

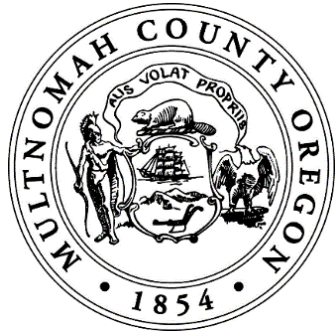
County Ethical Culture Survey Results

Ethical culture is generally strong, but there is room for improvement, particularly in Department of Community Justice

March 2019



Multnomah County Auditor's Office
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March 20, 2019

Dear Multnomah County community members and employees,

Near the end of 2018, my office sent our second County Ethical Culture Survey to all County employees. I want to thank each person who took the survey.

Some employee comments showed that people took the survey *despite* reservations about how the information would be used, or whether the survey was really anonymous. (It was.) I appreciate the leap of faith that those people took. I want that leap of faith to be worth it for each of those people and for our County overall. That calls on each of us at the County, especially our elected leaders and those in management, to use this report as a tool for sustaining what is good about our culture and improving what needs to change.

As in 2016, the 2018 survey found that the County's ethical culture is generally strong. Most survey takers agreed that County expectations for ethical behavior are clear. And three out of four employees agreed that they feel respected in their positions.

While pointing out these strengths in the County's ethical culture, the survey results also shed light on problems. One area that seems most in need of transformation is the Department of Community Justice. DCJ employees had low levels of agreement with nearly every survey statement. And, since the start of this year, some DCJ employees have contacted me out of a desire to make DCJ better for themselves and their colleagues. The employees I've talked to have vastly different perspectives about DCJ, but consistently described to me that the DCJ culture is fear-based. This seems due, at least in part, to a perception that managers are not held accountable for their actions and that line staff who speak up about workplace conditions experience retaliation.

These conversations, along with the survey results, make me worried about how the DCJ work environment is affecting employees' health, safety, and ability to consistently do their best work. The Chief Operating Officer and DCJ Director have a real opportunity to work hand-in-hand with DCJ employees – both managers and, crucially, with line staff – to rebuild DCJ into a respectful, functional workplace. To support this work, the attached report includes a DCJ-specific recommendation that my office expects to be completed by the end of fiscal year 2020.

Sincerely,

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Multnomah County Auditor

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Report Highlights

What We Found

Our 2018 survey results show that the County's ethical culture is generally strong, similar to results from 2016. For example, most survey takers agree that County expectations for ethical behavior are clear and employees are expected to treat all members of the public equally. While overall results are positive, there are some real challenges in a few departments, especially in the Department of Community Justice. The County can do a better job of creating environments in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns and addressing issues related to the complaints process and fears of retaliation. At the time of our survey, the County was in the midst of efforts to address workforce equity issues and the complaint process – many employees shared their perspectives on these topics.

Why We Conducted the County Ethical Culture Survey

The mission of the Auditor's Office is to ensure that Multnomah County government is efficient, effective, equitable, transparent, and fully accountable to all who live in our county. One way we work toward this mission is by supporting an ethical culture. We conducted the survey to learn how County employees perceive the County's ethical culture. Our findings provide Board members, County leadership, and staff with information on our collective understanding of the County's ethical culture.

What We Recommend

- New protected class complaint process should include:
 - A detailed description of what a complainant can expect from an investigation;
 - Clear instructions about how to report; and
 - Communications about where other types of complaints can be directed.
- Ensure that managers receive the training needed to handle complaints and make staff feel comfortable raising ethical issues.
- Take steps to ensure retaliation will not be tolerated, such as:
 - Provide anti-retaliation materials to all new employees;
 - Thoroughly document and track claims of retaliation; and
 - Regularly remind employees about laws and policies banning retaliation.
- Examine the Code of Ethics for alignment with best practices for ethics in public service and make the Code stronger, particularly related to hiring and promotion practices.
- Work with the DCJ director to ensure proven change management practices and culture change practices are consistently used to improve the culture at DCJ.

Results of the Ethical Culture Survey

In November 2018, the Auditor's Office conducted our second survey of the County's ethical culture, two years after our first survey. We made a few changes to the survey in 2018, and while many questions were similar in both surveys, results cannot be directly compared.

Thank you participants

We received responses from 2,417 employees, or about 40% of the County workforce. This compares to responses from 2,454 employees in 2016. The highest response rates came from employees in the Library (57%) and the Department of County Assets (49%). Please see the appendices for a copy of the survey and survey results for each department by question.

