and could supplement these guidelines with additional targets for recruitment and selection, benefits and retirement, and learning and development.

Figure 8: D.C. Department of Human Resources Performance Standards for Classification Services

Classification Service	Performance Standard
Completing an agency realignment or reorganization	30 calendar days
Completing an agency reduction in force	30 calendar days
Completing an agency classification report	5 business days
Making position description corrections or amendments	72 hours
Completing desk audits	21 business days
Completing position description reclassifications or redescriptions	7 business days
Completing a sample position description request	48 hours
Completing a new position description request	7 business days

Source: D.C. Department of Human Resources.

Other municipalities have also set performance standards for their human resources offices that include the following indicators, which DCHR could consider in developing its own service standards:

- Average number of days to post a job announcement after receiving a complete requisition and job description.
- Average number of days to certify a list of eligible candidates after the application closing date.
- Percentage of background checks completed within specified time frame.

29 See Testimony of David Hoagland, President of the District of Columbia Firefighters Association, before the Committee on Executive Administration and Labor, March 6, 2025, p. 1.

- Timeliness of response to benefits inquiries and requests.
- Time frame for updating employee records.

Recommendation

4. DCHR should issue and publicize standards for the timeliness and quality of services it provides to client agencies and incorporate the standards into its MOUs with other agencies.

D.C. government agencies are not engaging in systematic workforce planning, limiting their ability to identify and plan for future workforce needs.

For agencies to meet the challenges of governing in a time of growing societal and technological complexity, they must develop long-term strategies for acquiring, developing, and retaining staff to achieve their mission and goals. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has described workforce planning as "the systematic process of analyzing and assessing to set targets to mitigate the gaps between the workforce of today and the mission and human capital needs of tomorrow."[30] OPM further explained that:

> Workforce planning serves as the foundation for managing an organization's human capital. It enables organizations to strategically meet current and future workforce needs and prevents unnecessary disruption in maintaining a steady-state and agile workforce.[31]

Reflecting the importance of preparing for future workforce needs, Chapter 2, "Talent Acquisition," of the District Personnel Manual (DPM) requires personnel authorities to identify current and potential critical skills and knowledge gaps. The data compiled through the workforce planning process can then be used to (a) develop and implement knowledge gap reduction strategies, (b) inform agency organizational structure and deployment of the workforce, and (c) identify and develop strategies to overcome internal and external barriers to achieving strategic workforce goals.

In addition, Chapter 2 of the DPM states that agencies shall develop an agency-specific workforce plan, when required by their personnel authority, which includes the following elements:

- A list of mission critical positions.
- Core competencies by position type, to include all positions.
- Employee turnover by position type and tenure.
- Number of new hires within the last two years.
- Average time to fill a position.
- Current number of vacancies.
- Number of employees eligible to retire within the next two years.

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30 U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Workforce Planning Guide, November 2022, p. 4.
31 Ibid.

DCHR has not required agencies under its authority to prepare workforce plans, nor did ODCA learn of any agencies with independent personnel authority that created such plans. DCHR has developed capacity to support workforce planning by creating a web-based dashboard agencies can use to do their own planning. The dashboard enables agencies to analyze important data such as attrition, average tenure of the workforce, the percentage of employees who are D.C. residents, and the percentage of the workforce eligible for retirement. Nevertheless, some agency officials may not know about this resource or take the initiative to use it.

Therefore, DCHR's management of a formal workforce planning process and its provision of technical assistance to agencies in developing workforce plans is not only desirable but essential to meet the requirements set forth in Chapter 2 of the DPM. Logically, a formal workforce planning process could help agencies avoid or at least limit future shortages in critical positions, such as those the D.C. government has experienced for police officers, juvenile correctional officers, and school bus drivers in recent years. In addition, systematic workforce planning can allow DCHR to collect, aggregate, and analyze data from multiple agencies to identify and address cross-cutting problems that impede recruitment and retention of employees with needed skills.

Recommendation

5. DCHR should implement a workforce planning process for the agencies under its authority that identifies current and potential critical skills and knowledge gaps, consistent with the requirements set forth in the District Personnel Manual.

Although DCHR has tried to streamline recruitment by holding quarterly job fairs involving multiple agencies, DCHR does not have any cross-agency hiring pools which would reinforce its efforts to improve recruitment.

DCHR has tried to streamline recruitment by holding quarterly job fairs involving multiple agencies such as the Metropolitan Police Department, Child and Family Services Agency, Department of Behavioral Health, and D.C. Public Library. At these events, agencies can use statutory authority to hire employees non-competitively for positions at Grade 12 or lower for a term of 13 months to four years. These employees can gain permanent positions if they demonstrate satisfactory performance during the period of temporary employment. DCHR reported hiring 496 people during quarterly hiring events in FY 2024.

DCHR could build on this effort to streamline the hiring process by establishing cross-agency hiring pools, which presently do not exist in the D.C. government. OPM has noted the potential of multi-agency hiring efforts, stating that: "Pooled hiring at scale maximizes efficiency and enables agencies to quickly hire applicants who are highly qualified. This saves time and resources and enhances the applicant experience through a centralized coordination of government hiring." In a joint August 2024 memo, OPM and the U.S. Office of Management and Budget called on federal agencies to expand their use of pooled hiring practices and to review available lists of eligible candidates before launching new hiring actions.

Examples of cross-cutting positions in the D.C. government include grants management specialists, project managers, administrative officers, attorney-advisors, management analysts, customer service representatives, and human resources specialists. In a response to questions from ODCA, DCHR stated that agencies were unable to recruit through cross-agency pools because they could not view candidates for positions across agencies, but that the Office of the Chief Technology Officer would be evaluating the necessary technology enhancements.

The rules governing hiring in the D.C. government emphasize tailoring position descriptions and job announcements to the standards and qualifications set by the hiring agency, but pooled hiring should nevertheless prove workable. DCHR could select several cross-agency position titles to conduct a pilot project on pooled hiring, which could work as follows:

- DCHR would issue a regular job announcement to establish a pool or register of qualified applicants for a position that states the required standards and qualifications, as well as the procedures for applying.
- When the application period closed, DCHR would create a panel to evaluate and rank the applicants.
- The register would be in effect for a set period such as six months or one year, after which DCHR could issue a new announcement to replenish the pool of applicants.
- Any agency seeking to hire someone for the relevant position could send a requisition to DCHR describing the grade level of the position and any special requirements (such as a degree in a particular field).
- DCHR would then review the applicants in the registry and provide the hiring agency with a list of eligible candidates to interview.

Creating cross-agency hiring pools could help the D.C. government optimize its recruitment efforts because multiple agencies could consider a candidate and thereby maximize the chances of matching his or her skills and experiences with an agency that can make best use of them. For example, current and former officials from D.C. government human services agencies expressed the view that it would be beneficial for these agencies to be able to draw on a common pool of applicants with social work degrees. Presently, there is no formal way to retain and review the résumé and job application of someone who was not selected for a position but could help another agency achieve its mission.

OPM has summarized the drawbacks of recruiting for a single position at a time by stating that: "Each agency posts a unique vacancy announcement multiple times for a core occupation, such as acquisition or human resources. Hundreds of applicants apply and only 1 or 2 are selected leaving qualified applicants still available on the certificate."[32] OPM also provided an example of the benefits that can result from pooled hiring, stating that it worked with agencies receiving funding under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act to issue a multi-agency job announcement for HR specialists. This pooled hiring effort attracted 2,700 applicants and led to the hiring of 86 HR specialists at four federal agencies.

32 U.S. Office of Personnel Management, "Playbook for Implementing Strategies to Enable a Federal Workforce that is Inclusive, Agile and Engaged, with the Right Skills to Enable Mission Delivery," February 2024, p. 7.

Recommendation

6. DCHR should conduct a pilot project to test the feasibility of creating central registries of individuals who apply for positions needed by multiple agencies.

DCHR does not utilize hiring incentives until the end of the hiring process, which likely diminishes the impact of the incentives as a recruiting tool.

In seeking to recruit, select, and hire highly capable employees, D.C. law and personnel regulations allow DCHR and other personnel authorities to deploy additional tools to attract candidates with very specialized skills that may be in high demand. In general, agencies may use incentives to attract and retain critical talent when the position is hard to fill, the personnel authority approves the incentive, and the employee signs a continuation of service agreement for at least 12 months.

Subject to the conditions described above, DCHR and independent personnel authorities may offer the following incentives to enhance recruitment and retention: pre-employment travel and relocation expenses, additional income allowances, and hiring bonuses. The rules governing each type of incentive are shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9: D.C. Government Recruitment and Retention Incentives

Incentive	Description
Pre-Employment Travel and Relocation Expenses	An agency may pay travel expenses incurred for pre-employment interviews and relocation expenses for hard-to-fill positions with the approval of the personnel authority. A temporary housing allowance for up to 60 days is also available for employees in the Executive Service or Excepted Service.
Additional Income Allowance	An Additional Income Allowance (AIA) is an amount of additional compensation paid to an employee who fills a position determined by the personnel authority to face a significant recruitment and retention problem. An AIA is capped at 15% of the maximum pay for the employee's pay grade.
Hiring Bonus	A hiring bonus is a one-time supplemental payment provided to an individual newly hired by an agency to a position determined by the personnel authority to have a significant recruitment and retention problem. A hiring bonus is capped at 15% of the maximum pay for the employee's pay grade.

Source: District Personnel Manual, Chapter 11, "Classification/Compensation," and D.C. Department of Human Resources Issuance 1-2021-34, "Recruitment and Retention Incentives," dated September 20, 2021.

The District Personnel Manual and DCHR Issuance I-2021-34, "Recruitment and Retention Incentives," are silent on when job applicants are notified about available hiring incentives. Nevertheless, in a March 6, 2025, performance oversight hearing held by the Committee on Executive Administration and Labor, DCHR Director Charles Hall stated that the incentives are typically requested by the hiring agency and authorized by DCHR after the agency has selected a candidate. Mr. Hall offered several reasons for this practice, noting that it is not clear at the outset if the hiring agency can fund the incentives, and that the agency may view a position as hard to fill when that is not really so. For example, the agency may have trouble filling a position or group of positions because it has not prepared a position description and vacancy announcement that appeals to potential candidates.

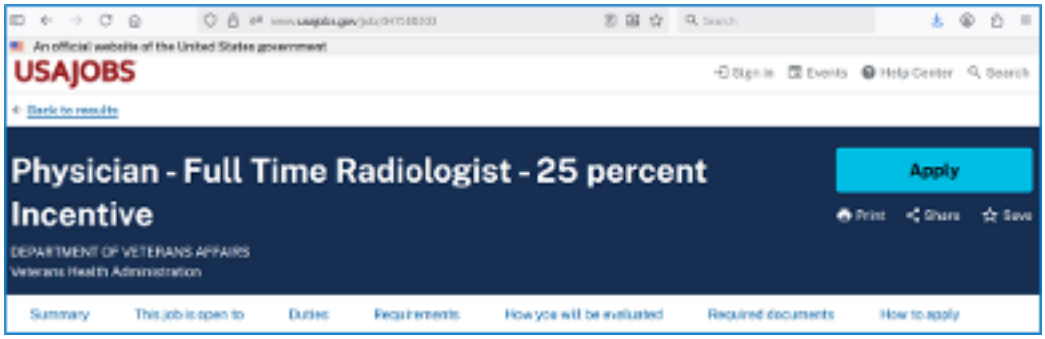
Nevertheless, as stated in DCHR's Recruitment Guide, an agency must complete a position description and obtain budget approval before a vacant position can be posted. Thus, there is an opportunity to certify the availability of funds up front. The cost of the incentives is unlikely to be prohibitive because they represent a small fraction of salary; as noted in Figure 9 on the previous page, hiring bonuses and additional income allowances are capped at 15% of salary.

