



**Human Resources/Risk Management  
County of Humboldt  
825 5th Street, Room 100  
Eureka, CA 95501**

**Interoffice Memorandum**

**Date:** August 11, 2015  
**To:** Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Dan Fulks, Director of Human Resources  
**Subject:** Response to 2014-2015 Grand Jury Report "Effects of Assembly Bill 109 and Proposition 47 on the Probation Department"

Recommendation R2: The Humboldt County Grand Jury recommends that the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors direct the Humboldt County Department of Human Resources to review its hiring and recruitment procedures with an objective of increasing retention of probation and substance abuse counseling staff. (F2)

**This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable**

**Response:**

The County of Humboldt Board of Supervisors in 1978 adopted Resolution 78-142 Humboldt County Merit System Rules. The Merit System Rules were established to facilitate efficient and economical services to the public and to provide for a fair and just system of personnel management in the County Government. The Merit System Rules set forth policies and procedures which insure like treatment for those who present themselves for original employment or promotion. The rules are designed to outline a fair and non-discriminatory process for each personnel transaction.

Specifically Rule IV RECRUITMENT , SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT is designed to ". ..publicize each examination for appointments to the classified service to the end that the best available persons shall be attracted to the service of the County.". Rule IV 2. SELECTION states as follows: "The personnel selection techniques used in the employment examination processes shall be impartial, of a practical nature, and shall relate to those matters which fairly test the relative capacity of the persons examined to discharge the duties and responsibilities of the classification to which they seek to be appointed."

As such the design of our recruiting practices are designed to attract the most qualified candidates based on measurable skills and to prohibit discrimination and favoritism in the recruiting process. Recruiting is not conducted with any measurement on the subjective basis that one candidate may have greater longevity vs. other candidates because of the increased likelihood an allegation of discrimination based on age or medical condition or other legally protected classes.

### **Other Practices Designed to Improve Retention**

Inlooking at turnover for Probation and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), we find there is below average turnover for Probation Officers and staff working for Probation. In recent years we have noticed an increase in turnover regarding our professional staff at DHHS, specifically mid-level and high level counselors providing direct services for Mental Health. Human Resources and DHHS administration have been working together to put together solutions to address this turnover resulting in a new policy designed to attract and retain specific classifications of employees. Recently the Board of Supervisors approved a resolution that provides for a monetary incentive if a candidate accepts specific positions with the County and in order to assist in the retention of existing employees, a similar incentive is paid to employees holding the same classification. As this policy is very new to the County it is too soon to recognize any measurable results at this point. However, we are very hopeful this new incentive will result in improved attraction for candidates applying to become employed and to extend longevity for those already with the County family.

In addition to the above, DHHS management has recently begun to engage with existing employees more closely to improve communications within the Mental Health Division. These efforts are designed to hear issues at the grass roots level and to implement solutions designed specifically to make the already difficult expectations of the job more bearable for employees delivering those services daily. As this process is relatively new (within the last two months), long-term results are inconclusive at this point, however some initial improvement has been noted.