We provided opportunities for employees to share their perceptions, which were wide-ranging

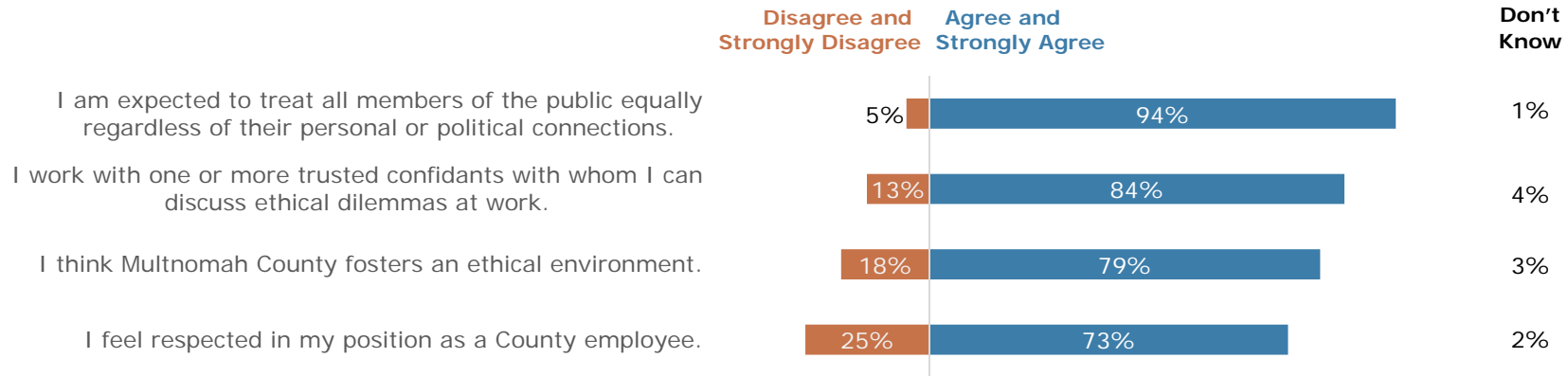
We organized the survey into three sections with several optional comment boxes throughout. About 30% of those who took the survey (716 people) chose to comment, an increase over the number of those who commented in 2016 (422 people). Some employees made more than one comment for a total of 1,240 comments, more than double the total comments received in the prior survey. Employees seemed more inclined to share negative perceptions than neutral or positive ones. We have included employee comments in sections of the report to illustrate individual employee perceptions on particular topics, but the open-ended comments are generally more negative than the answers to the multiple choice questions.

We conducted this survey at a time when the County was in the midst of efforts to improve specific areas of the County's ethical culture, including a focus on workforce equity and centralizing parts of the complaint process for employees. Many comments reflected on these efforts. Also of note, in 2018 there were leadership changes in the Department of Community Justice (DCJ) along with some issues that received media attention. A number of DCJ employees expressed their concerns in the comments.

We have incorporated selected comments throughout the report to highlight findings and provide insights into employee perceptions. We edited responses for clarity and to remove identifying references.

Our ethical culture is generally strong.

Nearly all employees agree that treating members of the public equally is an expectation—more employees selected **Strongly Agree** (70%) for this question than for any other. Large majorities of employees say they have colleagues they can trust, that the County fosters an ethical environment, and that they feel respected in their position as a County employee.



Source: Multnomah County Auditor's Ethical Culture Survey issued 2018. Some results may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Not all employees agree that the County fosters an ethical environment.

- Employees in DCJ were less likely to agree that the County fosters an ethical environment (55%), compared to 79% agreement overall.
- In contrast, employees in non-departmental positions had 98% agreement and those in the Department of County Management (DCM) agreed 91% of the time.

Three out of four employees agree that they feel respected in their position as a County employee.

- Employees in DCJ and the Sheriff's Office were less likely to agree that they feel respected (52% and 55%, respectively), compared to 73% agreement overall.

Selected employee comments are italicized below.

We are definitely going in the correct direction.

In the past we were really encouraged to have conversations about this and recently it seems to be more welcome. There were a few years that seemed very bleak but I feel it is getting better.

The opinions and expertise of line staff is not appreciated or respected.

I believe the County wants to do what is right, however, not sure of how the County leadership is going to educate and or promote these ideals.

I think our current culture is typical. We say the right things, but we don't always do the right thing. When our actions are questioned; the person who speaks up is sometime treated as the trouble maker.

I appreciate the strong ethical culture at the County and the Library District.

