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Labor Relations

January 23, 2023

Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California 93009

Subject: Receive and File a Report of the County of Ventura Workplace Misconduct Complaint Resolution Activity for July Through December 2023.

Recommendation

We recommend that your Board:

1. Receive and file the semiannual report of County Human Resources Workplace Misconduct and Complaint Resolution activity for January through June 2023.

Background

The County Executive Office - Human Resources and Labor Relations Divisions (CEO-HR) established a complaint hotline for employee concerns regarding perceived misconduct of fellow employees. The County has an obligation to investigate credible and actionable allegations of employee workplace misconduct and to take appropriate corrective and disciplinary action when employee misconduct has been substantiated. Complaints may be filed with our Employee Misconduct Hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by calling 1-800-684-6523. Complaints may also be filed utilizing our online reporting form at <https://app.mycompliancereport.com/report?cid=COV>.

Discussion

During the time period referenced above, we responded to 115 complaints, of which 43 were categorized as discourteous treatment, 37 had allegations of general misconduct, five (5) had allegations of discrimination, one (1) had an allegation of retaliation, two (2) included allegations of harassment, and 27 were classified as "other" as they were unrelated to any policies. Of current complaints, 44 are actively under investigation. Of the 71 closed cases, 30 could not be substantiated based on a preponderance of the evidence standard, 21 were withdrawn due to insufficient information, 12 were substantiated, and four (4) were partially substantiated. County Counsel is consulted on all sensitive and complex cases. Four (4) cases that originated as complaints were directed to the Employee Relations & Resolutions program.

The Employee Relations & Resolution (ERR) Program was designed to provide access for County employees who seek support and problem solving for workplace issues before

they escalate in severity. As cases are investigated, HR staff members evaluate the dynamics of the allegations to determine if the parties involved would benefit from this program. This is not a traditional program that solicits applications from employees, instead each allegation that is investigated is screened against a set of criteria to determine if the program will be beneficial. While a substantial number of the allegations we investigate are found to be unsubstantiated because the allegations do not rise to a violation of County Policy or other laws and regulations, we have noted that a majority of these allegations often result from strained interpersonal relations. As such, this program seeks to match the appropriate organizational development intervention that will best remedy the challenge that is the focus of the conflict. During the referenced time period, CEO-HR staff members constructed and administered 209 organizational development interventions in connection with this program. Specifically, HR staff members engaged in 136 individual coaching sessions, constructed and administered 28 customized trainings and team-building sessions, and engaged in 45 formal group resolution process consultations.

The activity above reflects the commitment of the County to develop, nurture, and sustain a diverse workforce by providing a safe and respectful workplace where individuals can thrive. We will continue to be vigilant in our investigations of allegations of misconduct and in our attempts to resolve conflicts utilizing cutting edge organizational development interventions.

The County Executive Office, County Counsel, and Auditor-Controller's Office have reviewed this letter. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact me at (805) 654-2561.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Atin
Assistant County Executive Officer/Human Resources Director



Sevet Johnson, PsyD
County Executive Officer

c: Jeffery S. Burgh, Auditor-Controller
Tiffany N. North, County Counsel
Mike Pettit, Assistant County Executive Officer
Kaye Mand, Assistant County Executive Officer/Chief Financial Officer

Attachment: Exhibit 1 - Workplace Misconduct Complaint Resolution Report