Moreover, the designation of a position as hard to fill rests with the DCHR Director or other personnel authority and follows criteria set by DCHR. Agencies can demonstrate that a position is hard to fill by showing the existence of multiple vacant positions, a significant length of time a vacancy has remained unfilled, the resignation of multiple employees in the position, and other indicators. Agencies must also demonstrate that the qualifications they are using to consider candidates do not exceed the qualifications needed to do the work effectively.

DCHR's unwillingness to authorize and publicize hiring and retention incentives up front may create a Catch-22: the incentives have less impact because they are not used to expand the candidate pool. If incentives are not considered until a candidate is selected, then they cannot spur more people to apply for hard-to-fill positions.

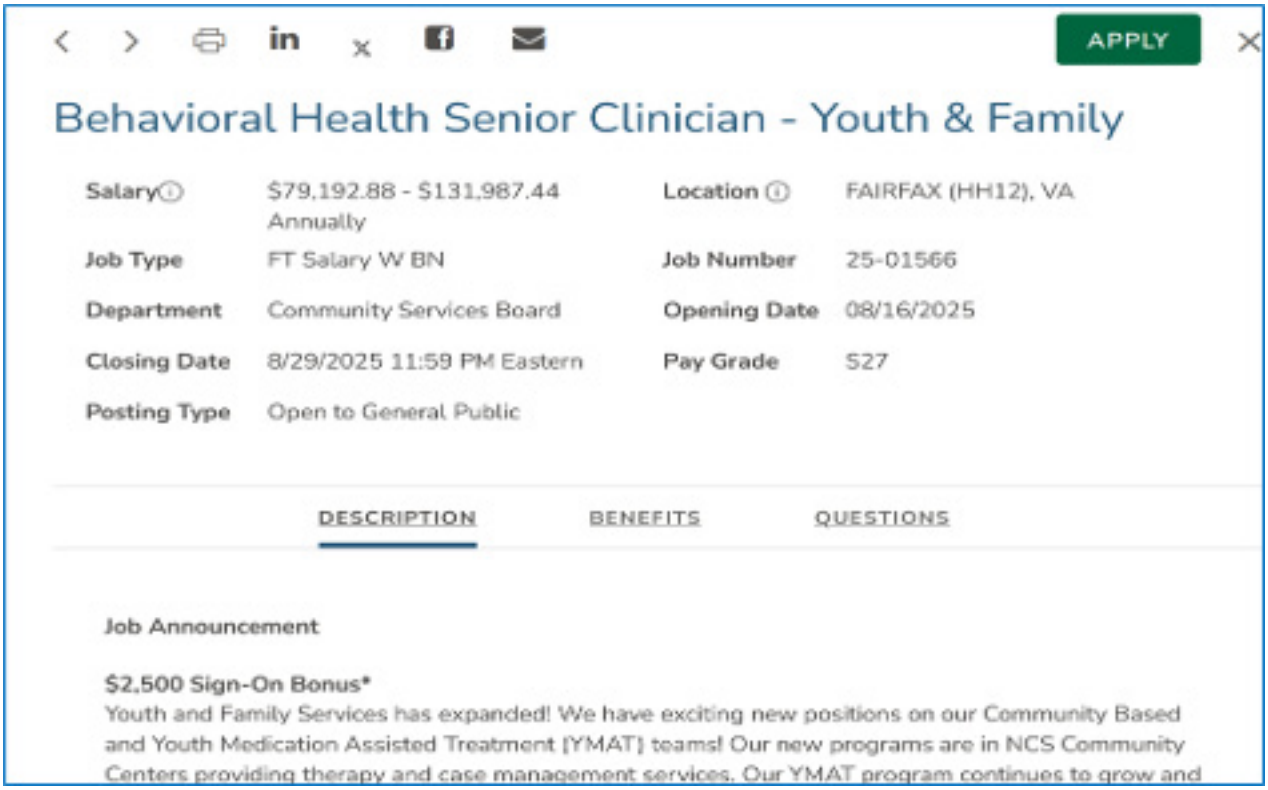
Finally, by not publicizing incentives at the start of the recruitment process, DCHR is forgoing a practice human resources offices are using at the federal, state, and local government levels. The project team identified examples of federal agencies that are publicizing hiring incentives in their job announcements, as are the Commonwealth of Virginia, Fairfax County, and New York City (see examples in Figures 10 and 11). Accordingly, ODCA recommends that DCHR join these other human resources offices in announcing the availability of recruitment and retention incentives when the hiring process begins. The Metropolitan Police Department similarly publicizes the availability of a $25,000 hiring bonus to potential applicants on its job site, http://joinmpd.dc.gov.

Figure 10: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Job Announcement Highlighting Recruitment Incentive



Source: www.usajobs.gov, **accessed on November 11, 2025.**

Figure 11: Fairfax County, Virginia Job Announcement Highlighting $2,500 Sign-On Bonus



Source: www.governmentjobs.com/careers/fairfaxcounty, **accessed on August 17, 2025.**

Recommendation

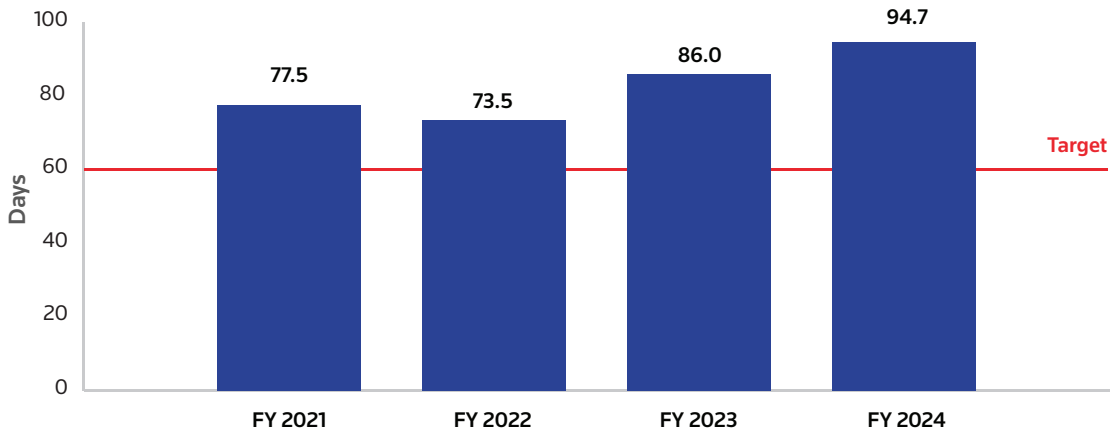
7. DCHR should revise the regulations and policy guidance on recruitment incentives to state that they can be authorized at the start of the recruitment process if funds are certified as available and the personnel authority determines that the position is hard to fill.

DCHR has not analyzed major causes of delay in the hiring process at the agency level, which could help counteract an increase in average time to fill a position from 78 days in FY 2021 to 95 days in FY 2024.

The first of four strategic objectives established by DCHR states that, "DCHR strategically and expeditiously sources, selects, and on-boards highly talented individuals with the acumen, aptitude, and attitude to thrive in District government."[33] One of DCHR's key performance indicators (KPIs) for this strategic objective is the average number of days to fill a position, measured from the time a position is posted to the time a candidate accepts a job offer. DCHR's target level of performance for time to fill is 60 days, although DCHR has emphasized that this is a stretch goal.

DCHR has consistently fallen short of the 60-day target level of performance. Moreover, the average time to fill reported by DCHR has increased from 77.5 days in FY 2021 to 94.7 days in FY 2024, as depicted in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Average Number of Days from Job Posting to Acceptance of Job Offer FY 2021 to FY 2024



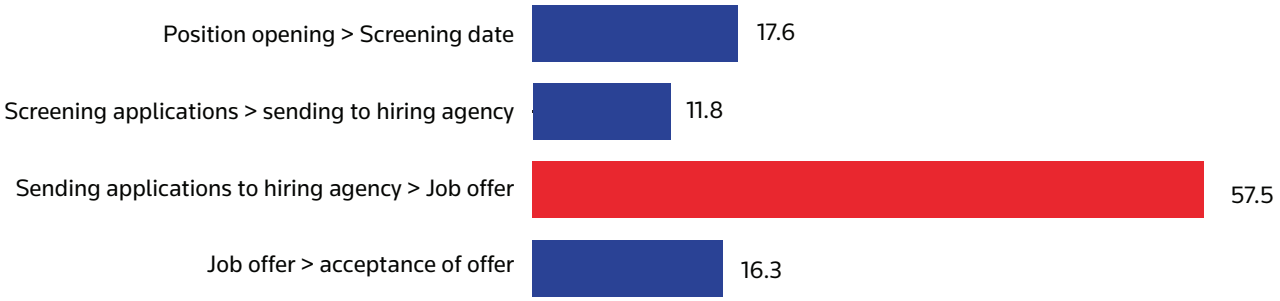
Source: D.C. Department of Human Resources.

ODCA also found large variation among D.C. government agencies in average time to fill a position. For example, in FY 2024 agency averages for time to fill ranged from a low of 3.8 days at DCHR to a high of 175.9 days at the Metropolitan Police Department.[34] Some variation in hiring time among agencies is to be expected depending on the professional backgrounds they seek and the labor market for the relevant occupations. National data indicate that public safety, executive, and professional positions take longer than average times to fill. Other internal factors, such as the way an agency defines the requirements for a position, also affect hiring cycle time.

33 D.C. Department of Human Resources, "Fiscal Year 2025 Performance Plan," p. 4.
34 Although it might seem implausible for DCHR to fill positions in an average of 3.8 days, the agency filled some of its small number of vacancies through "on-the-spot" contingent job offers at its hiring fairs.

Because the factors affecting time to fill a position are so wide-ranging and sometimes agency-specific, it would be valuable for DCHR and agencies to drill down into the causes of hiring delays and try to address them. When asked for any analyses of the time-to-fill cycle that describe the amount of time taken during various stages of the process, either overall or by agency, DCHR did not provide any agency-level analysis but provided the average length for four stages in the hiring process during FY 2024. These data are summarized in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Average Number of Days from Job Posting in PeopleSoft to Acceptance of Job Offer, FY 2024



Source: D.C. Department of Human Resources.

The aggregate data presented in Figure 13 are not granular enough to identify problems in the hiring process. First, the lack of agency-level data prevents DCHR and agency partners from analyzing problems that are distinctive to each agency. Second, the third stage of the hiring process summarized above (sending applications to the hiring agency to offering a job) is so long — 57.5 days, more than the other three stages combined — that it should be broken down into sub-steps to identify any chokepoints. Steps involved between routing applications to the hiring agency and a candidate receiving an offer include scheduling and conducting interviews, selecting a candidate and notifying the HR staff, setting the salary, conducting any suitability screenings, and processing the hiring action in PeopleSoft.

DCHR has several initiatives underway to hasten the hiring process but more data about their impact would likely help the agency refine and better target these efforts. As discussed earlier in this report, DCHR hosts quarterly hiring fairs for multiple agencies, which are supplemented by hiring events for individual agencies or agency clusters. DCHR advised the Council Committee on Executive Administration and Labor that mass hiring events "have typically decrease[d] time to fill as HR specialists and hiring managers are able to complete scoring and interviews in a condensed timeframe,"[35] but did not provide more specific information.

