Chief Human Capital Officers Council 2022 Report to Congress

In accordance with requirement established through Public Law 107-296, Section 1303(d)



Interagency forum established in 2002 to advise and coordinate activities of member agencies on matters of federal personnel policy and practices







"By seeking to be an equitable, effective, and accountable Government that delivers results for all, the Federal government will transform itself into being the model employer it envisions today for its workforce and people."

- Analytical Perspectives, President's 2023 Budget







"The people who serve in the Federal government have always been our most important asset. We are committed to building, strengthening, and supporting our diverse Federal workforce and ensuring they can address the nation's most pressing issues and deliver on behalf of the American public. The Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCO) Council is a critical forum for the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Federal government as we work to support and empower our 2.2-million-person workforce."

- OPM Director and CHCO Council Chair, Kiran Ahuja

A Message from OPM Director and CHCO Council Chair, Kiran Ahuja

I am pleased to present you with the 2022 CHCO Council Annual Report to Congress.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) resumed full stewardship of the Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCO) Council in July 2021, and CHCOs from across the Federal government have been crucial partners in our efforts since then. As human capital leaders, CHCOs offer critical input. They strengthen our policies and deliver feedback in real-time, allowing us to provide timely support to help Federal agencies deliver on their respective missions.

OPM focused heavily on improving Federal hiring in 2022. We partnered closely with CHCOs from the seven Federal agencies working to enact the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to ensure each one had access to the talent needed for the law to succeed. These efforts led to more than 3,500 hires for 90 occupations in 2022, and we plan to double that number by the end of the current Fiscal Year.

In May 2022, OPM issued guidance beginning to broaden the focus of Federal hiring from education to skillsets. Our guidance allows Agencies to pursue candidates who have the skills they need, even if they don't have a particular degree. Additionally, OPM developed a ten-year term appointment for STEM positions. Both of these efforts increase the talent pools available to agencies and both efforts benefitted directly from critical CHCO feedback throughout the process.

Going forward, we will continue to focus on President Biden's mandate in the President's Management Agenda to make every Federal job a good job and build a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible workforce that reflects our nation. For example, we will continue our focus on improved hiring to ensure success for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the CHIPS & Science Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and surge hiring efforts taking place across the Federal government. In addition, we will continue to work with agencies to support their efforts to increase the number of paid internships, refresh the Pathways Program, and take affirmative steps to reduce the gender and racial pay gap by addressing the use of salary history in determining Federal pay. Finally, we will continue to champion Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) initiatives across government, including the newly created Chief Diversity Officers Executive Council (CDOEC). For all of these initiatives and more, OPM is excited to remain in close partnership with the CHCO Council to better serve the most important asset in the Federal government – our people.

In the pages that follow, you will find an in-depth reporting of the CHCO Council's work and impact throughout 2022. If my office can answer any further questions, please contact Margot Conrad and the CHCO Council team at CHCOCouncil@opm.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Kiran Ahuja OPM Director and CHCO Council Chair U.S. Office of Personnel Management

A Message from Executive Director of the CHCO Council and Senior Advisor to the Director, Margot Conrad

I am honored to reflect on the accomplishments of the CHCO Council in this 2022 Annual Report to Congress. It was an incredibly full and productive year. In addition to monthly CHCO Council meetings, the CHCO Council hosted regular Personnel Policy Office Hours, established five working groups and two communities of practice (one in partnership with OPM's office of Human Capital Data Management and Modernization), and launched a new CHCO Council website. Our Executive Steering Committee (ESC) met biweekly throughout the year to help shape Council meeting agendas and priorities and inform OPM policy and initiatives. We also convened a terrific full day Fall Forum in-person for CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs, as well as an Annual Public Meeting.

This year, feedback from CHCO Council members informed key initiatives such as: OPM Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) modernization efforts, OPM's future of the workforce vision, priorities, and web page, and the OPM Data Strategy. CHCO feedback was invaluable on several important OPM policies, including the 10-year term regulation, paid internship guidance, and the Pathways Program refresh. Finally, for a second consecutive year, CHCOs provided feedback on the running of the Council and engagement with OPM through a CHCO Annual Survey.

OPM also partnered closely with CHCOs on the implementation of Priority 1 of the President's Management Agenda (PMA), Strengthening and Empowering the Federal Workforce, which had its one-year anniversary in November 2022. Throughout the year, five CHCOs served as Strategy Leads for the Workforce Priority of the PMA, helping to shape the outcomes and initiatives we are collectively driving across government. They are now championing more than a dozen PMA pilot projects and initiatives to help strengthen the Federal workforce.

I look forward to the CHCO Council continuing to work together throughout 2023 to innovate, share best practices, and creatively problem solve to address the human capital challenges and opportunities before us. I also look forward to celebrating our 20th anniversary of the founding of the CHCO Council in May 2023!

Sincerely,

/s/

Margot Conrad

Executive Director of the CHCO Council and Senior Advisor to the Director U.S. Office of Personnel Management

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Executive Summary

Overview

The year 2022 was another successful year for the CHCO Council. Under the leadership of the OPM Director and CHCO Council Chair, Kiran Ahuja, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Deputy Director for Management and CHCO Council Vice Chair, Jason Miller, and Executive Director of the CHCO Council and Senior Advisor to the Director, Margot Conrad, the Council continued regular meetings, engaged the Executive Steering Committee, established priorities, stood up new working groups and communities of practice, instituted new CHCO Council Personnel Policy Office Hours and launched an improved website. This report covers CHCO Council activities from January 1 through December 31, 2022.

