

COUNTY OF OTTAWA
HUMAN RESOURCES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR YEAR 2011



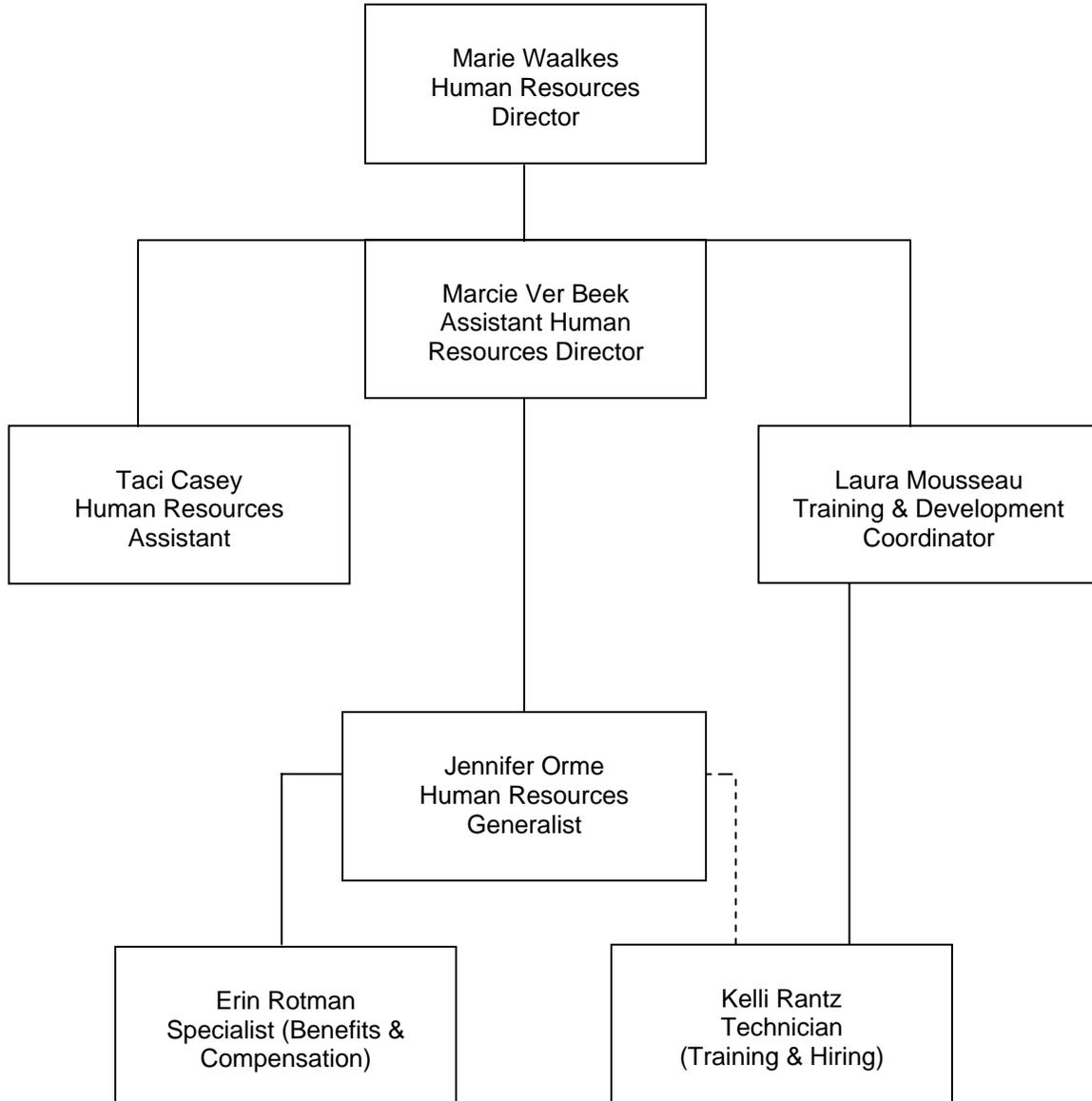
Human Resources Department
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*The activities and programs of this department are brought to you by the members of
the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners*

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Human Resource Department Staff 2011



**2011 HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT'S
ANNUAL REPORT
TO THE OTTAWA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

MISSION STATEMENT

The Human Resources Department serves the County of Ottawa by focusing efforts on the County's most valuable asset, its employees. Human Resources does this through recruitment, hiring and retention of a diverse, qualified workforce. The Human Resources Department provides human resource direction and technical assistance, training and development, payroll administration, equal employment opportunities and employee/labor relation services to the County.