DCHR also advertises hard-to-fill positions on LinkedIn to help hiring mangers identify good candidates and encourage them to apply. DCHR reported to the Committee on Executive Administration and Labor that, "With the social media method of recruitment, a drastic improvement in time-to-fill should occur

35 D.C. Department of Human Resources, "FY 2022-FY 2023 Performance Oversight Questions," p. 42.

since this process involves hiring managers on the frontend vs. the backend of recruitment and recruiters can quickly identify the 'right' candidates for hard to fill positions,"[36] but this prediction should be verified through data analysis.

Inability to hire more expeditiously creates operational risks for D.C. government agencies. For example, the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) has struggled with a rising vacancy rate that makes it hard to maintain order at its facilities, creating safety risks both for detained youths and employees. Staffing shortages also create gaps in education and other programming at DYRS facilities. Efficient hiring is needed to rectify such problems, but DYRS had an above-average time to fill in FY 2024 of 97.8 days.

More generally, University of North Carolina Professor David Ammons, an expert in performance measurement, summarized the effect of delays in the hiring process as follows:

> Outstanding HR departments waste little time in referring qualified applicants to hiring departments. Otherwise, delays in the process could lead to the loss of top candidates who decide not to wait and instead accept offers from more expeditious employers.[37]

To help reduce hiring cycle times, DCHR could focus its analysis on identifying and easing bottlenecks at high-priority agencies experiencing severe or persistent problems in filling positions promptly. Among agencies under DCHR's personnel authority, those with the highest averages for time to fill a position from FY 2022 to FY 2024 have been the Department of Corrections, Office of Human Rights, Department of General Services, Department of Public Works, and Department of Motor Vehicles.

Recommendation

8. DCHR should assist agencies with the longest average time to fill over the past three years in analyzing the number of days taken during each step of the hiring process to identify bottlenecks and develop solutions.

D.C. government agencies operate many job sites, creating a fragmented system that may be difficult for job seekers to navigate and that does not serve the broader interests of the District government.

Standards for government websites and digital services call for user-centered and data-driven design. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has stated that executive agencies "should publish content online so the public can find what they need, understand what they find, and use what they find to meet their needs."[38]

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36 Ibid, p. 43.

37 David Ammons, *Municipal Benchmarks: Assessing Local Performance and Establishing Community Standards* (Third Edition). Armonk, NY: ME. Sharpe, Inc. 2012, p. 177.

38 Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, "Memorandum for Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies" on "Delivering a Digital-First Public Experience," September 22, 2023, p. 8.

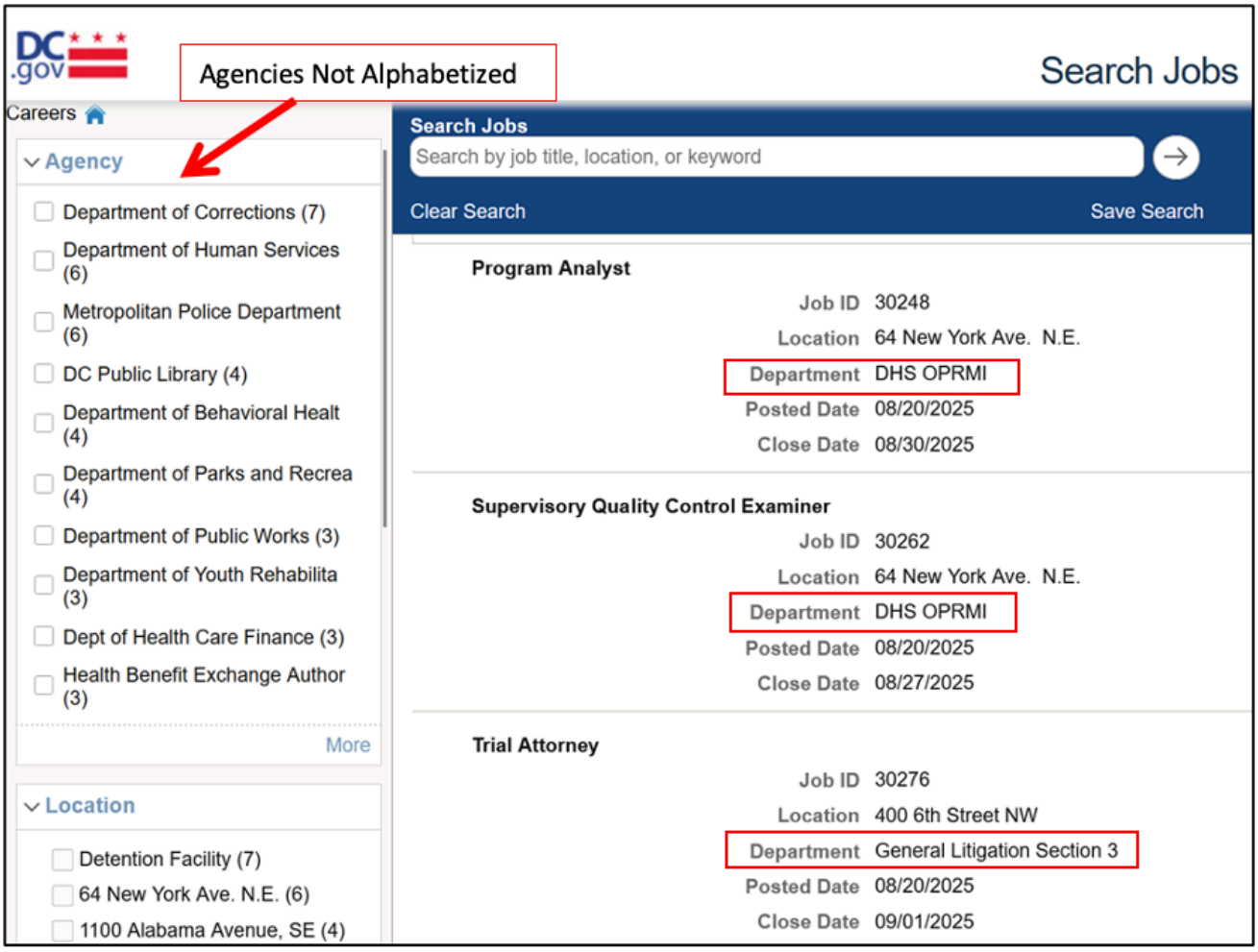
D.C. government has numerous job sites and they do not reflect principles of user-centered web design and digital services. In addition to the central job site, http://careers.dc.gov, administered by DCHR, there are separate sites for the Metropolitan Police Department, D.C. Public Schools, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments, University of the District of Columbia, and D.C. Housing Authority.

The sites cited above are almost completely unconnected. Because DCHR is the D.C. government's central personnel authority, DCHR's job site would be an appropriate place to provide such links (as in a hub-and-spokes system). Nevertheless, among the agencies listed above, only positions from MPD are posted on careers.dc.gov, even though there was no direct link to the MPD job site from careers.dc.gov. Positions at DCPS, OCFO, UDC, and DCHA are not shown on careers.dc.gov, nor are positions under MOTA's purview.

The careers.dc.gov site also does not display features of a user-centered, visually appealing site that uses clear language. For instance:

- Jobs and agencies are not listed in alphabetical order and the description of open jobs is marred by jargon (see Figure 14).
- Job abstracts often do not designate the hiring department or office accurately, instead referring to organizational units in a department (see Figures 14 and 15). For example, a position with a departmental listing of "Executive Office," shown in Figure 15, is actually part of the Department of Aging and Community Living — important information that might interest a job seeker.
- The site's search engine does not appear to work well. For example, as shown in Figure 15, a search for "Department of Health" yielded 25 results, the first of which was an aircraft mechanic position in the Metropolitan Police Department.

Figure 14: Careers.DC.Gov Design Flaws



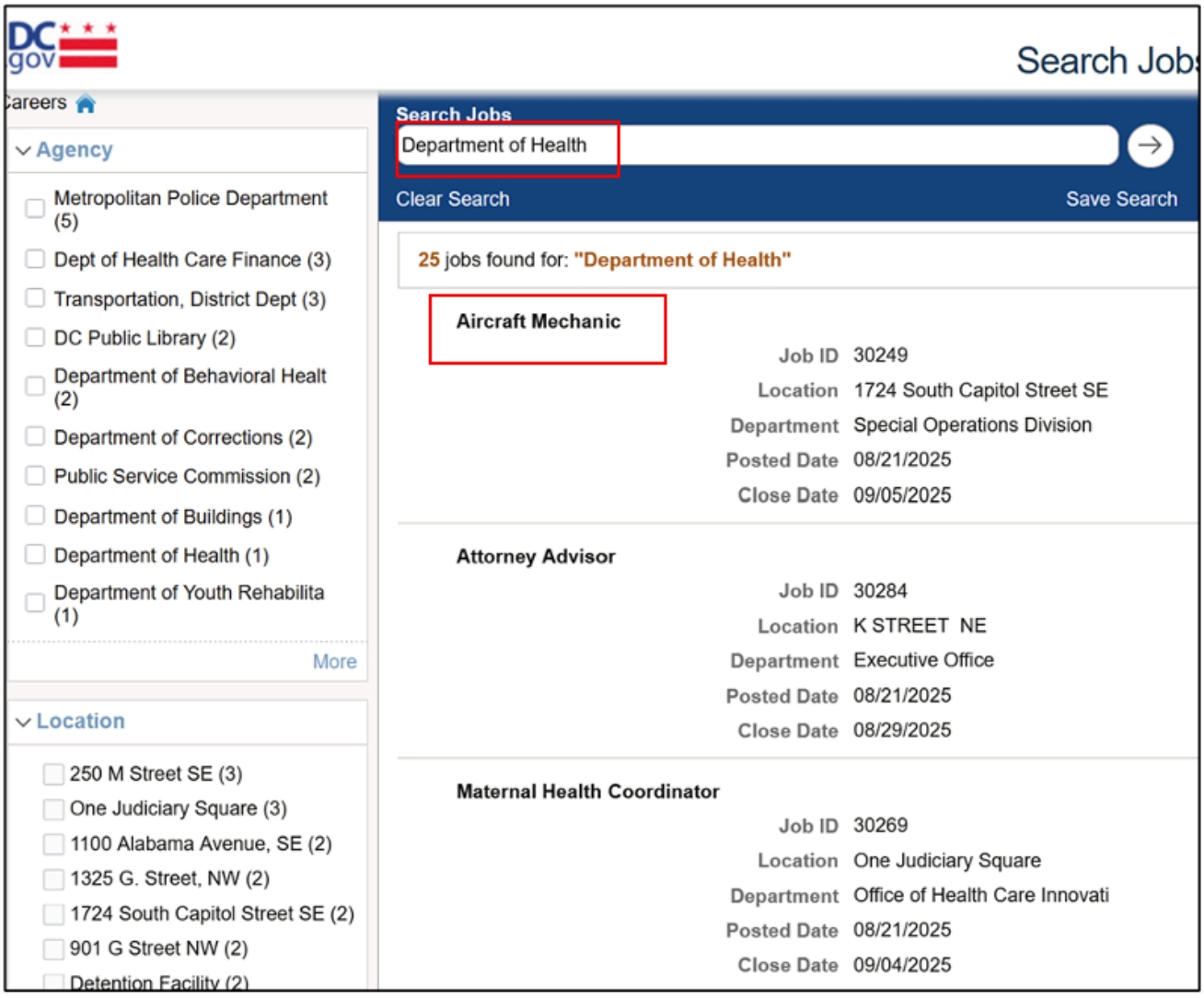
Source: http://careers,dc.gov, **accessed on August 22, 2025.**

DCHR and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) have implemented several upgrades to careers.dc.gov. In a response to questions preceding its performance oversight hearing before the Committee on Executive Administration and Labor in 2024, DCHR stated that:

> DCHR collaborated with the Mayor's Office on Innovation and OCTO to redesign the front-facing page of careers.dc.gov .... The redesigned site features a dedicated section highlighting hard-to-fill positions, making it easier for job seekers to identify and apply for these roles. The redesigned page also incorporates multimedia elements with dynamic videos and images of the benefits and culture of working for the District.[39]

39 D.C. Department of Human Resources, "DCHR FY 2024 Performance Oversight Questions," p. 17.

Figure 15: Careers.DC.Gov Search Engine Flaws



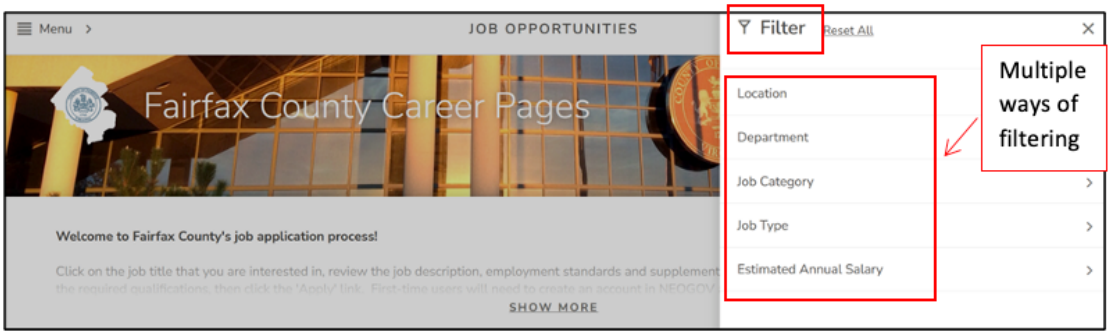
Source: http://careers,dc.gov, **accessed on August 22, 2025.**

The D.C. government's fragmented job sites likely result in confusion for a job seeker and missed opportunities for agencies to expand their talent pools and hire skilled individuals who can help agencies achieve their missions. One D.C. government official described the situation succinctly, stating that job seekers do not know that the D.C. government has six (or more) job sites. If a resident somehow finds the DCPS job site, he or she won't know that there might be positions on the UDC website that would be of interest. Similarly, if a job seeker is interested in an accountant or fiscal analyst position, they won't see relevant positions posted on careers.dc.gov and won't learn that the OCFO job site displays numerous opportunities.

Job sites from other local governments provide examples of clearer, more intuitive and visually appealing designs that DCHR and OCTO can adopt for careers.dc.gov. For example:

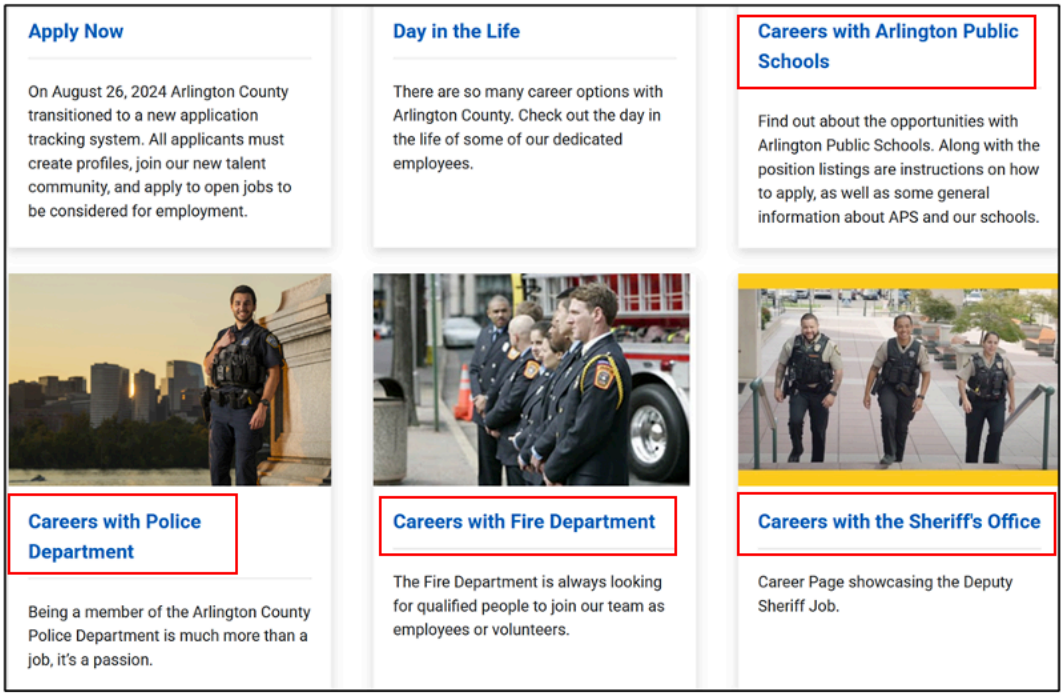
- Local governments such as Prince George's County in Maryland and the City of Alexandria and Fairfax County in Virginia alphabetize their job postings.
- Other governments routinely include integrated sorting and filtering functions to help job seekers find positions that best match their backgrounds and interests (see Figure 16).
- Some governments provide links to the job sites maintained by school systems, police departments, sheriff's offices, and other important entities (see Figure 17).

Figure 16: Integrated Filtering of Jobs on the Fairfax County, Virginia Job site



Source: www.governmentjobs.com/careers/fairfaxcounty, **accessed on August 22, 2025.**

Figure 17: Links to Other Agency Job Sites on the Arlington County, Virginia, Job site



Source: www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Careers/1-Explore-Careers, **accessed on August 22, 2025.**

The D.C. government can draw on these and other examples to upgrade careers.dc.gov and enhance agency recruitment efforts.

Recommendation

9. DCHR, in partnership with the Office of the Chief Technology Officer, should make careers.dc.gov more user-centered and easier to navigate, including prominent links to other D.C. government job sites.

Training programs for D.C. government human resources professionals have been subject to instability, impeding efforts to upgrade the quality of services.

Public officials have recognized the importance of training and development for the government's human resources professionals. During the Biden administration, the President's Management Agenda stated that "a modernized federal HR workforce" is needed to "provide credible, effective support to agencies" and that, "(A)gency leadership and the HR workforce need technical, consultative, and analytical skills to implement talent management strategies that improve mission outcomes."[40]

DCHR Director Charles Hall has also underlined the importance of capable human resources professionals to the effectiveness of the D.C. government's workforce, stating in February 15, 2024, testimony to the Council's Committee on Executive Administration and Labor that:

> The District requires strategic and innovative HR professionals to implement modern HR solutions. The city's talented and dedicated HR professionals play a significant role in DCHR's and the District's workforce accomplishments.[41]

Nevertheless, DCHR has struggled for more than a decade to implement and sustain a workforce development system for human resources professionals. One of DCHR's FY 2014 initiatives was to develop and launch an HR Certificate Program for the District's HR professionals, but this effort was marked by delays and changes in direction, as summarized in Figure 18.

By the end of FY 2023, DCHR had implemented two tiers of an HR certificate program — Tier 1 for junior staff and Tier 2 for more experienced staff. DCHR stated that the certificate program was designed to ensure that HR professionals are using industry best practices and cutting-edge knowledge to provide the District workforce with first-class customer service. Nevertheless, in FY 2024, this long-awaited certificate program was abandoned as DCHR considered a new approach to training HR professionals.

Management turnover may have impeded DCHR's efforts to implement a systematic HR workforce development program over the past decade, along with perceived deficiencies in some of the approaches that were tried. A DCHR official explained that the agency found the HR certificate program to be too

40 Each administration typically releases a President's Management Agenda to communicate cross-agency priority goals, objectives, and implementation strategies.

41 Testimony of Charles Hall, Jr., Director, D.C. Department of Human Resources, on "Fiscal Year 2023-24 Performance of the Department of Human Resources" before the Committee on Executive Administration and Labor, February 15, 2024, p. 7.

narrow because employees needed two years of experience for Tier 1 and five years of experience for Tier 2. In place of the HR certificate program, DCHR now plans to pursue a more universal approach to HR workforce training, starting with recruitment (staffing and onboarding) refresher training for current staff and then expanding to cover new employees.

DCHR Director Charles Hall stated in February 2024 testimony to the D.C. Council Committee on Executive Administration and Labor that DCHR was planning to develop and implement a "comprehensive HR onboarding and refresher training program" for all D.C. government HR professionals in FY 2024.[42] In March 2025 testimony to the same committee, Mr. Hall pushed this goal out another year, stating that, "In FY25, DCHR intends to launch an additional formal HR training program for the HR community to refresh and enhance their skills."[43]

Figure 18: Timeline of D.C. Department of Human Resources' Efforts To Launch HR Certificate Program

- **2014:** DCHR works with George Washington University (GWU) to launch the District's HR certificate program in the third quarter of FY 2014.
- **2015:** GWU recommends revising the program to align with a nationally recognized certificate program. DCHR stated its intent to explore this option in FY 2016.
- **2016:** DCHR acknowledges that it did not meet its FY 2016 goal of launching a pilot version of the HR certificate program.
- **2019:** DCHR provides pilot training on the HR certificate courses and finalizes 11 topics to be covered in Tier 1 of the training, which is targeted at human resources professionals with three years or less of experience.
- **2020:** DCHR reports launching Tier 1 and training more than 20 human resources professionals across the D.C. government on key topics such as compensation, leave management, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and qualification analysis.
- **2023:** DCHR offers Tier 2 training for the first time. This training was targeted at human resources professionals at the Grade 12 level or above with at least five years of experience and covered subjects such as recruitment, talent management, performance management, and employee relations.
- **2024:** DCHR reports that 25 human resources professionals completed Tier 2 training in January, but the DCHR Director announces a new plan to develop and implement a comprehensive HR onboarding and refresher training program for all HR professionals in FY 2024.
- **2025:** DCHR states its intent to launch a formal training program for human resources professionals in the D.C. government by the end of FY 2025.

Source: D.C. Department of Human Resources' performance plans, performance reports, testimony to the D.C. Council, and other agency documents.

42 Ibid, p. 8.
43 Testimony of Charles Hall, Jr., Director, D.C. Department of Human Resources, on "Fiscal Year 2024-25 Performance of the Department of Human Resources" before the Committee on Executive Administration and Labor, March 6, 2025, p. 9.

A systematic training program for D.C. government human resources professionals is needed and long overdue after more than a decade of work on the issue. The lack of such a program leaves DCHR and independent personnel authorities without a tool that can develop the "strategic and innovative HR professionals" needed to "implement modern HR solutions," as stated by Director Hall.[44] DCHR may thus perpetuate a system in which client agencies sometimes complain that DCHR's services are inconsistent and inefficient, often depending on the particular person assigned to a task. As noted earlier, these criticisms apply to classification, recruitment and staffing, leave, and retirement benefits.

HR professionals interviewed by ODCA confirmed that there is an urgent need for more systematic and consistent training of D.C. government HR staff, who often have to figure out issues with little guidance. To make this type of experience less common in the future, DCHR should commit to implementing comprehensive HR training by the end of FY 2026.

Recommendation

10. DCHR should create and implement training for all human resources professionals by the end of fiscal year 2026.

DCHR does not capitalize on continuing and professional education offerings from the University of the District of Columbia.

The District Personnel Manual states that, "The Mayor shall implement and maintain programs for the training and development of all employees. This shall be conducted through planned courses, programs, systems, or other institutions of education in fields that are or will be related to the performance of official duties for the District government."[45] The DPM further states that, "The personnel authority may make arrangements for employee development and training with colleges, universities, other institutions of higher education, or private sector organizations, as appropriate."[46]

As the agency with delegated authority to carry out the Mayor's personnel responsibilities, DCHR established the Center for Learning and Development (CLD) to coordinate training programs and activities for D.C. government agencies and employees. CLD provides career assistance, resource centers, and agency-specific training in partnership with universities, vendors, and other local training institutions.