CHCO Council Meetings

The CHCO Council met monthly, generally on the third Tuesday of the month, for two hours. CHCOs also met for a full day Fall Forum in October 2022. In addition, the Council hosted monthly informal policy feedback sessions with OPM to provide early input on policy matters. Five working groups and two communities of practice were established with regular meeting cadences focusing on the future of the workforce, elevating human resources, human capital data, employee engagement, and recruitment and outreach. At the end of 2022, the CHCO Council held its annual public meeting on Tuesday, December 13, 2022, via a virtual web platform. The event was announced in the Federal Register with additional outreach to labor unions, management associations, the press, and good government organizations. Nearly three hundred individuals attended.

Authority and Purpose of the Chief Human Capital Officers Council

Authority

The CHCO Council (Council) was formally established by the Chief Human Capital Officers Act of 2002 (Act), which was enacted as part of the Homeland Security Act, Public Law 107-296, on November 25, 2002. The Act became effective May 24, 2003.

Purpose

The CHCO Council is the principal interagency forum to advise and coordinate the activities of the agencies of its members on such matters as modernization of human resources systems, improved quality of human resources information, and legislation affecting human resources operations and organizations.

CHCO Council 2022 Activities CHCO Council Meeting Highlights

The CHCO Council Chair and Vice Chair presided over monthly CHCO Council meetings, with the CHCO Council Executive Director facilitating. Chief Human Capital Officers from the 24 Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act agencies attended and represented their agencies. In addition, the Chair of the Small Agency Human Resources Council (SAHRC) attended. CHCOs from OMB and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence attended as well, as was the historical precedent. Deputy CHCOs were invited to attend CHCO Council meetings in addition to, but not in lieu of, CHCOs. The Chief Learning Officers Council co-chairs also attended CHCO Council meetings. There were times when the CHCO Council held Executive Sessions that were CHCO-only to allow for smaller group discussions around strategic topics.

CHCO Council meeting agendas during the 2022 calendar year included, but were not limited to, the following topics:

- 2022 CHCO Council Priorities
- Safer Federal Workforce Task Force Guidance
- Updates from OPM on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility
- Updates from OPM on Surge Hiring and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)
- OPM Personnel Policy Priorities
- 2022 OPM FEVS
- President's Management Agenda
- Legislative Updates
- Employee Engagement and Recognition
- Worker Empowerment Strategies Guidance and Implementation Feedback
- Mental Health and Well-being
- Senior Executive Service Strategy and Priorities
- OPM Data Strategy

- Human Resources Line of Business (HRLOB) and HR Quality Service Management Offices (QSMO) FY23 Priorities
- Elevating Human Resources
- Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) Research Agenda
- Pay and Compensation
- Hiring Policy
- Hiring Innovations Shared Certificates and Multi Agency Hiring and Skills Based Hiring

Executive Steering Committee

After being stood up in 2021, the CHCO Council Executive Steering Committee (ESC) met biweekly in 2022. The ESC serves as a voice for the CHCO Community to raise important issues and has continued to be a sounding board on OPM policy and programmatic matters. Additionally, the ESC has helped shape the CHCO Council meeting agendas and inform the work of the Council more broadly. ESC members provided periodic updates to their peers on their work at monthly CHCO Council meetings in 2022.

The CHCO Council facilitated a peer-nomination and approval process for a vacant seat on the ESC after Jamesa Moone Hunter left her role as SAHRC Chair therefore vacating a seat on the ESC. With final approval by the CHCO Council Chair and Vice Chair, the current members of the ESC as of December 2022 are:

- Margot Conrad, Executive Director of the CHCO Council
- Traci DiMartini, CHCO at the General Services Administration
- Roland Edwards, CHCO at the Department of Homeland Security
- Catherine Emerson, CHCO at the Department of Justice
- Wonzie Gardner, CHCO at the National Science Foundation
- Tracey Therit, CHCO at the Department of Veterans Affairs

CHCO Council Priorities

The CHCO Council established four priorities in 2022 that will carry forward to 2023. The priorities are responsive to key issues CHCO Council members and the ESC identified and wanted to focus on as a community. The four priorities are:

- 1. Informing Human Capital Policy Development
- 2. Building HR Workforce Capacity and Capability
- 3. Improving Human Capital Data Collection and Usage
- 4. Fostering Strategic Partnerships to Elevate Human Capital

To support these priorities, as well as facilitate the implementation of the President's Management Agenda and OPM's Strategic Plan, the CHCO Council established several working groups and communities of practice.

Working Groups and Communities of Practice

To drive execution of the CHCO Council priorities and support implementation of the President's Management Agenda, the CHCO Council set up five working groups and two communities of practice in 2022. Each group is co-chaired by at least one CHCO, often an OPM senior leader, and other senior agency leaders where appropriate. Groups meet on a regular basis – some bi-weekly and others monthly – depending on the individual needs. Membership of each working group is determined by their respective leadership but generally includes CHCOs or other senior human capital leaders. Members of the communities of practice are human capital practitioners. The working groups and communities of practice established in 2022 are as follows:

1. Future of the Workforce Working Group

This working group was co-chaired by Traci DiMartini, Chief Human Capital Officer at the General Services Administration, Jessica Palatka, Chief Human Capital Officer at the Department of Commerce, and Jason Barke, Deputy Associate Director for Strategic Workforce Planning at the Office of Personnel Management. The working group supported OPM in developing policy guidance and providing recommendations on tools, resources, and services to support agencies as they continue to navigate a hybrid work environment and plan for the workforce of the future. The group partnered with OPM in enabling a

workforce that is inclusive, agile, and engaged with the skills for today and the future. The group evolved from 2021 but continued to meet frequently on a monthly basis to have discussions with subject matter experts at OPM and provided input to OPM on various items. Input included a draft vision for the future of the workforce, as well as feedback on government-wide training for supervisors and managers that OPM is developing free of charge to agencies under the PMA.