INTRODUCTION

The current Human Resources staff is responsible for providing the delivery of a full service Human Resources program to and for the County's existing departments and staff. This is no small undertaking considering that the County's work force has 892 benefited full-time and part-time employees, and 270 temporary employees comprised of eight different collective bargaining units, non-represented employee groups and unclassified staff.

The following is a list of functions currently being provided by the Human Resources Department: (The list is not in any order of importance.)

- (1) Employee Selection
 - a. On-Line Application
 - b. Application Screening
 - c. Interviewing
 - d. Applicant/Employee Development Tool (Testing)
 - e. Background Investigation
 - f. Hiring
- (2) Exit Interviews
- (3) Employee Training and Development
 - a. GOLD (Growth Opportunities in Learning and Development)
 - b. Leadership Development
 - c. New Employee Orientation
 - d. Compliance Training
 - e. DiSC Assessment
- (4) Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- (5) Labor Relations
 - a. Grievances
 - b. Grievance Discipline Data Base
 - c. Contract Negotiations
 - d. Contract Administration
- (6) Equal Employment Opportunity
- (7) Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

- (8) Benefits Administration
 - a. Health Insurance
 - b. Health Savings Account (HSA)
 - c. Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
 - d. Employee Wellness Program
 - e. Dental Insurance
 - f. Vision Insurance
 - g. Tuition Reimbursement
 - h. 457 Deferred Compensation Plan
 - i. Workers Compensation
 - j. MERS
 - k. Life Insurance
 - l. Salary Wage Continuation (STD/LTD)
 - m. Family Medical Leave Act
- (9) Employee Recognition
- (10) Wage Evaluation & Classification Study
- (11) Unemployment Insurance
- (12) Payroll Administration and Maintenance
- (13) Security System Maintenance for County Buildings and Courts

Many of the functions of the department are difficult to quantify. For instance, within the function of Benefits Administration the department answers numerous employee questions during the course of a year amounting to a significant expenditure of time. However, it is not feasible to keep detailed statistics regarding the numbers, duration or subject matter of such calls. Several functions are more easily quantifiable and are given in the remainder of this report. Following are highlights of the activities in many of the major Human Resources Department's functions for 2011.

EMPLOYEE SELECTION

The advertising of positions and the receipt of all employment applications is the responsibility of the Human Resources Department. A very detailed procedure for the various departments to follow in the hiring process was developed by the Human Resources Department and is outlined in Policy HR-04 Employee Selection Policy. Human Resources monitors and assures that selection policies and procedures are being followed by the individual departments. In 2008, the On-Line Application process was developed to streamline the application/interviewing/hiring process. Currently, the Human Resources Generalist arranges and coordinates the employee selection process with the help of a Human Resources Technician.

In response to one hundred seventeen (117) positions posted by the County in 2011, four thousand two hundred and fifty-nine (4259) applications were received and screened. In 2011, the department conducted four hundred fifty-four (454) employment interviews resulting in the hiring of two hundred and one (201) employees. Of those two hundred and one (201) hires, fifty-two (52) were promotions or transfers of existing employees and one hundred and forty-nine (149) were new (external) hires.

APPLICANT TESTING

The Human Resources Department provides a variety of computerized assessment tools to assist hiring managers in screening qualified applicants. The new testing system which was implemented in 2009 tests candidates in a variety of specific software programs (Word, Excel, etc.), as well as skills such as spelling, grammar, reading comprehension, math, data entry and typing. In 2011 Human Resources upgraded the testing software for compliance with the latest Office programs.