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44 Testimony of Charles Hall, Jr., Director, D.C. Department of Human Resources, on "Fiscal Year 2023-24 Performance of the Department of Human Resources" before the Committee on Executive Administration and Labor, February 15, 2024, p. 7.
45 See Chapter 13, "Employee Development," of the D.C. Personnel Regulations, Section 1301.1.
46 Ibid., Section 1308.1.

CLD's offerings can be categorized as follows:

- Online and in-person classes sponsored by DCHR.
- Online classes offered through the Percipio e-learning platform.
- Workforce development initiatives and programs including the District Leadership Program, Capital City Fellows, Certified Public Manager, and Executive Leadership Program.[47]

Each category listed above also has different components and features. For example, the online and in-person classes sponsored by DCHR include training specifically for the Management Supervisory Service. Training sponsored by DCHR is sometimes offered by in-house trainers and sometimes offered by vendors. The Percipio learning platform is described as offering more than 500 "curated course channels" covering workplace topics such as business communication skills, human resources, leadership, project management, and information technology. DCHR administers the Certified Public Manager and Executive Leadership Programs in partnership with George Washington University.

Amid this array of training options and providers, ODCA identified a source of workforce development training — the University of the District of Columbia (UDC) — that DCHR used to draw on but does not presently provide learning and development services to D.C. government employees. During FY 2013, for example, UDC contracted with an online education provider, Education to Go, to provide continuing education courses to D.C. government employees as part of their benefit package, for a total cost not to exceed $39,850.[48]

By not drawing on the continuing education offerings provided by UDC, DCHR may be overlooking a source of valuable training for the D.C. government workforce. UDC's Office of Continuing and Professional Education (CPE) offers more than 1,000 online courses and more than 60 professional certificates, making it likely that UDC can provide training that is not currently available to District government employees. UDC's CPE Office also can design customized training to meet workplace needs.

The large number and type of continuing education classes offered by UDC strongly suggest that at least some could be of higher quality or lower cost than those currently offered by DCHR. At the time of this writing, DCHR had four contracts in place with private vendors for competency-based employee training. Each contract had a maximum value of $750,000 for FY 2025.[49] DCHR might be able to reduce these private contract costs by engaging UDC as a workforce training partner.

ODCA's comparison of UDC's continuing and professional education offerings to DCHR's stated priorities for D.C. government workforce development, reflected in core competencies identified by DCHR and the

47 The District Leadership Program is an internship program that provides college juniors and seniors, as well as graduate students with knowledge, skills, and experiences that will help them become tomorrow's leaders. The Capital City Fellows Program seeks to attract recent graduates of master's degree programs in public administration, public policy, and related fields to work in D.C. government. The Certified Public Manager Program is intended to enhance the skills of D.C. government managers and provide them with tools needed to be more effective. The Executive Leadership Program is intended to enhance the performance of the Mayor's cabinet and build a talent pipeline for cabinet positions.

48 Unraveling the reason or reasons why the DCHR-UDC workforce development partnership ended was difficult because many officials now in key roles were not in the D.C. government at the time. For example, DCHR's Associate Director for Learning and Development assumed his position in April 2024 and had not previously worked in the D.C. government.

49 The vendors were Capital Business Group, CL Russell Group, Knowlogy Corporation, and Urban Equity group.

technical skill priorities of DCHR's "City University,"[50] indicates that UDC could be a valuable partner to DCHR. For example:

- UDC offers online classes on Six Sigma: Total Quality Fundamentals, Project Management Fundamentals, Introduction to Microsoft Excel, Accounting Fundamentals, Writing Effective Grant Proposals, Fundamentals of Supervision and Management, Computer Skills for the Workplace, Building Teams That Work, and Achieving Success with Difficult People.
- UDC provides in-person classes on Leadership Skills, Project Management Principles and Projects, Modern Workplace Communications, and Team Building for Effective Teams in the Workplace.

Recommendation

11. DCHR should work with UDC to develop and implement a memorandum of understanding for UDC to provide D.C. government employees with access to classes, courses, and certificate programs that meet needs identified by DCHR.

Cohorts for the Capital City Fellows program have gotten smaller in recent years, narrowing an important talent pipeline to the D.C. government.

The need to develop talent pools in government at all levels has been widely recognized by experts in public administration and human resources. The GAO has stated that agencies "should focus on current and future needs and develop pools of high-potential staff to meet the organization's long-term goals."[51] More specifically, OPM has pointed out that:

> Early career programs provide a critical entry point into Federal service whether someone is entering the workforce for the first time or changing professions. By increasing opportunities and removing barriers to hiring interns, fellows, and apprentices, Federal agencies can boost their talent pipelines and better serve the American people.[52]

Although OPM's statement refers to the federal workforce, the same principle also applies to the D.C. government, as DCHR has affirmed. DCHR's third strategic objective for FY 2025 states that, "DCHR defines the pathways, programs and processes to create opportunities to consistently develop District employees and residents through assignments and activities aimed at advancing their career trajectory."[53]

DCHR's Center for Learning and Development administers two important early career programs — the District Leadership Program (DLP) and Capital City Fellows (CCF) — that expose students and recent graduates to opportunities in the D.C. government and cultivate the next generation of skilled workers and leaders. DLP offers internships to college juniors, seniors, and graduate students, while CCF seeks

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50 City University is DCHR's program for professional and technical training intended to meet critical workforce skill development needs.
51 U.S. Government Accountability Office, "Leading Practices in Human Capital Management: Issue Summary," undated.
52 U.S. Office of Personnel Management, "Playbook for Implementing Strategies to Enable a Federal Workforce that is Inclusive, Agile and Engaged, with the Right Skills to Enable Mission Delivery," February 2024, p 13.
53 D.C. Department of Human Resources, "Fiscal Year 2025 Performance Plan," p.4.

to attract recent graduates of master's degree programs in public administration, public policy, urban planning, and related fields to work in the D.C. government.

In addition, DCHR assists the Department of Employment Services with an HBCU Public Service program, launched in 2024 to create a talent pipeline from historically black colleges and universities to the D.C. government. The HBCU Public Service program offers yearlong apprenticeships in D.C. government agencies, as well as on-the-job training and mentoring, to recent graduates of Howard University and the University of the District of Columbia. DCHR serves as the apprenticeship sponsor and oversees the program's apprenticeship standards. Each annual cohort is intended to have 25 participants. After completing the apprenticeships, participants can get permanent jobs at the DS-11 level.

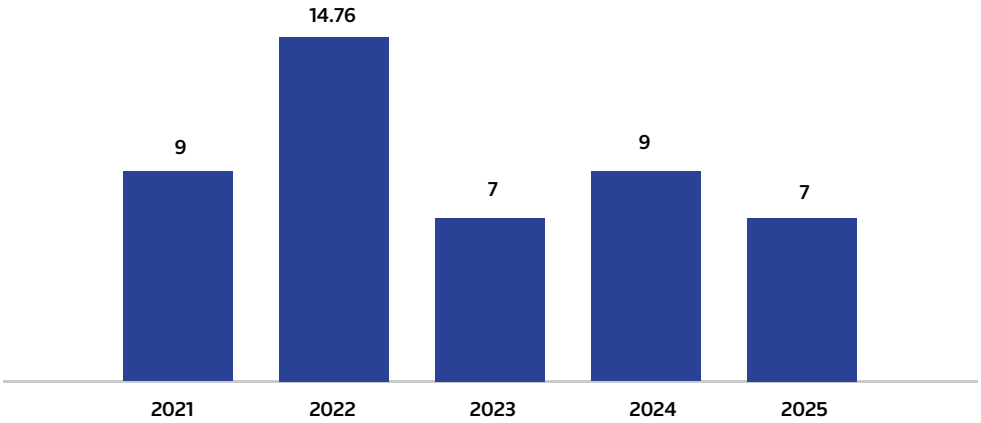
Established in 1999 as a priority of Mayor Anthony Williams, the CCF program lasts for 18 months and participants cycle through three six-month rotations at different agencies to expose them to a wide range of government operations, after which they can obtain permanent positions in the D.C. government. Originally, the program spanned 24 months, but it was reduced to 18 months in 2013 because most fellows had accepted permanent D.C. government positions and left the program by the 18-month mark.

The number of CCF positions has dropped over time. From FY 2008 through FY 2010, the budget was sufficient to support 25 CCF slots each year. As part of efforts to close a budget gap in FY 2011, D.C. policymakers reduced the number of CCF funded positions to 15. The cost-cutting efforts continued in FY 2012, as the CCF program was cut by five more positions, leaving the number of funded slots at 10.

To sustain enrollment, the CCF program shifted to a hybrid funding model in which positions funded in the DCHR operating budget were supplemented by inter-agency payments to cover a fellow's salary and fringe benefits, as reflected in a memorandum of understanding between DCHR and the fellow's host agency. This approach increased the number of CCF positions, which rose from 12 in FY 2015 to 19 in FY 2019.

Nevertheless, as shown in Figure 19, the number of CCF positions has dwindled in recent years, staying mostly in single digits. With seven fellows in FY 2025, CCF slots were less than one-third of the number 15 years ago. Cuts to the CCF program have been larger than for other DCHR learning and development programs.

Figure 19: Capital City Fellows Positions, Fiscal Years 2021 to 2025 (Full-Time Equivalents)



Source: D.C. Department of Human Resources.

The lower number of CCF positions reflects the narrowing of a critical pipeline of capable employees to the D.C. government, selected through a highly competitive process. To be eligible, an applicant must have received his or her graduate degree with a grade-point-average of 3.5 or higher in the past two years. Applicants must provide official graduate transcripts, a résumé, and two letters of reference, and those selected for further consideration must participate in individual interviews, a group exercise, and a writing exercise. Applicants are then assessed and ranked based on their academic records, the strength of their application, leadership potential, potential for professional growth, and commitment to public service.

Reflecting their ability to help agencies fulfill their missions and provide high-quality services, Capital City Fellows have been cited as instrumental in helping to launch major initiatives such as Capital Bikeshare, the D.C. Circulator, Sustainable D.C., and Age-Friendly DC. Many fellows have risen to positions of leadership in the D.C. government, including the current Director of the Department of For-Hire Vehicles, and a former Director of the District Department of Transportation.

To expand this valuable source of public servants and future leaders, directly funding CCF positions in the DCHR budget seems like the best approach, because agencies may be reluctant to pay for a fellow who will rotate to another agency after six months. In FY 2025, the DCHR operating budget appropriated $441,000 and authorized six FTEs for the Capital City Fellows program.[54] Only two agencies — the Office of the State Superintendent of Education and DC Health — signed MOUs with DCHR to pay for Capital City Fellows.[55]

Recommendation

12. The Office of the City Administrator should work with the D.C. Department of Human Resources to develop and implement a plan to increase the number of funded slots for the Capital City Fellows program.

Personnel records management in the D.C. government still involves inefficient manual processes despite steps taken toward digitization.

Information technology investments represent one of the most powerful ways of streamlining processes and generating efficiency gains. The federal government's Chief Information Officers Council has stated that:

> Investments in IT can dramatically enhance organizational performance. When carefully managed, IT becomes a critical enabler to improve business processes, makes information widely available, and reduces the cost of providing essential Government services. As IT rapidly evolves, the challenge of realizing its potential benefits also becomes much greater.[56]

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54 One way to restore the CCF program to the double-digit position levels that have prevailed through most of its history would be to shift funds to the DCHR operating budget from agencies that have made the greatest use of fellows in the past three to five years. Because salaries and fringe benefits per fellow totaled just over $75,000 in FY 2026, the five agencies that hosted the most fellows could each fund one CCF FTE by transferring $75,000 apiece. In a time of federal government job cutbacks, the D.C. government might reap benefits from expanding the number of CCF slots as recent graduates of master's degree programs look for alternatives to federal service.