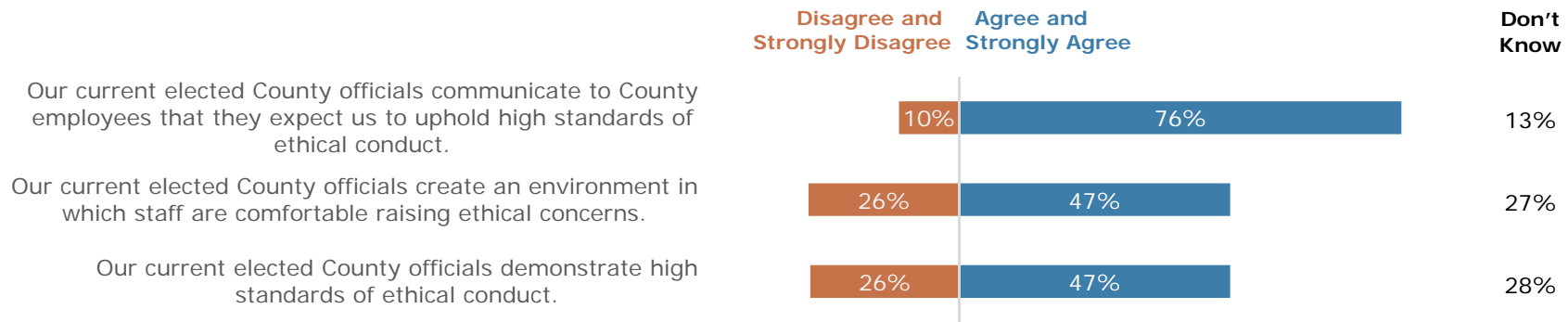
The County could make a point of publishing an ethics item at least once a month in the Wednesday Wire to promote the importance of how employees are good stewards of public resources and trust.

I appreciate the level of engagement and transparency within the county. It has made me feel quite welcome.

I feel grateful to work in a diverse work setting. I think that people are doing the best that they can. I think that Management has an extraordinarily tough job and need to be supported administratively in addressing ethical concerns of their peers and employees. I think the County has a longstanding culture that cannot just be changed by saying that we have a value or a set of values. The values ought to be supported with resources to implement, follow through, and honor in daily work.

County elected officials have opportunities to strengthen our ethical culture.

A majority (76%) of employees agreed that our County’s elected officials communicate their ethical expectations to employees. However, less than half (47%) agreed that elected officials create environments conducive to raising ethical concerns or demonstrate high standards of conduct. Survey takers gave high levels of *Don’t Know* responses (27% and 28%) on these two measures, indicating areas where employees are uncertain or have limited awareness of our elected official’s perspectives on ethical culture. Results suggest that elected officials could continue efforts to connect with employees and model ethical behavior. Results for this section are similar to results from our previous study.



Source: Multnomah County Auditor’s Ethical Culture Survey issued 2018. Some results may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Some employees were much more likely to agree that elected officials hold high standards of ethical conduct.

- Employees who work in non-departmental positions (many of whom work for elected officials) were most likely to agree (63% compared to 47% agreement overall.)
- Employees in DCJ and the Sheriff’s Office were less likely to agree (35% and 43% agreement) that our current elected County officials demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct.

County leadership could strengthen the tone at the top.

Our elected leaders can help the County strengthen our ethical culture by consistently demonstrating high standards of honesty, respect, transparency and trustworthiness—and infusing those values into our daily operations, how we work with each other, and how we serve the public.

Ethical behavior needs to start at the top. I don’t think our commissioners or some of our managers model ethical behavior.

Action seems to come when there is sufficient public exposure, but it is unclear that appropriate investigative action is taken when unethical behavior is reported.

I think the elected officials have good intentions and that we are in a period of change and hopefully improvement as it relates to workforce equity issues.

I have had no reason to interact with elected officials. There has been transparent effort at being inclusive of all individuals, which is valuable.

Our County officials need to work on their ability to work together with respect and collaboration.

Look at the interactions between two members of the board. It's a shameful example for the public and the county.

I believe our elected officials send out written communication using language that demonstrates and encourages high ethical conduct, however I do not see that backed up in action or have any support or "teeth" to ensure that is followed through or people are held accountable at the department or division level.

There is wide variation amongst elected officials - while most deserve high marks, not all do.

Some employees have limited awareness of our elected officials.

We also heard from people who said they don't have enough information to say whether our elected officials were ethical.

I am not familiar with the elected officials enough to say with any certainty either way.

As a new employee I have not had personal or informative (correspondence) with elected County officials.

I occasionally get system wide emails from the Chair as well as other officials. I review e-policies every year, but I really have no idea about our current elected County officials.

In this section, some employees expressed the sense that different political views are not tolerated.