2. Elevating Human Resources Working Group

This working group was co-chaired by Bob Leavitt, Chief Human Capital Officer at the Department of Health and Human Services, John Gill, Acting Executive Director of Human Capital Data Management and Modernization at the Office of Personnel Management, and Veronica Hinton, Acting Associate Director of Employee Services at the Office of Personnel Management. The working group focused on how to build the capacity and capability of the human resource (HR) workforce. Meeting on a bi-weekly basis, the group worked towards the goal to build a strong and modern Federal HR workforce able to provide credible, effective support as partners in agency mission, strategy, and operational success. The group has been continuously working to develop a common understanding of the state of the HR workforce and identify successful and innovative human capital management practices to strengthen HR competencies and expand developmental opportunities for the HR workforce. The working group launched two agency-led project teams in the fall of 2022. One project team focused on identifying successful and innovative human capital management practices to strengthen HR competencies and the other focused on career pathing for the HR workforce.

3. Human Capital Data Working Group

This working group was co-chaired by Zev Goldrich, Acting Chief Human Capital Officer and Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Ted Kaouk, Chief Data Officer & Deputy Director, Human Capital Data Management and Modernization at the Office of Personnel Management, and Trey Bradley, Program Director, Strategic Data Initiatives at the Office of Shared Solutions & Performance Improvement Office of Government-wide Policy at the General Services Administration. The working group sought to serve as a strategic partner to OPM on its data strategy and

played an advisory role in the Human Capital Data Analytics Community of Practice run in partnership with OPM's Office of Human Capital Data Management and Modernization (HCDMM). The working group worked to improve data and dashboarding support to agencies as they plan for the future of the workforce with a focus on recruiting, hiring, retaining, and advancing the talent and skills they need to achieve agency mission. In 2022, the working group met on a monthly basis and established a collaboration framework that defines how the working group and community of practice work together and across agencies to tackle cross-agency issues such as filling holes in agency data collection strategies. The community of practice provided a forum for agencies to share unique or innovative applications of data analytics in the human capital space. The community of practice met monthly attracting over 200 members and monthly meetings consistently attracted over 100 attendees.

4. Employee Engagement Working Group

This working group was co-chaired by Anita Adkins, Chief Human Capital Officer at the Department of Agriculture, Antonia Harris, Chief Human Capital Officer at the Department of Education, and Lori Michalski, Chief Human Capital Officer at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The working group, supported by the PMA Workforce Priority Implementation Team, worked to identify and implement holistic solutions to employee engagement. Meeting monthly, the working group identified a set of strategic priorities based on employee engagement data points and input from the Employee Engagement Community of Practice (CoP) which the working group advised. The CoP sought to support agencies in taking quick, visible action on employee survey results such as OPM FEVS, provided agencies opportunities to share and learn about challenges and best practices, and elevated and scaled ideas on how to create an engaging, inclusive work environment and workplace culture. The community met monthly with about 100 members.

5. Recruitment and Outreach Working Group

This working group was co-chaired by Jane Datta, Chief Human Capital Officer at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Colleen Heller-Stein, Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer at the Department of the Treasury, and Anne Audet, Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer at the Department of Transportation. The working group, supported by the PMA Workforce Priority Implementation Team,

began at the end of 2022. The working group began to identify opportunities to champion shared recruitment and outreach initiatives. Additionally, the working group developed a plan for a new Recruitment and Outreach Community of Practice (CoP) to be stood up in early 2023 to facilitate the sharing of best practices, lessons learned, and resources to attract and hire the most qualified employees, who reflect the diversity of our country, in the right roles across the Federal Government.

The CHCO Council also collaborated with OPM's Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility to finalize a resource of DEIA promising practices for Federal agencies. These practices were identified by members of the 2021 DEIA CHCO Council working group.

CHCO Council Special Sessions and Involvement

In addition to the official monthly CHCO Council meetings, CHCO Council staff brought the CHCO community together several times throughout the course of the year for special sessions. Topics ranged from a Department of Homeland Security volunteer force interagency detail opportunity discussion, information on AmeriCorps and the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) program, an OPM FEVS survey results session, and a presentation focused on the state of the human capital function analysis.

In addition to special sessions, OPM continued to engage CHCOs and sought their direct input on several policies, including the following items:

- Sec. 5. Progress Toward a Living Wage for Federal Employees in Executive Order (EO) 14003 – Protecting the Federal Workforce
- Implementation of EO 13932 –Modernizing and Reforming the Assessment and Hiring of Federal Job Candidates
- Firefighter Trading Time Policy (section 1110 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022, Public Law 117-81, December 27, 2021, which added a new subsection (h) in 5 U.S.C. 5542)
- Position Classification Standard for Wildland Fire Management Series, 0456
- Supporting the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, and CHIPS and Science Act of 2022
- Information Technology Special Pay Rates

Outside of CHCO Council-wide special sessions, individual CHCO Council members were sought out for their agency input on a variety of topics. These include matters such as strengthening system capacity, connecting people to care and creating a continuum of support for mental health, OPM FEVS modernization and engagement, OPM customer input meetings, and supporting early career talent initiatives.