55 OSSE's MOU with DCHR was for two fellows, while DOH's MOU with DCHR was for one fellow.

56 U.S. Chief Information Officers Council, "Chief Information Officers Council Handbook," p. 25.

In collaboration with the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO), DCHR has implemented upgrades to PeopleSoft, the D.C. government's human resources information system, to make HR services more efficient and effective. PeopleSoft upgrades have included:

- Implementing an electronic process to submit applications for paid and family medical leave benefits.
- Creating an electronic telework application that lets employees choose a day of telework, explains telework requirements, and sends the application to the employee's supervisor for approval.
- Introducing new employee leave codes to reflect new types of leave usage including pandemic-related leave.
- Adding a function for employees to upload proof of Covid-19 vaccination status.

Nevertheless, DCHR's implementation of electronic processes is not complete. Although DCHR has highlighted plans to digitize official personnel folders (OPFs) for more than 10 years, these plans are not yet fully realized. Approximately 20,000 OPFs are still maintained as paper files even though many relevant documents are stored in PeopleSoft.

An OPF is an official repository of the personnel records created during an employee's service with the D.C. government and, in some cases, the federal government. The OPF is maintained throughout the employee's service and is transferred with the employee if he or she moves to a District government agency under a different personnel authority. Records that must be retained in an employee's OPF include notices of personnel action, service computation dates, veteran preferences, appointment affidavits, authorizations for salary step increases, signed offers of employment acceptance, pre-employment screening checklists, and acknowledgments of sexual harassment rules.

Figure 20: Timeline of DCHR and OCTO Efforts to Digitize Official Personnel Folders

- **2014:** DCHR announces an initiative to "assess the current business practices and system architecture used to support electronic storage of the official personnel folders and the potential to effectively access files electronically."
- **2017:** DCHR reports working with OCTO to begin a transition to electronic OPFs and states that OCTO completed the procurement and licensing of software to begin scanning inactive OPFs. DCHR also states its intent to begin transitioning OPFs for all current employees in FY 2019.
- **2019:** DCHR implements electronic onboarding for newly hired staff in agencies under its authority, allowing new hires to enter their information directly into PeopleSoft.
- **2022:** DCHR collaborates with OCTO to implement an "attachment framework for HR personnel and recruitment actions … with associated document retention," allowing records to be stored in PeopleSoft electronically. DCHR also promises that current and former employees will soon be able to view their personnel records from their employee portal, rather than having to request physical files from DCHR.

Source: D.C. Department of Human Resources performance plans and reports; Office of the Chief Technology Officer, "Pre-Onboarding Job Aid for Selected Applicants (October 2019); and D.C. Department of Human Resources, "PAR Action Attachment Upload Procedures: HR Checkpoint," undated.

The eOnboarding module in PeopleSoft, which went live in 2019, features a welcome from the Mayor and allows newly hired employees to fill out and sign their orientation documents electronically. The eOnboarding module includes the following forms, documents, and acknowledgments.

- I-9 employment eligibility verification.
- Disability status.
- Appointment affidavit.
- Employee conduct and Americans with Disabilities Act policy statement.
- Sexual harassment policy statement.
- Drug-free workplace notification.
- Deferred compensation retirement plan enrollment.
- Prior work experience form.
- Relatives working for D.C. government.
- Beneficiary designation.
- Applicant demographics.

The attachment framework implemented in 2022 (which like the eOnboarding module is only available to agencies under DCHR's authority) allows electronic storage of personnel documents from an employee's period of service. Using a module called "HR processing," human resources staff can now attach relevant documents to the record of a personnel transaction in PeopleSoft; for example, employees can attach a justification memo or input reason codes that are relevant to a promotion. Moreover, there is a pre-populated list of all documents required for each type of personnel action. OCTO's development of attachment capacity in PeopleSoft has removed one of the technological barriers to the digitization of OPFs, because some key documents that are part of an OPF — such as a job offer letter, position description, or disciplinary action — are not generated in PeopleSoft but can now be attached to a relevant file in PeopleSoft by clicking a button.

One reason for the fits and starts depicted in Figure 20 is that other priorities took precedence. For example, interviewees claimed that an upgrade of PeopleSoft from version 9.0 to 9.2, which took place from 2014 to 2017, absorbed most of the time of the PeopleSoft specialists at OCTO and DCHR, halting work to create electronic OPFs. In 2022, the need to reprogram PeopleSoft to reflect collective bargaining agreements the D.C. government signed with teachers and police officers similarly sidelined other initiatives, including electronic OPFs.

Remaining barriers to electronic OPFs involve designing the system to meet requirements dictated by personnel law and DCHR policies. It will be necessary for DCHR to define what records should be part of the electronic OPFs and how access to the records will differ for various users such as the employee, the employee's manager, and the relevant HR specialist. Although some have raised concerns that an electronic system could create risks of unauthorized access to sensitive personal information, such risks must be assessed and controlled regardless of whether personnel folders are in paper or electronic form.

Based on the work already done, DCHR and OCTO are well positioned to roll out eOnboarding and the attachment framework to agencies outside DCHR's authority and to digitize older files. A critical resource is OCTO's Human Capital Application Support Unit, which had 10 FTEs in FY 2024 including technology

specialists and a subject-matter expert.[57] Personnel experts cite the following advantages of electronic personnel files:

- Eliminating the need to provide physical storage space, which can save money and employee time.
- Facilitating quick retrieval of information and easy access to documents both for human resources professionals and D.C. government employees.
- Increasing efficiency by avoiding the need for agencies to organize and transfer paper files when employees move from one agency within the government to another.
- Improving security by reducing the likelihood that documents are misplaced or stolen.
- Providing an opportunity to correct errors in paper OPFs as they are converted to electronic form.
- Preserving documents needed for an effective defense in employment-related administrative appeals or lawsuits.
- Promoting sustainability.

Recommendation

13. DCHR should work with OCTO to develop and implement a plan to complete the digitization of official personnel folders.

57 OCTO's human capital application support unit includes employees who focus on human resources operations or payroll. Staff members further specialize in topics such as benefits, e-learning, and security.

Conclusion

Sound and effective personnel policies and practices provide an essential foundation for a high-performing government, even if they command little attention from policymakers and the public until something goes wrong. Education, human services, public safety, transportation, and other public services depend on effective recruitment, compensation, training, and evaluation of teachers, social workers, police officers, and bus drivers.

Policymakers should focus on human resources policy in D.C. government as a system of interrelated parts, comprising DCHR, the agencies it supervises, and independent agencies, while balancing the often-conflicting pressures that human resources offices face, such as procedural fairness vs. speed, rules vs. discretion, neutral competence vs. political responsiveness, and human resources expertise vs. program expertise. For example, there is no right answer to how centralized or decentralized a human resources system should be, but D.C. elected officials should make decisions about independent personnel authority by weighing the important tradeoffs and the systemic implications for efficiency and accountability, rather than considering each case in isolation.

Even in a human resources system with so many independent actors, D.C. officials should also look for ways to integrate the different parts, enhance coordination, and achieve economies of scale. DCHR has modeled this behavior by offering fee-based services to independent agencies, sponsoring training programs that serve the whole government, and providing informal policy and legal advice to agencies not under its supervision. ODCA has proposed additional ways of connecting and coordinating different parts of the D.C. government to strengthen human resources operations, such as engaging the University of the District of Columbia in employee learning and development.

Finally, as the D.C. government's main personnel agency, DCHR can and should play an important role not only in executing and supervising personnel transactions and enforcing compliance with personnel rules and regulations, but also in serving as a government reform partner. The Mayor and Council should encourage DCHR in this role. By using data tools and leading initiatives such as workforce planning, DCHR can help agencies develop strategies to use resources efficiently; recruit, retain, and develop the staff they need now and in the future; encourage and reward outstanding performance; and help agencies fulfill their missions.

Summary of Report Recommendations

Our audit identified 13 recommendations that could make D.C. government human resources operations more efficient and effective.

Findings	Recommendations
The D.C. government's personnel management system is fragmented. Although the D.C. Department of Human Resources (DCHR) is the central personnel authority for the D.C. government, DCHR exercises personnel authority for only 44% of D.C. government employees.	**1.** The D.C. Council should require an agency to submit a written plan demonstrating how it will administer personnel functions effectively and efficiently before approving any new statutory grants of independent personnel authority. **2.** The D.C. Council Committee on Executive Administration and Labor should review the independent personnel authority of the Office of Contracting and Procurement and determine whether to bring OCP under DCHR's authority, similar to other internal service agencies.
D.C. government efforts to implement agency-level performance measures for human resource operations are incomplete, depriving decision makers of information about the performance of different parts of the HR system and where improvements may be needed.	**3.** The Office of the City Administrator should require agencies to set targets and report performance on standard HR performance measures aligned with DCHR's key performance indicators and require that DCHR help agencies gather the relevant data.
DCHR has not issued and publicized standards for the quality and timeliness of services it provides to client agencies, depriving DCHR and the agencies of a tool of accountability and service improvement.	**4.** DCHR should issue and publicize standards for the timeliness and quality of services it provides to client agencies and incorporate the standards into its MOUs with other agencies.
D.C. government agencies are not engaging in systematic workforce planning, limiting their ability to identify and plan for future workforce needs.	**5.** DCHR should implement a workforce planning process for the agencies under its authority that identifies current and potential critical skills and knowledge gaps, consistent with the requirements set forth in the District Personnel Manual.
Although DCHR has tried to streamline recruitment by holding quarterly job fairs involving multiple agencies, DCHR does not have any cross-agency hiring pools which would reinforce its efforts to improve recruitment.	**6.** DCHR should conduct a pilot project to test the feasibility of creating central registries of individuals who apply for positions needed by multiple agencies.

Findings	Recommendations
DCHR does not utilize hiring incentives until the end of the hiring process, which likely diminishes the impact of the incentives as a recruiting tool.	**7.** DCHR should revise the regulations and policy guidance on recruitment incentives to state that they can be authorized at the start of the recruitment process if funds are certified as available and the personnel authority determines that the position is hard to fill.
DCHR has not analyzed major causes of delay in the hiring process at the agency level, which could help counteract an increase in average time to fill a position from 78 days in FY 2021 to 95 days in FY 2024.	**8.** DCHR should assist agencies with the longest average time to fill over the past three years in analyzing the number of days taken during each step of the hiring process to identify bottlenecks and develop solutions.
D.C. government agencies operate many job sites, creating a fragmented system that may be difficult for job seekers to navigate and that does not serve the broader interests of the District government.	**9.** DCHR, in partnership with the Office of the Chief Technology Officer, should make careers.dc.gov more user-centered and easier to navigate, including prominent links to other D.C. government job sites.
Training programs for D.C. government human resources professionals have been subject to instability, impeding efforts to upgrade the quality of services.	**10.** DCHR should create and implement training for all human resources professionals by the end of fiscal year 2026.
DCHR does not capitalize on continuing and professional education offerings from the University of the District of Columbia.	**11.** DCHR should work with UDC to develop and implement a memorandum of understanding for UDC to provide D.C. government employees with access to classes, courses, and certificate programs that meet needs identified by DCHR.
Cohorts for the Capital City Fellows program have gotten smaller in recent years, narrowing an important talent pipeline to the D.C. government.	**12.** The Office of the City Administrator should work with the D.C. Department of Human Resources to develop and implement a plan to increase the number of funded slots for the Capital City Fellows program.
Personnel records management in the D.C. government still involves inefficient manual processes despite steps taken toward digitization.	**13.** DCHR should work with OCTO to develop and implement a plan to complete the digitization of official personnel folders.