EXIT INTERVIEWS

In addition to conducting employment interviews the Human Resources Department also conducts an extensive exit interview process. Exit interviews are conducted in an effort to gain information that will result in better selection and training practices, improve working conditions, enhance supervision, and in general, further public relations by having the employee leave with a positive view of the employer. The exit interview can also be used to identify possible salary and benefit deficiencies, EEO violations, and other areas of potential legal liability.

In 2011, sixty (60) full time employees and fifty-four (54) part time/temporary employees, inclusive of twenty-five (25) retirees and one (1) laid-off employee, separated from County employment. The turnover rate for full and part-time employees was 8% in 2011. Ottawa County continues to represent stability as an employer to our labor force.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING ACTIVITIES

GOLD Standard Training

The GOLD Standard Training Program continued to expand in 2011. In addition to an extensive offering of general classes, the department-specific and custom classes became a significant portion of the program this past year. Teams explored topics such as Handling Emotions Under Pressure, Adjusting to Change, Dealing with Conflict, Business Etiquette, Developing a Positive Workplace Environment, and more. We also worked closely with departments to offer ways to help apply the learning between meetings.



During the 2011 calendar year, we continued to offer two sessions of the successful GOLD Standard Leaders Level 1 program. At the end of 2011, 158 employees completed this core 3-month leadership program, many of whom are currently pursuing their Level 2 certifications.

The use of the online DiSC Assessment tool as a core piece of our GOLD Standard Leaders training has resulted in a variety of ongoing departmental classes and programs in this area. At the end of 2011, over 600 employees had completed the DiSC assessment and initial training.

In 2011, 181 training classes were conducted in the GOLD Standard Training Program (multi-session classes like Spanish, GOLD Leaders, etc. are only counted as one class). At this time,

1064 unique employees have taken at least one class through the program, resulting in a 92.5% participation rate of our entire workforce.

Ottawa County GOLD Certification Programs

In August, the Human Resources Department rolled out a new training initiative, building on the GOLD Standard Training Program. This new component allows employees to seek certification as GOLD Standard Employees or GOLD Standard Leaders (Levels 1 and 2). These certifications are built around the development of core competencies established at the onset of the GOLD Training program. To achieve certification, employees complete required and elective courses from the core skill areas over a number of years.

Rolling out the certification program has resulted in a large increase in the demand for core classes such as Ottawa County Policies, Preventing Harassment, Ottawa County Information, DiSC, and a number of our general computer courses. This ultimately results in a more informed, highly-skilled county workforce.

Since many employees have been participating in the GOLD classes since the program began in 2008, we expect to have our first GOLD Standard Employees eligible for certification in 2012.

Collaboration with IT on Office 2010 Transition

In 2011, we worked closely with the User Services division of Information Technology to coordinate a smooth transition from Office 2003 to Office 2010. This major undertaking required significant development of new reference and instructional materials and a significant increase in the amount of training made available to employees.

To maintain consistency in the structure and delivery method of the training, Human Resources developed the new materials for the Office 2010 programs and trained the User Services staff. HR worked with User Services to coordinate a variety of training options for departments throughout the transition to the new software. These included hands-on sessions, overview sessions, staff meeting trainings, etc. taught by both IT and HR training staff. This collaboration will continue well into 2012 as the rest of the county upgrades to this new software and higher level classes are developed and added to the schedule.

Online Training

The online area of our training and development program continued to expand in 2011. We developed new online training programs in the areas of Bloodborne Pathogens, Radar, Firearms, Professional Development Plans, and other department specific topics. This option was utilized to complete required training in Bloodborne Pathogens for 825 employees, Radar training for 53 employees, LEIN training for 138 employees, Harassment training for 338 employees, and Firearms training for 95 employees. Additional online training is currently being developed.

New Employee Orientation

We continued with a new and updated New Employee Orientation in 2011. The new structure is more of a modular approach, enabling employees to attend just the sections that are relevant based on the needs of their position. The new format includes general county information on the structure, departments, and functions of our organization; training in the areas of preventing harassment, bloodborne pathogens, and policies and procedures; hands-on Lotus Notes training; phone training; a tour of the Fillmore facility; and information on all employee benefits.