CHCO Council Personnel Policy Office Hours

In 2022, the CHCO Council instituted new CHCO Council Personnel Policy Office Hours to provide more opportunities for the CHCO community to share early input with OPM on policies under consideration. OPM subject matter experts came with a prepared topic for CHCO Council member (or designated representative depending on the topic) input. Topics included items such as paid internship guidance and Pathways Program regulation updates, options for Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) retirement reform, ten-year term appointment proposed regulations, and ideas for potential future telework or remote work policy changes. Feedback from both OPM and CHCOs indicated that the office hours were valuable. We look forward to continuing to host them in 2023.

Fall Forum

On October 21, 2022, OPM convened CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs for the first CHCO Council Fall Forum in several years. The Forum objective was to build community and strengthen relationships between Council members. The agenda focused on building a shared vision for the future of the Federal workforce and the HR workforce needed to achieve this future state. CHCO Council Chair, Director Ahuja, opened the event and several CHCOs facilitated discussions. OPM staff discussed key policy priorities in the pipeline. Meaningful conversations took place throughout the Fall Forum and CHCOs noted deeply valuing the chance to connect with each other further and build stronger relationships. In 2023, the CHCO Council plans to hold a two-day Fall Forum for CHCOs at the Federal Executive Institute to build on the success of the 2022 Fall Forum.

Annual Public Meeting

The CHCO Council held its annual public meeting virtually on Tuesday, December 13, 2022. The agenda included leadership remarks from the CHCO Council Chair and Vice Chair, an update on the Council from the CHCO Council Executive Director, a focus on

hiring innovations highlighting the one-year anniversary of the bipartisan infrastructure law, a moderated panel of CHCOs talking about shared certificates and multi-agency hiring, and brief CHCO Council agency presentations on skills-based hiring. CHCO Council member, Jane Datta, was recognized as a recipient of a Presidential Rank Award. Executive Steering Committee member, Tracey Therit, recognized key OPM staff for their active collaboration and engagement with the CHCO Council. The event was noticed in the Federal Register with additional outreach to labor unions, management associations, and the press. Almost three hundred individuals attended.

Cross-Agency Council Engagement

The CHCO Council has been continuing to build relationships with other cross agency councils and groups to strengthen collaboration. The CHCO Council met with other councils such as the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Council, Chief Data Officers (CDO) Council, Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council, Chief Learning Officers (CLO) Council, and the newly established Chief Diversity Officers Executive Council (CDOEC). Additionally, the CHCO Council connected with other relevant groups such as the Multi-Agency Executive Strategy Committee (MAESC). The CHCO Council presented at several meetings and forums of other cross agency councils including the CLO Council, MAESC, and Small Agency Human Resources Council (SAHRC).

Members of several councils, including the CLO, CDO, SAHRC and MAESC, participate in CHCO Council working groups and communities of practice. The SAHRC Chair is a member of the CHCO Council, and the CLO Council co-chairs attend monthly CHCO Council meetings, as well.

CHCO Council Operations

CHCO Council Communications

The CHCO Council communicates with several stakeholders including Council members, human capital leaders, and the public through different communication channels. The Council continued to send a streamlined operational weekly email at the beginning of the week from the Executive Director to CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs. The email included important items happening in the week ahead in the human capital

space, recent memoranda, guidance, or policy, reminders about data call deadlines, upcoming CHCO Council meetings and/or workgroup activity, sharing of key HR job postings, and requests from CHCOs on particular topics to facilitate information sharing and learning. Additionally, the CHCO Council further developed an online collaboration space for agencies to access to facilitate more streamlined, consistent communications and real-time collaboration.

CHCOC.gov

The CHCO Council launched a newly designed and modernized CHCOC.gov website in 2022. The site features improved content and was designed to enhance the user experience. It is also easier for CHCO Council staff to maintain. Historical documents such as the CHCO Council Charter and CHCO Council Annual Reports are on the website as well as CHCO Council member information. An overview of priorities, working groups, and communities of practice have been added, along with HR opportunities and communities. Additionally, a CHCO Council news section has been updated to better communicate externally about the work of the Council and OPM. Currently, transmittals are still hosted on CHCOC.gov and Council staff looks forward to continuing to make improvements to the site, as it is a recognized resource for many.

CHCO Council Annual Survey

The CHCO Council in partnership with the Planning, Performance, and Evaluation team in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer at OPM created a CHCO Council Annual Survey. The survey's purpose is to collect feedback from CHCO Council members on the administration of the CHCO Council, OPM performance, and customer experience. The feedback collected is used to strengthen the CHCO Council, identify areas of improvement for OPM, and measure agency progress on several measures in OPM's FY 2022-2026 strategic plan.

The first annual survey launched in December 2021 and closed in January 2022. The results for this survey were analyzed in 2022. The second administration of the annual survey was launched and closed in October 2022. Results were analyzed shortly after. Respondents were invited to complete the survey via email, using an anonymous link. The survey was voluntary, anonymous, and confidential to help the CHCO Council leadership and OPM understand where to drive improvements.

Almost three quarters of the CHCO Council completed the 2022 CHCO Council Annual Survey. Roughly twenty percent of the total survey population were new to the Council in 2022 compared to the membership for the 2021 Annual Survey. Because the pool of respondents was different across the two years, the analysis should be treated as a point-in-time estimate.