Agency Comments

On November 26, 2025, we sent a draft copy of this report to D.C. Department of Human Resources (DCHR) for review and written comment. DCHR responded with comments on December 17, 2025. Agency comments are included here in their entirety.

December 17, 2025

Kathy Patterson
Office of the District of Columbia Auditor
1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Subject: **D.C. Government Human Resources System Needs Greater Coordination and Cohesion**

Dear Ms. Patterson:

The Department of Human Resources ("DCHR") received your report entitled, "D.C. Government Human Resources System Needs Greater Coordination and Cohesion." Below are DCHR's responses to the recommendations outlined in your report.

Finding	Recommendation	Executive Response
The D.C. government's personnel management system is fragmented. Although DCHR is the central personnel authority for the D.C. government, DCHR exercises personnel authority for only 44% of D.C. government employees.	1.The Council should require a written plan from DCHR describing how an agency's human resources needs can be met before approving a proposal for independent personnel authority to help ensure that any new grants of independence make human resources operations more efficient and effective.	1. While this recommendation is directed to the Council, DCHR offers the following observations: The decision to grant an agency independent personnel authority is often complex and occurs outside DCHR's control. DCHR recommends any agency seeking independent personnel authority provide an HR management plan to demonstrate how the agency will maintain effective and efficient HR operations under independent authority. DCHR would be

	2. The Council Committee on Executive Administration and Labor should review the independent personnel authority of the Office of Contracting and Procurement and determine whether to bring OCP under DCHR's authority, similar to other internal service agencies.	available to provide feedback on these plans and identify any gaps in the proposed plan. 2. The Executive does not agree with this recommendation as contracting and procurement functions are highly specialized, time-sensitive and deeply interconnected with financial controls, compliance requirements, vendor relationships, and legal risk exposure. Unlike many internal-facing administrative roles, procurement capacity has a direct downstream effect on all agencies' ability to execute contracts, stand up programs, begin capital projects or spend appropriated funds on time.
D.C. government efforts to implement agency-level performance measures for human resource operations are incomplete, depriving decision makers of information about the performance of different parts of the HR system and where improvements may be needed.	3.The Office of the City Administrator should require agencies to set targets and report performance on standard HR performance measures aligned with DCHR's key performance indicators and require that DCHR help agencies gather the relevant data.	3. Agreed and in progress. The Office of the City Administrator requires agencies to annually review data reported by DCHR by agency for core performance measures, including the percent of new hires that are District residents and the percent of total employees who are District residents in annual performance

		plans. The Council has mandated similar reporting through D.C. Code § 1-515.06. OCA agrees that additional performance measures are needed and will work to include some of the recommended performance measures in the next annual report.
DCHR has not issued and publicized standards for the quality and timeliness of services it provides to client agencies, depriving DCHR and the agencies of a tool of accountability and service improvement.	4.DCHR should issue and publicize standards for the timeliness and quality of services it provides to client agencies and incorporate the standards into its MOUs with other agencies.	4. DCHR respectfully disagrees with the findings, as it has established standards for the quality and timeliness of services that are included in the appendix, and the recommendations are already in place or in progress with agencies. In addition, DCHR includes service level agreements (SLAs) for many services tracked through our internal HR service platform. The platform has been socialized on numerous occasions with the HR community through dedicated presentations, emails and other communications. This extensive awareness campaign has facilitated the platform's use by the HR community and employees to submit requests for various services to include PeopleSoft support, benefits and retirement, classification, and the

		center for learning and development. SLAs corresponding to each request category were shared with the HR community and are included in the HR desk platform when a request is submitted. DCHR will review how these SLAs can be included in MOUs.
D.C. government agencies are not engaging in systematic workforce planning, limiting their ability to identify and plan for future workforce needs.	5.DCHR should implement a workforce planning process for the agencies under its authority that identifies current and potential critical skills and knowledge gaps, consistent with the requirements set forth in the District Personnel Manual.	5. We disagree with the finding but agree with the recommendation; it is in place and ongoing. DCHR has created tools and resources to assist agencies with their workforce planning process. These include an agency workforce planning dashboard that provides agencies with a real-time comprehensive, analytical display of various human resources data points and metrics that can be used for agency-specific workforce development planning. Specific metrics included in the dashboard are: turnover rates, vacancy rates, time-to-fill, and retirement eligibility. DCHR presented the workforce planning dashboard to the HR community and sent multiple emails about the dashboard.

		DCHR also recently established an "HR Connection Lab" which includes a workforce planning workgroup with HR personnel from across the District. This group will focus on developing consistent, data-informed approaches to workforce planning that help agencies forecast needs, strengthen succession planning, and align talent with organizational goals across the District. DCHR has also shared the workforce planning dashboard with this group.
Although DCHR has tried to streamline recruitment by holding quarterly job fairs involving multiple agencies, DCHR does not have any cross-agency hiring pools which would reinforce its efforts to improve recruitment.	6. DCHR should conduct a pilot project to test the feasibility of creating central registries of individuals who apply for positions needed by multiple agencies.	6. Agree in part and disagree in part with both the finding and the recommendation. DCHR and OCTO have previously explored creating talent pools for the same position (for example, program analyst) across District agencies. For most positions, DCHR classifies roles using the Office of Personnel Management's Handbook of Occupational Groups and Families and applies OPM's Qualification Standards when establishing hiring criteria, as outlined in Section 206 of the District Personnel Manual.

		This framework promotes consistency in how positions are defined and evaluated across agencies, which helps ensure that applicants are assessed using common standards for similarly situated roles. These shared classification and qualification practices could inform future consideration of pooled hiring approaches. Although DCHR will continue to explore the feasibility of creating such pools in PeopleSoft based on current personnel rules, this practice may not align for similar positions across agencies as nuanced skills or experience may be needed
DCHR does not utilize hiring incentives until the end of the hiring process, which likely diminishes the impact of the incentives as a recruiting tool.	7.DCHR should revise the regulations and policy guidance on recruitment incentives to state that they can be authorized at the start of the recruitment process if funds are certified as available and the personnel authority determines that the position is hard to fill.	7.DCHR's regulations and policy do not prohibit an agency from including information about recruitment incentives in a vacancy announcement. Director Hall's statements in the audit regarding recruitment incentives aligns with District regulations and policy. As noted by Director Hall, in practice, agencies often provide incentives after a candidate is selected;

		however, this is not required by policy. Agencies regularly request pre-approval of recruitment incentives and include them in job postings, provided the position meets the criteria for being hard to fill and funding is certified. For example, agencies such as the Department of Corrections and the Office of Unified Communications include information about their hiring bonuses in their announcements. DCHR will continue to reinforce awareness of available recruitment incentive options through ongoing engagement and HR community meetings.
DCHR has not analyzed major causes of delay in the hiring process at the agency level, which could help counteract an increase in average time to fill a position from 78 days in FY 2021 to 95 days in FY 2024.	8.DCHR should assist agencies with the longest average time to fill over the past three years in analyzing the number of days taken during each step of the hiring process to identify bottlenecks and develop solutions.	8. Recommendation is accepted and implemented in part; otherwise in progress. DCHR, in collaboration with the Districtwide HR community, have reviewed the time-to-fill process and examined ways to decrease the time-to-fill. This process analyzed major causes of delay in the hiring process at the agency level. In April 2025, DCHR onboarded an HR Business Partner who provides agency-specific

		support and guidance and is brainstorming with agencies on how to decrease time-to-fill especially for hard-to-fill positions. Agencies also have access to a time-to-fill dashboard that provides real-time data on the length of each recruitment phase.
D.C. government agencies operate many job sites, creating a fragmented system that may be difficult for job seekers to navigate and that does not serve the broader interests of the District government.	9.DCHR, in partnership with the Office of the Chief Technology Officer, should make careers.dc.gov more user-centered and easier to navigate, including prominent links to other D.C. government job sites.	9.DCHR has collaborated with OCTO to improve the District's Career page (careers.dc.gov). Recent improvements include: an automated email to applicants who saved but didn't submit their applications, clarifying which fields in the application process are required, simplifying the education and previous work experience sections and reordering the steps of the application to create a more streamlined process. DCHR and OCTO are also exploring additional enhancements including implementation of a resume parser that will parse information from an applicant's uploaded resume and add it to the experience section of the application process. We are also exploring adding links to other independent agency job sites including the

		University of the District of Columbia (UDC).
Training programs for D.C. government human resources professionals have been subject to instability, impeding efforts to upgrade the quality of services.	10.DCHR should create and implement training for all human resources professionals by the end of fiscal year 2026.	10. Recommendation is accepted and implemented in part; otherwise in progress. To provide monthly training opportunities for the HR community, in January 2025, DCHR shifted the HR community meeting to include one hour training sessions. Training has been provided on topics that include: hiring packages, enforced leave, calculating service computation dates, residency compliance, project management, recognizing employee burnout, military leave, and proper use of administrative leave. In addition, DCHR provides professional development opportunities by hosting a two-day HR Summit. This year's HR Summit was held in September 2025 and included sessions including Embracing AI in the Workplace, Compensation Basics, Recruitment 101, Informal Conflict Resolution, and Promoting Mental Health in the Workplace. Several panel discussions with agency Directors and HR

		leaders discussing human capital best practices were also held. Additionally, DCHR is developing, and implementing in January, a District-wide HR training program that will include a core curriculum for District government HR professionals to ensure there is an across-the-board standard of knowledge no matter an HR professional's background or agency.
DCHR does not capitalize on continuing and professional education offerings from the University of the District of Columbia.	11.DCHR should work with UDC to develop and implement a memorandum of understanding for UDC to provide D.C. government employees with access to classes, courses, and certificate programs that meet needs identified by DCHR.	11. Recommendation is accepted and is implemented in part; in progress in part. DCHR currently has a Memorandum of Agreement with UDC that provides reduced tuition for District employees. DCHR also held an initial conversation with UDC on October 23 regarding opportunities for UDC to provide employees with educational offerings specifically regarding AI and will continue to explore opportunities. More information about employee discounts at UDC can be found here.
Cohorts for the Capital City Fellows program have gotten smaller in recent years, narrowing an important talent pipeline to the D.C. government.	12.The Office of the City Administrator should work with the D.C. Department of Human Resources to	12. Agree with the recommendation to improve the local talent pipeline; some respectful disagreement about the

	develop and implement a plan to increase the number of funded slots for the Capital City Fellows program.	narrow focus on Capital City Fellowships. OCA will continue to explore the Capital City Fellow programs, and the positions allocated, against financial constraints the District Government faces. In addition, DCHR continues to explore other opportunities to create talent pipelines for the DC government. This includes a recently launched Public Service launchpad in which District employees engage with current District high school and college students about the opportunities and benefits of being a public servant in the District government.
Personnel records management in the D.C. government still involves inefficient manual processes despite steps taken toward digitization.	13.DCHR should work with OCTO to develop and implement a plan to complete the digitization of official personnel folders.	13.DCHR agrees with this recommendation and has taken steps to accomplish digitization and electronic access. As stated in the report, in April 2022, DCHR, in collaboration with OCTO, implemented an attachment framework that allows HR personnel to upload documents electronically on personnel action requests in PeopleSoft. As DCHR

		maintains approximately 20,000 OPFs that were created prior to 2022, we continue to digitize these folders beginning with OPFs for former District employees. As some folders may contain more than 100 pages, the effort can be time-consuming. Moreover, older OPFs often contain outdated forms that are physically longer in length which requires additional time to digitize. DCHR will continue to collaborate with OCTO on providing employees with access to their electronic folders.