In 2011, we added a separate New Employee orientation program and scheduling for the County's seasonal employees.

New Employee Orientation sessions are currently being conducted twice a month, but employees can start work prior to orientation, a practice that has provided a great deal more flexibility to the hiring managers. Often employees start in their new department for a few days, before attending their orientation session.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN CONTROL PLAN

Human Resources took over the duties of the BBP Control Plan from Public Health. The full plan was completely revised and updated. This included new procedures for training, exposures, and recordkeeping, as well as completely updated lists of positions requiring annual training and Hepatitis B vaccines. Although the control plan had been reviewed over the years, numerous tables, attachments and forms were outdated. The new control plan will be maintained by Human Resources and updated annually. Annual training requirements will also be handled by the HR Department.

WAGE AND CLASSIFICATION STUDY

A new wage study evaluation team was formed and trained in 2010 to point value the jobs that had not been reviewed in the original study, including the County Clerk's Office, Prosecutor's Office, and Community Mental Health. New job descriptions were created for positions in the Prosecutor's Office, Clerk's Office and Community Mental Health. The team met during 2011, and completed the wage study for these employees. A total of 83 job classifications were reviewed affecting 214 employees.

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

In 2011, the Tuition Reimbursement Program was suspended due to budget constraints.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP's) are designed to help employees and often their families recognize and overcome personal problems that are interfering with the employee's work performance. EAP's are designed to reach performance problems that cannot be remedied by training, education, or other employer-controlled factors. Examples of the many personal problems that an EAP may deal with are alcohol/drug abuse, emotional problems and marital issues. An effective EAP may help control employee turnover, absenteeism, and other costs associated with personal problems such as health care. Even though the employer pays for the service and may make referrals to the program, all information is held in strict confidence between the employee and the EAP. Ottawa County's EAP provider is the Employee Assistance Center (EAC).

LABOR RELATIONS

Contract Negotiations

In 2011 the Human Resources Department successfully negotiated all eight (8) Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA's) which expired at the end of 2011. These negotiations were all completed prior to the end of 2011.

Grievances

Two (2) grievances, concerning contract interpretation, were filed in 2011. Both were resolved at “Step 2” (at Department level) of the Grievance Process.

Contract Administration

Throughout 2011, Human Resources staff worked closely with County Department, Elected Offices and Court supervisors on various contract interpretation issues.

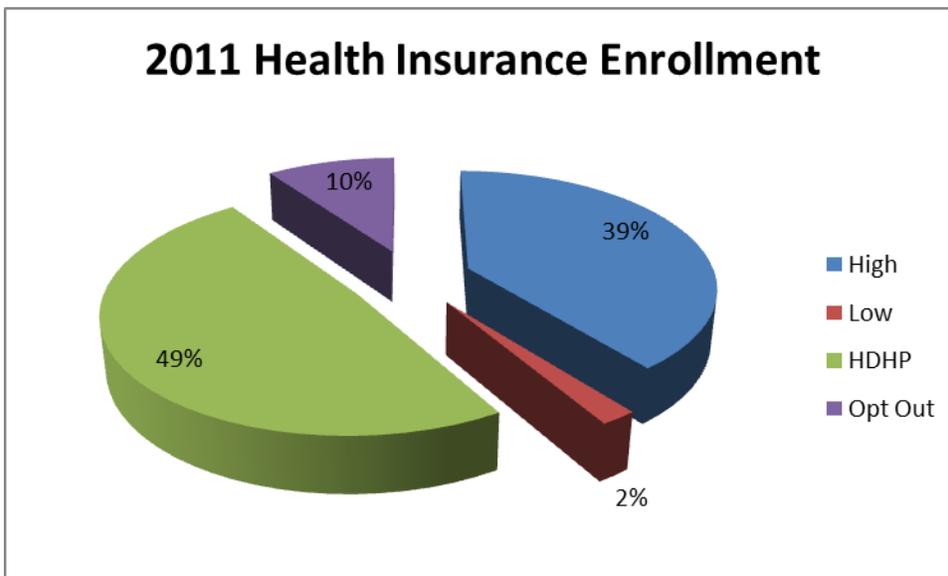
BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION

Health Insurance

In 2011, the average number of active employees enrolled in the County Health Plan was eight hundred eighty four (884). There were sixty one (61) retirees enrolled under the age of 65 and three (3) over the age of 65 in our health plan. There were nineteen (19) people on COBRA. The adoption of a new County Health Plan allow employees more choices on health insurance, therefore in 2011 employees could choose from a High Plan (100/80), a Low Plan (90/70) or a High Deductible Health Plan. In 2011 there were three hundred forty eight (348) individuals enrolled in the High Plan, eighteen (18) individuals enrolled in the Low Plan, and four hundred thirty one (431) individuals enrolled in the High Deductible Health Plan.

Through the use of Section 125 Flexible Spending Accounts, one hundred twenty eight (128) were enrolled in the medical flexible spending, which reflects a decrease of one hundred ninety one (191) participants, and forty (40) participants were enrolled in dependent care, which reflects an increase of nine (9) participants.

Below is a summary of the 2011 health plan enrollment.



Health Management

The adoption of a new County Health Plan was a major accomplishment as we moved into 2011. In 2010 there were three major goals identified by the Board of Commissioners regarding health benefits; **1)** reduce costs from the 2011 projected rates, **2)** provide employees with choices and **3)** enact a health management plan to positively impact claims and the future costs of the plan.

In 2011 the Human Resources Department along with the Administrators office worked on the third goal of enacting a health management plan, which is an important goal for the long-term health of our workforce and containment of rising healthcare costs. Research has shown that promoting health and wellness in the workplace can lower healthcare costs, reduce absenteeism, improve morale, reduce employee turnover, and enhance employee recruitment.

The first step of the Health Management Plan was the formation of the Health Management Committee which occurred in 2011. The committee meets on a monthly basis and is committed to:

- Provide health management input and direction
- Suggest effective program communications and initiatives
- Promote communication between employees and management
- Support a culture of health management and carry the initiative forward
- Oversee the planning, implementation and evaluation of health management program

In 2011, the Health Management Plan also focused on providing incentives for employees to work on their health and wellness. Ottawa County partnered with Priority Health and participated in a HealthbyChoice Rewards program. This program was designed to encourage and reward employees for taking responsibility for their health. In subsequent years the Health Management Plan will incorporate disincentives for those individuals who do not participate in a plan or follow their doctor's advice addressing health concerns.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Since 1988 the County has conducted an employee recognition program that consists of an annual Service Awards Banquet held each year in January. In 2009, the switch was made to hold the banquet in October for more favorable weather. The banquet recognizes employees who have reached employment milestones of five (5), ten (10), fifteen (15), twenty (20), etc. years with the County.

On October 19, 2011, two hundred seventy-five (275) people attended the Service Awards Banquet honoring one hundred sixty-three (163) award recipients and twenty-nine (29) retirees from October 1, 2010, to September 30, 2011. The total cost for the banquet was \$24,224.81.

COUNTY PAYROLL ADMINISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE

In late 2011, the Human Resources Department took over the duties and functions of the county-wide payroll processing for the 1,162 employees who are on the county payroll system. This includes processing the biweekly County payroll, ensuring the accurate payment of wages and salaries and compliance with all federal, state and local income and payroll tax regulations, Collective Bargaining Agreements and benefit manuals. In addition, Human Resources maintains and updates employee master files and tables, withholding tax rates, health insurance premium contributions, life and disability insurance premium contributions, retirement contributions, union dues, payroll tax rates and other deductions and employer contributions, along with entering all new employees, change of addresses, wage increases, terminations and promotions.

SECURITY SYSTEM

Ottawa County has thirteen facilities in which the access is controlled by the Midstate proximity card access security system. In 2010, two new buildings were added to this system, Hemlock Crossing Nature Education Center and Grand Haven Courthouse and in 2011 the Juvenile Detention Facility was added to the security system. During 2011 Human Resources oversaw and maintained the security system. Human Resources is also responsible for maintaining and issuing identification cards, assigning card access to new employees and updating current employees access levels.