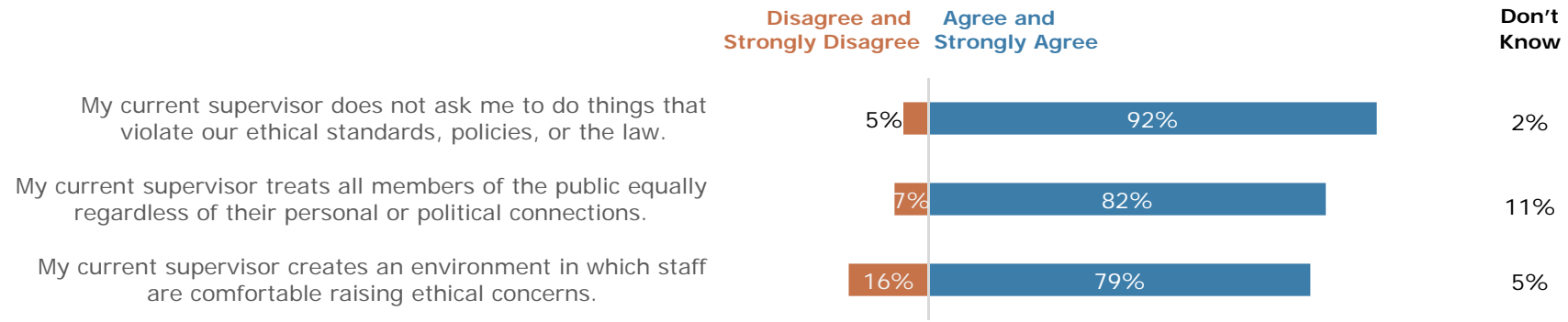
When Multnomah county senior leaders/commissioners remember inclusion includes all sides rather than one side or political view then some will not have to hide their faith, political views and feel more comfortable being a part of the very movement of inclusion the county preaches. The conversation has to go both ways. We should serve everyone in the county not just one side, one group or one political group.

The county has made it very clear that only a highly "progressive" worldview will be tolerated and discrimination is fostered as long as it is against anyone who is viewed as an outsider of the progressive "Keep Portland Weird" culture. Openly insulting conservative and/or religious leaders is not only permitted but applauded even in direct violation of county policy. This has been documented and demonstrated repeatedly.

I feel we are told what our ethic should be based on the political climate in the county. If my upbringing doesn't match what the county tells me, I am told I still have to 'think' the way the county tells me to. That isn't tolerance of differences.

Employees agree that their direct supervisors are ethical and many say supervisors create cultures where staff feel comfortable raising issues.

A majority of employees said their supervisors do not ask them to violate ethical standards (92%), and that supervisors treat all members of the public equally (82%). Although a large majority of employees said their supervisors create work environments in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns (79%), 21% of employees either disagreed with this statement or said *Don't Know*. Although not directly comparable, results for each question show a slight improvement over those from our 2016 study.



Source: Multnomah County Auditor's Ethical Culture Survey issued 2018. Some results may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Some employee groups were much more likely than others to agree that their supervisors create an environment in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns.

- Employees who work in non-departmental positions and the Library were more likely to agree with this statement (93% and 88%) compared to 79% overall.
- Employees in DCJ (64%), those in the DA's Office (66%), and in DCS (69%) were less likely to agree.

Selected employee comments

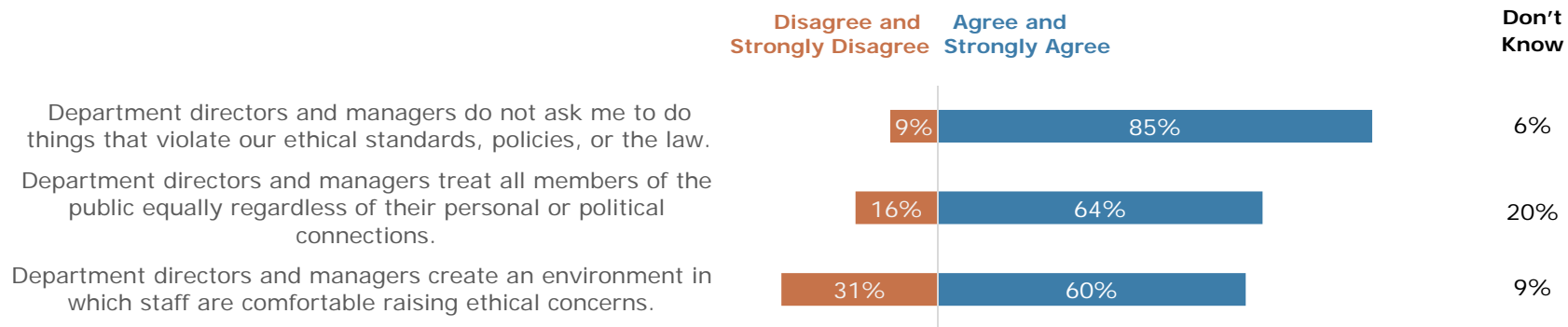
Issues of ethical concern have not been resolved. Discussions have started, currently waiting for results.