Most respondents report having a good experience overall with the CHCO Council. In 2022, 90% of respondents agree or strongly agree that "CHCO Council meetings brought the community together around shared solutions." Respondents agreed that meetings were well-facilitated, informative, and fostered the sharing of promising practices. Results reflect general agreement that the CHCO Council is well run and useful. One hundred percent of respondents reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the CHCO Council weekly update, and 97% were satisfied with customer service. Survey responses indicate high levels of satisfaction with special CHCO sessions, meeting cadence, and CHCO Council Personnel Policy Office Hours. Additionally, the majority (91%) of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that OPM treats CHCOs as strategic partners.

Eight items in the annual survey are tracked and publicly reported OPM Strategic Plan measures. Two of the measures, Objective 2.2.008 (Percent of CHCOs who strongly agree that OPM treats them as strategic partners) and Objective 4.5.002 (Percent of CHCOs who agree that OPM's policy-making approach is responsive to agency needs), saw significant positive changes, the latter exceeding the 2026 strategic plan target increase. The CHCO Council plans to administer the survey again in fall 2023.

Employment Barriers

Pursuant to Section 6604 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022, PL 117-81, December 27, 2021, 135 Stat 1541, the CHCO Council's annual reporting requirements, detailed in the Homeland Security Act of 2002, PL 107-296, 5 U.S.C. 1401, were amended to require the addition of the following content:

A description of employment barriers that prevent the agencies of its members from hiring qualified applicants, including those for digital talent positions, and recommendations for addressing the barriers that would allow such agencies to more effectively hire qualified applicants. Although no definition was provided for digital talent positions in this portion of the bill, in Section 909, digital talent was defined to include "positions and capabilities in, or related to, software development, engineering, and product management; data science; artificial intelligence; distributed ledger technologies; autonomy; data management; product and user experience design; and cybersecurity." In conducting an analysis of the employment barriers faced by the CHCO Council member agencies, this was the definition used for describing digital talent positions.

To fulfill this new reporting requirement, the CHCO Council discussed this topic during one of the monthly full Council meetings, which included CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs. CHCO Council members, Tracey Therit (CHCO, Veterans Affairs) and Colleen Heller-Stein (Deputy CHCO, Treasury) – who also serve as Strategy Leads for Strategy 1 of the Workforce Priority of the PMA, which is focused on attracting the most qualified applicants, recruiting broadly in an endeavor to achieve a workforce drawn from all segments of society, and hiring employees in the right roles across the Federal government - facilitated the discussion. They framed some brief polling questions and breakout group discussions around three broad categories: employment barriers agencies face related to early career talent, senior level talent, and digital talent. For the purpose of the breakout groups, early career talent was defined as "individuals with fewer than five continuous years of full-time civilian employment." Senior level talent was defined as "individuals at the GS-14 and above including recruiting for new SES positions." For the purposes of the CHCO Council reporting requirement, "agencies" refers to CHCO Council agencies, including a representative from SAHRC to reflect the small agency viewpoint.

The barriers and discussions below highlight the general views and perspectives of CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs in CHCO Council agencies. They do not represent the administration's official position.

Digital Talent Employment Barriers

The competition for digital talent is fierce and agencies often lack the ability, and the resources, to offer competitive salaries compared to their private sector counterparts. Mission is a significant selling point for government service, and it helps to attract talent as seen in our United States Digital Service ranks, but mission alone is often not enough when at any time a significant number of information technology (IT)/cyber positions go unfilled.

Another barrier CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs discussed was the presence of legacy IT systems in a number of Federal agencies and the need for continued investment in technologies that drive innovation in the private sector. Agencies are making progress, however, CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs said these dynamics – pay and IT challenges – make it hard for the Federal government to attract talent and demonstrate that it is on the cutting edge. They also shared their views regarding the important role telework and remote work flexibilities can have in enhancing the ability of agencies to compete for critical tech talent from anywhere across the country.

CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs also said HR specialists are overwhelmed, lack the bandwidth and capacity to get hiring certificates issued quickly, and do not have dedicated resources to focus on digital talent hiring. Generally, HR talent in the Federal government is scarce, and there is fierce competition amongst agencies for this talent pool. This often leads to job hopping by HR specialists, creating critical gaps within HR offices. These gaps within HR offices contribute to a longer hiring process, which makes it harder for agencies to compete for talent. Finally, CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs pointed to HR specialists needing training to better keep pace with a persistently changing digital sector where the hiring authorities across agencies, positions, and types of skills needed constantly fluctuate.

CHCO Council Discussion

CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs acknowledged that OPM provided technical support to a number of agencies recently as they developed a special pay rate request for IT positions, which OPM and OMB are now considering Governmentwide. Many expressed that this would be helpful to them in recruiting for some digital talent positions, as they would be able to offer greater compensation packages. However, even with these special pay rates, they are concerned some positions will go unfilled as the private sector can offer even more pay. Additionally, some agencies raised concerns that they do not have the resources to pay these special salary rates, which could lead to inequity across government as agencies compete for talent. CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs identified additional funding for agencies to hire and compensate digital talent and allow for greater competitiveness in the broader labor market as one potential way to address these concerns. The Council also identified workplace flexibilities as recruitment tools to help agencies hire distributed talent across the country, which could also result in agencies becoming more competitive in smaller labor markets.

CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs agreed that agencies hiring more HR staff so they could bring in HR specialists focused exclusively on hiring digital talent would help reduce the time-to-hire for positions and make agencies more competitive employers. They also report that the ability to have talent onboard and start working while they wait for their clearances is crucial. Otherwise, even when an agency makes a hire quickly, the candidate may still have to wait several months before beginning work. OPM and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence have issued policy, through the Trusted Workforce 2.0 initiative, to speed the use of preliminary determinations permitting faster onboarding, and an implementation strategy is underway.