We appreciate the collaboration with your team during the audit process and look forward to answering any additional questions you may have. Feel free to contact me at Charles.hall@dc.gov with any questions.

Sincerely,

Charles Hall, Jr.
Director
District of Columbia Department of Human Resources

Appendix A: Service Level Agreements

Benefits Service Request	Response Time	Resolution Time
SmartTrip Benefit Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	By the 15th day of each month
Health Savings Account Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Flexible Spending Account: Healthcare & Dependent Care	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Employee Discount Program	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Report Death of a Dependent	48 hours from ticket submission	5 business days from the date all required document(s) are received.
Report the Death of an Employee	48 hours from ticket submission	5 business days from the date all required document(s) are received.
Commuter Benefits	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
529 College Savings	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Benefit Restoration	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Change a Beneficiary	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Disability Employer Statements	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
General Benefit Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Health Insurance Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response

Leave Accrual Discrepancies	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Leave Bank Request	48 hours from ticket submission	15 business days from ticket response
Medical Support Notices	48 hours from ticket submission	10 business days from ticket response
Qualifying Life Event Request	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC)	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Benefit Plan Premium Discrepancies/Inquiries	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response

Benefits Service Request	Response Time	Resolution Time
SmartTrip Benefit Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	By the 15th day of each month
Health Savings Account Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Flexible Spending Account: Healthcare & Dependent Care	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Employee Discount Program	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Report Death of a Dependent	48 hours from ticket submission	5 business days from the date all required document(s) are received.
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Commuter Benefits	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
529 College Savings	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response

Benefit Restoration	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Change a Beneficiary	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Disability Employer Statements	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
General Benefit Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Health Insurance Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Leave Accrual Discrepancies	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Leave Bank Request	48 hours from ticket submission	15 business days from ticket response
Medical Support Notices	48 hours from ticket submission	10 business days from ticket response
Qualifying Life Event Request	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC)	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response
Benefit Plan Premium Discrepancies/Inquiries	48 hours from ticket submission	3 business days from ticket response

Retirement Service Request	Response Time	Resolution Time
Benefits Calculation Request	48 hours from ticket submission	2 weeks
General Retirement Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	72 hours from ticket submission
457(b) Enrollment Changes	48 hours from ticket submission	5 business days from ticket response
MissionSquare (401 (a) Vendor) Profile Change Request	48 hours from ticket submission	3 days from ticket response
401(a) or 457(b) Beneficiary Change	48 hours from ticket submission	16 business hrs Non VIP
457(b) Distribution Inquiry		48 hours from ticket response

	48 hours from ticket submission	
Initiate My Retirement	48 hours from ticket submission	2 business days from ticket response
Reconciliation Request	48 hours from ticket submission	1 day from ticket response
401(a) Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	3 months

Classifications Service Request	Response Time	Resolution Time
Agency Realignment/ Reorganization	48- 72 Hours	30 Days (Calendar days)
Agency RIF	48- 72 Hours	30 days (calendar days)
Agency Classification Reports	24- 48 Hours	5 days (business days)
PD Correction/Amendments	24- 48 Hours	72 Hours
Desk Audit/ Position Review	24- 48 Hours	21 Days (business days)
PD Reclassification/ Redescription	24- 48 hours	7 Days (business days)
Sample PD Request	24 Hours	48 Hours
New PD Request	24- 48 hours	7 Days (business days)

Customer Care -Service Request	Response Time	Resolution Time
Employment Verification Letter	24-48hr	24-48hr
E-Recruits Support	24-48hr	24-48hr
Payroll and W-2 Inquiry	24-48hr	24-48hr
Percipio Support	24-48hr	24-48hr

Learning & Development	Response Time	Resolution Time
General Training Inquiry	48 hours from ticket submission	2 business days from ticket response
Training Room Reservation	48 hours from ticket submission	48 hours from ticket response

ODCA Response to Agency Comments

ODCA appreciates the detailed and thoughtful comments on the draft report from D.C. Department of Human Resources (DCHR) Director Charles Hall. ODCA also notes the constructive responses to its recommendations. Although Director Hall did not state an explicit position on each of ODCA's 13 recommendations, he expressed the administration's agreement with six recommendations, partial agreement with two recommendations, and disagreement with two recommendations.

In addition, Mr. Hall stated that the executive branch is already implementing some of the recommendations. For example, the Office of the City Administrator plans to implement additional human resources performance measures for agencies to track and report, which should help ensure that all parts of the human resources system – DCHR, DCHR's client agencies, and agencies with independent personnel authority – are striving to meet the same goals. DCHR has also strengthened its efforts to help agencies hire more quickly, especially for hard-to-fill positions, by hiring an agency business partner to work with agencies on this issue.

In response to Mr. Hall's comments, ODCA has modified its first recommendation to state that the D.C. Council should require agencies (existing or new) seeking independent personnel authority to submit a written plan demonstrating how they would administer this function effectively and efficiently. DCHR would provide feedback on the agency's plan. Previously, ODCA's recommendation was for the D.C. Council to require DCHR to present a plan explaining whether and how it could meet an agency's human resources needs before granting the agency independent personnel authority.

Nevertheless, ODCA believes that its other findings and recommendations still have merit as written. In the instances of disagreement expressed by Mr. Hall, ODCA found that executive branch objections did not withstand scrutiny or reflect a full understanding of the finding or recommendation. Specifically:

- The executive branch disagreed with ODCA's recommendation for the D.C. Council to review the independent personnel authority of the Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP). In framing the recommendation, ODCA noted, *inter alia*, that all other internal service agencies are under DCHR's personnel authority. The executive branch explained its disagreement by stating that "contracting and procurement functions are highly specialized, time-sensitive, and deeply interconnected with financial controls, compliance requirements, vendor relationships, and legal risk exposure," but the same statement could apply to the Office of the Chief Technology Officer or the Department of General Services – both of which are under DCHR's authority. ODCA further points out that much of the D.C. government's work – from economic development to corrections or human services – is highly specialized, time-sensitive, and deeply interconnected, and that DCHR must be able to deal with these challenges.
- DCHR disagreed with ODCA's finding that DCHR has not issued and publicized standards for the quality and timeliness of services it provides to client agencies, pointing to a long list of customer service standards DCHR has implemented. ODCA regards the customer service standards as a positive step that DCHR should continue to build on but notes that the standards largely represent response times for individual inquiries, not service standards for DCHR's services to client agencies. DCHR's memoranda of understanding to provide human resources support to independent agencies

do not incorporate service-level agreements and agency human resources officials interviewed by ODCA stated that DCHR does not provide clear performance standards for services such as posting a job announcement, processing retirement papers, completing criminal checks, or administering drug and alcohol tests.

- DCHR disagreed with ODCA's finding that D.C. government agencies are not engaging in systematic workforce planning, limiting their ability to identify and plan for future workforce needs. DCHR pointed out that it "has created tools and resources to assist agencies with their workforce planning process," including an agency workforce planning dashboard that gives agencies timely information about turnover rates, vacancy rates, time to fill a position, and retirement eligibility. ODCA's report acknowledges these valuable tools, which were praised by agency officials interviewed by ODCA, but notes that this is a decentralized approach that relies on agency initiative and capacity to use the tools. Instead, ODCA calls on DCHR to lead agencies in more *systematic* workforce planning that applies the data to identify current and future workforce needs, develop and implement strategies to address any gaps, and guide agency organizational structure and deployment of the workforce.

Appendix

Personnel Authority of Agencies, Boards, Commissions, and Funds Included in the D.C. Government's Approved FY 2025 Operating Budget

Entities Under DCHR's Authority	Entities with Independent Authority

Government Direction Entities

- Captive Insurance Agency
- Department of General Services
- Department of Human Resources
- Employees' Compensation Fund
- Executive Office of the Mayor
- Mayor's Office of Legal Counsel
- Office for Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing
- Office of Disability Rights
- Office of Labor Relations and Collective Bargaining
- Office of LGBTQ Affairs
- Office of Risk Management
- Office of the Chief Technology Officer
- Office of the City Administrator
- Office of the Inspector General
- Office of the Secretary
- Office of the Senior Advisor
- Office of Veterans Affairs
- Office of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs
- Office on Latino Affairs

Economic Development Entities

- Department of Housing and Community Development
- Department of Small and Local Business Development
- Office of Cable Television, Film, and Music
- Office of Planning
- Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development

Government Direction Entities

- Board of Elections
- Board of Ethics and Government Accountability
- Contract Appeals Board
- Council of the District of Columbia
- Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions
- Office of Campaign Finance
- Office of Contracting and Procurement
- Office of Employee Appeals
- Office of Finance and Resource Management
- Office of the Attorney General
- Office of the Chief Financial Officer
- Office of the District of Columbia Auditor
- Public Employee Relations Board
- Statehood initiatives

Economic Development Entities

- Commission on the Arts and Humanities
- Office of the Tenant Advocate
- Office of Zoning
- Real Property Tax Appeals Commission
- Rental Housing Commission

Entities Under DCHR's Authority	Entities with Independent Authority

Public Safety and Justice Entities

- Department of Corrections
- Department of Forensic Sciences
- Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
- Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency
- Office of Human Rights
- Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement
- Office on Returning Citizens Affairs
- Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
- Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice
- Office of Unified Communications
- Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants

Public Education Entities

- Department of Employment Services
- Department of Parks and Recreation
- Non-Public Tuition
- Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education
- Office of the State Superintendent of Education
- Special Education Transportation

Human Support Services Entities

- Department of Aging and Community Living
- Department of Health
- Department of Health Care Finance
- Department of Human Services
- Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services

Public Safety and Justice Entities

- Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure
- Corrections Information Council
- Criminal Code Reform Commission
- Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
- D.C. National Guard
- D.C. Sentencing Commission
- Judicial Nomination Commission
- Metropolitan Police Department
- Office of Administrative Hearings
- Office of Police Complaints

Public Education Entities

- D.C. Public Charter Schools
- D.C. Public Library
- D.C. Public Schools
- State Athletics Commission
- State Board of Education

Human Support Services Entities

- Child and Family Services Agency
- Department of Behavioral Health
- Department on Disability Services
- Office of the Ombudsperson for Children

Operations and Infrastructure Entities

- Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Administration
- Office of the People's Counsel
- Public Service Commission

Enterprise and Other Entities

- D.C. Retirement Board
- D.C. Health Benefits Exchange
- Office of Lottery and Gaming
- Other Post-Employment Benefits Fund
- University of the District of Columbia

Entities Under DCHR's Authority	Entities with Independent Authority
Operations and Infrastructure Entities	
■ Department of Buildings	
■ Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection	
■ Department of Energy and the Environment	
■ Department of For-Hire Vehicles	
■ Department of Insurance, Securities, and Banking	
■ Department of Motor Vehicles	
■ Department of Public Works	
■ District Department of Transportation	
■ Office of the Deputy Mayor for Operations and Infrastructure	
Enterprise and Other Entities	
■ Housing Production Trust Fund	

Sources: ODCA research based on D.C. Code, information from D.C. Department of Human Resources, and Government of the District of Columbia, *FY 2025 Approved Budget and Financial Plan*, Volume 1, Executive Summary.

About ODCA

The mission of the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (ODCA) is to support the Council of the District of Columbia by making sound recommendations that improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of the District government.

To fulfill our mission, we conduct performance audits, non-audit reviews, and revenue certifications. The residents of the District of Columbia are one of our primary customers and we strive to keep the residents of the District of Columbia informed on how their government is operating and how their tax money is being spent.

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