Finally, CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs articulated a desire for a government-wide digital strategy to identify the talent needed, and more sharing of recruitment strategies across agencies. This could include a campaign articulating the type of work the Federal government does and advertising the government as a place for digital talent and an employer of choice. CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs said public-private talent exchanges, job fairs, and recruiting at schools could improve to some extent the current digital talent recruitment challenges.

Early Career Talent Barriers

CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs mentioned that at the top level of agencies there was a recognition of the need to better attract and hire early career talent. However, CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs also pointed to the challenge of investing in and hiring early career talent and ensuring that hiring managers prioritize development of early career opportunities. Additionally, they shared challenges with recruiting early career talent due to the lengthy hiring process and compensation. Managing this priority along with the need for more experienced or specialized roles will continue to be a matter of balance and talent management.

Similar to the digital talent breakout group, CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs acknowledged that the length of the hiring process was a significant barrier to recruiting and hiring early career talent. They expressed that the private sector is engaging, interviewing, and providing offers of employment to applicants faster than the Federal government. On top of this, the wait for a security clearance before work can begin also drives away top talent. Lastly, CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs expressed that pay for early career talent within the government is much lower than in the private sector in some key career fields.

CHCO Council Discussion

CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs emphasized the importance of succession planning, shifting lower-level work to early career talent, and providing early career talent with training. They recognized it can be challenging when there are competing funding and talent management priorities. They discussed the importance of agencies conducting strategic workforce planning that addresses personnel gaps and develops early career talent opportunities. An idea discussed by the Council included expanding rotational and developmental assignments within the Federal government. This would allow early career talent to explore career opportunities and grow professionally while contributing their skills to the Federal government. More broadly, CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs also discussed utilizing existing career ladders and demonstrating clear career paths to help early career talent understand how they can progress in their careers.

To improve the value proposition for the Federal government regarding early career talent, members of the CHCO Council discussed the use of more special pay rates for specific fields (such as digital talent discussed above) where the government lags most behind the private sector for entry level pay. CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs suggested providing employees with increased access to employee programs such as student loan forgiveness plans or reimbursement for educational purposes could help to address early career talent recruitment barriers. In addition, they acknowledged that certain benefits are more utilized depending on an employee's individual circumstances; for instance, a military spouse may not be interested in enrolling in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program and instead may wish for an enhanced tuition assistance or student loan forgiveness allowance. Allowing for a menu of options approach to benefits would enable employees to select those benefits that are most impactful to their lives and wellbeing.

Senior Level Talent Barriers

Competitive pay for the current job market and the length of the hiring process were also cited as key barriers in hiring qualified applicants for senior level positions, despite the fact that there is a different hiring process and compensation system for SES and Senior Level/Senior Technical (SL/ST) positions.

On the issue of pay, CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs highlighted the challenges they face in offering competitive pay for senior executives. This is due to pay caps and pay compression between positions in the General Schedule and the Senior Executive

Service because adjusted pay for General Schedule positions is limited to EX-IV. In some cases, there is little advantage for a GS-15 to join the SES because they would be taking on more responsibility but may not receive a higher salary. They pointed to some instances where people in the SES were making less money than employees who are more junior and talked about the challenges of a pay system that is based on longevity in the position and/or previous pay rather than the complexity of the position.

They also recognized that agencies have different "tiers" in their SES and pay their leaders differently, as a result. This causes inequities across the agencies. Further, they noted the gap in salaries between the public and private sector is significant, making it difficult to attract senior talent into the Federal government. Finally, CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs spent significant time discussing the challenges that grade inflation has had on the workforce. Specifically, some agencies are creating SES positions as a tool for retention or promotion even when there is not a strategic business need for a position at that level.

Some CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs mentioned a lack of rigor when assessing candidates promoted within government into SES positions. Others mentioned that agencies rely too heavily on technical qualifications when screening for SES positions when the process should be focused on selecting leaders based on their management experience. The hiring process is lengthy for applicants, with many agencies still relying on having applicants submit Executive Core Qualification narratives most of the time as part of their application rather than allowing candidates to apply with a resume like they do in the private sector. This can discourage external candidates from applying for SES positions. However, for those agencies using resume-based hiring, more work is required by agency executive resource specialists who prepare the packages for OPM review and certification.

CHCO Council Discussion

CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs pointed to the need for Congressional action to lift the pay caps and address pay compression. The FY24 President's Budget referenced that the Administration will take action to rectify the long-standing white-collar Senior Executive Service and higher graded General Schedule (GS) pay compression, as well as blue-collar Federal Wage Grade pay limitations through development of a legislative proposal. These reforms should be universal rather than specific to particular

positions. In the interim, participants suggested looking at what could be done administratively to address SES pay by offering higher pay rates for executive positions, acknowledging a need for such action to be paired with additional agency funding from Congress to enable agencies to implement the higher pay rates.

With respect to hiring, agencies shared steps they were taking internally to streamline the hiring process. For example, one agency shared they only do resume based hiring in the initial stage of the process, and they have limits on the number of pages you can submit. They also assign people to help candidates with the application process so they don't make mistakes that could disqualify them. Another agency shared they have been doing information sessions for candidates interested in applying for SES positions and this is particularly helpful for those applying from outside the government who don't understand the Federal government's hiring process.

CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs also discussed the need for and the utilization of Qualification Review Board (QRB). CHCOs were in favor of several efforts OPM currently has under way, including streamlining the QRB process to reduce administrative burden while still maintaining OPM oversight, setting up a structured interview program for SES candidates with four to five agencies pilot testing, and reviewing the current Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) and competencies to ensure they are relevant. Components of OPM, in collaboration with CHCOs, are working on implementing these solutions to remove this second barrier related to senior level talent.

Conclusion

In summary, CHCOs and Deputy CHCOs expressed several common barriers in recruiting digital, early career, and senior level talent. They recognized several efforts currently underway administratively and expressed gratitude for the partnership with OPM on these efforts. More broadly, they shared that they believed prioritization is needed to support the HR function in government to provide dedicated resources for recruiting and hiring talent. In addition, they expressed a desire for a holistic look at the compensation system and potential changes to allow the Federal government to compete for all talent and truly be an employer of choice.

Appendix 1: CHCOC.gov Transmittals

In 2022, OPM — acting through the CHCO Council — transmitted a total of 64 guidance documents to CHCOs, HR Directors, and Heads of Agencies between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2022. These can be viewed on the CHCO Council website (www.CHCOC.gov) or in the Appendix below.

Date	Transmittal Title	Author
5-Jan-22	Agency Opportunities to Establish Chief Diversity Officer or Diversity and Inclusion Officer Pursuant to Executive Order 14035, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
7-Jan-22	Three New Academic Agreements Offer Federal Employees Reduced Tuition Rates to Pursue Post- Secondary Education	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services
14-Jan-22	Emergency Leave Transfer for Federal Employees Adversely Affected by the Midwest and Southern Tornado Outbreak 2021 and the Boulder County, Colorado Wildfires 2021	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
21-Jan-22	Achieving a \$15 Per Hour Minimum Pay Rate for Federal Employees	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
26-Jan-22	COVID-19 Over-the-Counter Tests, Vaccines, and Therapeutics	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
1-Feb-22	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Schedule A Hiring Authority	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
2-Feb-22	Issuance of Performance Management Tips for a Hybrid Workplace	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services
22-Feb-22	Call for Nominations for FY2022 Presidential Rank Awards	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
9-Mar-22	Request for CY 2021 Data on Student Loan Repayments	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Date	Transmittal Title	Author	
14-Mar-22	Request for Data for the FY 2021 Physicians' Comparability Allowance Report to Congress	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
17-Mar-22	Request for the Annual Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program Report, Hispanic Employment Report, and Individuals with Disabilities Report for Fiscal Year 2021	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services	
17-Mar-22	Executive Women in Motion (EWIM): Pathways to the Senior Executive Service Toolkit	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
24-Mar-22	Recent Pay and Leave-Related Legislative Changes in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
24-Mar-22	Executive Order on Promoting Access to Voting	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
28-Mar-22	Annual Data Call for Senior Executive Service (SES), Senior- Level (SL), and Scientific or Professional (ST) Performance Ratings, Pay, and Awards for Fiscal Year 2021	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services	
29-Mar-22	Update to Fiscal Year 2022 Prevailing Rate Pay Adjustments	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
31-Mar-22	Chief Human Capital Officers Council 2021 Report to Congress	CHCO Council	
1-Apr-22	Parental Bereavement Leave	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
11-Apr-22	Cybersecurity Workforce Management Updates and Resources	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services	
12-Apr-22	Guidance on Implementation of EO 14025: Highlighting Union Rights to Access and Communicate with Bargaining Unit Employees	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	

Date	Transmittal Title	Author	
12-Apr-22	Guidance on Implementation of EO 14025: Highlighting Requirements During Union Organizing	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
12-Apr-22	Guidance on Implementation of EO 14025: Highlighting Requirement to Timely Process Requests for Payroll Deductions for Labor Organization Dues	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
18-Apr-22	CFC Special Solicitation – UKRAINE	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
19-Apr-22	Continued Pay Freeze for Certain Senior Political Officials	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
25-Apr-22	Second Chance Month	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
10-May-22	2022 Federal Workforce Priorities Report	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services	
18-May-22	Supporting the Mental Health and Well-Being of Federal Employees	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
19-May-22	Guidance Release - E.O. 13932; Modernizing and Reforming the Assessment and Hiring of Federal Job Candidates	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
24-May-22	2022 Office of Personnel Management Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
27-May-22	Fiscal Year 2021 Federal Executive Board National Network Annual Report	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
21-Jun-22	Position Classification Standard for Wildland Fire Management Series, 0456	Kimberly A. Holden, Deputy Associate Director, Talent Acquisition, Classifications and Veterans Programs	
22-Jun-22	COVID-19 Vaccination of Children Over 6 Months of Age	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
27-Jun-22	Extension of the Coronavirus COVID-19 Schedule A Hiring Authority	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	

Date	Transmittal Title	Author	
1-Jul-22	Emergency Leave Transfer for Federal Employees Adversely Affected by the 2022 Montana Severe Storm and Flooding	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
12-Aug-22	Emergency Leave Transfer for Federal Employees Adversely Affected by the 2022 Kentucky Severe Storms, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
17-Aug-22	2022 Combined Federal Campaign	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
24-Aug-22	Agency Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program (DVAAP) Annual Reporting	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services	
13-Sep-22	Federal Employees Support Health and Hunger Relief	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
23-Sep-22	Emergency Leave Transfer for Federal Employees Adversely Affected by the Mississippi Water Crisis 2022	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
28-Sep-22	Emergency Leave Transfer for Federal Employees Adversely Affected by Hurricane Fiona 2022	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
29-Sep-22	Agency Noncompetitive Hiring Authority of Military Spouses Annual Reporting	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services	
6-Oct-22	Administrative Leave for New, Updated COVID-19 Vaccine	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
7-Oct-22	Human Resources Flexibilities and Procedures for Disasters and Other Emergency Situations	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
7-Oct-22	Emergency Hiring Situation Resulting from Hurricane Fiona and Hurricane Ian	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
14-Oct-22	Emergency Leave Transfer for Federal Employees Adversely Affected by Hurricane Ian 2022	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	

Date	Transmittal Title	Author	
19-Oct-22	2022 Annual Review of Special Rates (Data Call)	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
21-Oct-22	Continuation of National Emergency in Iraq	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services	
21-Oct-22	The Importance of Seasonal Affective Disorder and Suicide Prevention	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
21-Oct-22	Delegated Examining Certification Checklists for Employees and Supervisors and Engagement After Failure	Mark W. Lambert, Associate Director, Merit Systems Accountability and Compliance	
24-Oct-22	Public Service Loan Forgiveness: Certification of Federal Employment for Federal Employees	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
27-Oct-22	Closing Skills Gaps Initiative Closeout Report	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
3-Nov-22	Workforce Planning Guide	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
14-Nov-22	Human Capital Framework Evaluator Training	Mark W. Lambert, Associate Director, Merit Systems Accountability and Compliance	
30-Nov-22	Agency Actions Requested on Success Metrics Related to the Workforce Priority of the President's Management Agenda	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Dr. Kathleen Hicks, Deputy Secretary, Department of Defense, Julie Su, Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor	
8-Dec-22	2022 Telework Call for Data	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services	
9-Dec-22	Governmentwide Dismissal and Closure Procedures	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	
14-Dec-22	Call for Biennial Review Submission for Executive Allocations for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025	Robert H. Shriver, III, Associate Director, Employee Services	
14-Dec-22	Firefighter Trading Time Policy	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management	

Date	Transmittal Title	Author
15-Dec-22	FY2023 Human Capital Reviews	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
23-Dec-22	January 2023 Pay Adjustments	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
23-Dec-22	2022 Annual Review of Special Rates (Results)	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
29-Dec-22	Fiscal Year 2023 Prevailing Rate Pay Adjustments	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
29-Dec-22	Continued Pay Freeze for Certain Senior Political Officials	Kiran A. Ahuja, Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
30-Dec-22	Political Appointees and Career Civil Service Positions	Mark W. Lambert, Associate Director, Merit Systems Accountability and Compliance

Appendix 2: CHCO Council Member List as of December 31, 2022

Agency	Title	Name
Agency for International Development	Acting CHCO	Cheryl Anderson
Agency for International Development	DCHCO	Vacant
Department of Agriculture	CHCO	Anita Adkins
Department of Agriculture	DCHCO	Allen Hatcher
Department of Commerce	CHCO	Jessica Palatka
Department of Commerce	DCHCO	Vacant
Department of Defense	CHCO	Gilbert R. Cisneros
Department of Defense	Delegated CHCO	Nancy Anderson Speight
Department of Education	CHCO	Antonia Harris
Department of Education	DCHCO	Jacqueline Clay
Department of Energy	CHCO	Erin Moore
Department of Energy	DCHCO	Todd Turner
Department of Health and Human Services	CHCO	Bob Leavitt
Department of Health and Human Services	DCHCO	Jeffery Anoka
Department of Homeland Security	CHCO	Roland Edwards
Department of Homeland Security	DCHCO	Kimya Lee
Department of Housing and Urban Development	CHCO	Lori Michalski
Department of Housing and Urban Development	DCHCO	Priscilla Clark
Department of the Interior	CHCO	Mark Green
Department of the Interior	DCHCO	Jennifer Ackerman
Department of Justice	CHCO	Catherine Emerson
Department of Justice	DCHCO	Valarie Mulcahy
Department of Labor	CHCO	Sydney Rose
Department of Labor	DCHCO	Carin Otero
Department of State	CHCO	Marcia Bernicat
Department of State	DCHCO	Phil Lussier
Department of the Treasury	CHCO	Trevor Norris
Department of the Treasury	DCHCO	Colleen Heller-Stein

Agency	Title	Name
Department of Transportation	СНСО	Philip McNamara
Department of Transportation	DCHCO	Anne Audet
Department of Veterans Affairs	CHCO	Tracey Therit
Department of Veterans Affairs	DCHCO	Vacant
Environmental Protection Agency	Acting CHCO	Arron Helm
Environmental Protection Agency	DCHCO	Mara Kamen
General Services Administration	CHCO	Traci DiMartini
General Services Administration	DCHCO	Merrick Krause
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	СНСО	Jane Datta
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	DCHCO	Brady Pyle
National Science Foundation	CHCO	Wonzie Gardner
National Science Foundation	DCHCO	Bill Malyszka
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	CHCO	Mary Lamary
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	DCHCO	Eric Dilworth
Office of the Director of National Intelligence	Acting CHCO	Zev Goldrich
Office of the Director of National Intelligence	DCHCO	Zev Goldrich
Office of Management and Budget	CHCO	Sarah Spooner
Office of Management and Budget	DCHCO	Starlisha Anderson
Office of Personnel Management	CHCO	Carmen Garcia
Office of Personnel Management	DCHCO	Vacant
Small Agency Council	СНСО	Eric Mozie
Small Agency Council	DCHCO	Starlisha Anderson
Small Business Administration	СНСО	Elias Hernandez
Small Business Administration	DCHCO	Julie Brill
Social Security Administration	СНСО	Darlynda Bogle
Social Security Administration	DCHCO	Lydia Marshall



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