My immediate supervisor generates frequent and helpful discussions regarding ethics, more so than the County in general.

We treat the members of the public with professionalism. We need to look internally as to how employees treat each other.

Employees generally agree that their department directors are ethical, but more can be done to make employees comfortable raising ethical concerns.

A large majority of employees said department directors and managers do not ask them to violate ethical standards (85%). Although a small majority said that they treat all members of the public equally (64%), one-third either don't know or disagree with that statement. And, while a little more than half of employees said department directors and managers create work environments in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns, 31% of employees disagreed. These results indicate that department directors and managers need to receive training on creating comfortable environments for raising ethical concerns.



Source: Multnomah County Auditor's Ethical Culture Survey issued 2018. Some results may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Some employee groups were much more likely than others to agree that department directors and managers create an environment in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns.

- Employees who work in non-departmental positions, and DCA were more likely to agree with this statement (79% and 77%) compared to 60% overall.
- Employees in DCJ were least likely to agree (33%) that department directors and managers create environments comfortable for raising concerns.

Some employees expressed frustration about not holding managers accountable for their actions.

Managers and directors are not held accountable when it comes to ethical standards and conduct.

More contact between upper level management and front line staff might create more safe environments where employees feel comfortable.

There is no transparency in how managers/senior managers are held accountable when ethical violations have been reported.

Employees expressed concerns related to reporting and retaliation.

A majority of employees said they knew to whom they could report a supervisor-related ethical issue. However, just over one third of respondents (37%) agreed that action would be taken to correct reported unethical behavior or that they can report unethical behavior without fear of retaliation. The level of *Don't Know* responses for two reporting related questions ranged from 33% to 42%. The lack of agreement and *Don't Know* responses for these measures suggests that the County should take steps to improve our culture related to ensuring that action is taken on reports of unethical behavior, and addressing fears of retaliation.



Source: Multnomah County Auditor's Ethical Culture Survey issued 2018. Some results may not add to 100% due to rounding.

The majority of employees knew to whom they could report a supervisor-related ethical issue.

However, nearly one third of respondents disagreed with this statement or reported *Don't Know*, indicating that many employees are uncertain to whom they would report a supervisor-related ethical concern. These results indicate the County needs to clarify the reporting process so that employees have a clear understanding of how and where to report ethical violations.

The County needs to earn the trust of employees who report, and address fears of retaliation.

Nearly half of employees said they are unsure whether action would be taken to correct unethical behavior if reported, and another 21% disagreed that action would be taken. Results indicate a need to build trust in the reporting process, educate employees about expectations when reports are filed, and ensure that action will be taken to address unethical behavior. Although employees may not be aware of specific corrective actions, leaders should take opportunities to set reasonable expectations of how much information can be shared. The County also needs to acknowledge people's concerns about retaliation and take steps to ensure retaliation will not be tolerated.

Some employees shared their perceptions on issues related to reporting, including a lack of trust in handling reports.

I have reported behavior in the past to HR and upper management and it was disregarded.

I have not seen unethical behavior from coworkers but if I did I have very little confidence in the system.

I have spoken directly with management about bullying and hazing within the department and it was swept under the rug and told it doesn't exist.

Some employees fear or have experienced retaliation.

Retaliation is a serious problem where I work. Throughout the county it is stated that retaliation is not tolerated, BUT IT IS!! Particularly for employees of color, who experience daily discrimination, it takes a toll on all aspects of their wellbeing (career, personal, physical, emotional and work life) - often to the point where coming to work is a negative experience.

I have reported and have been harassed along with those who stood with me. The message was clear - DON'T TALK!

A number of employees expressed frustration with reporting concerns about managers.

When concerns are raised regarding supervisors/managers, concerns are poorly investigated by HR and never founded. Managers are only looking out for themselves and each other and ignore the workforce that actually serves the community.

I have directly reported unethical behaviors to my direct manager, senior manager and the Division Director and the manager's unethical behaviors did not stop, and the manager was not held accountable in any way. NO ONE CARES about line staff! I have never been treated more poorly.

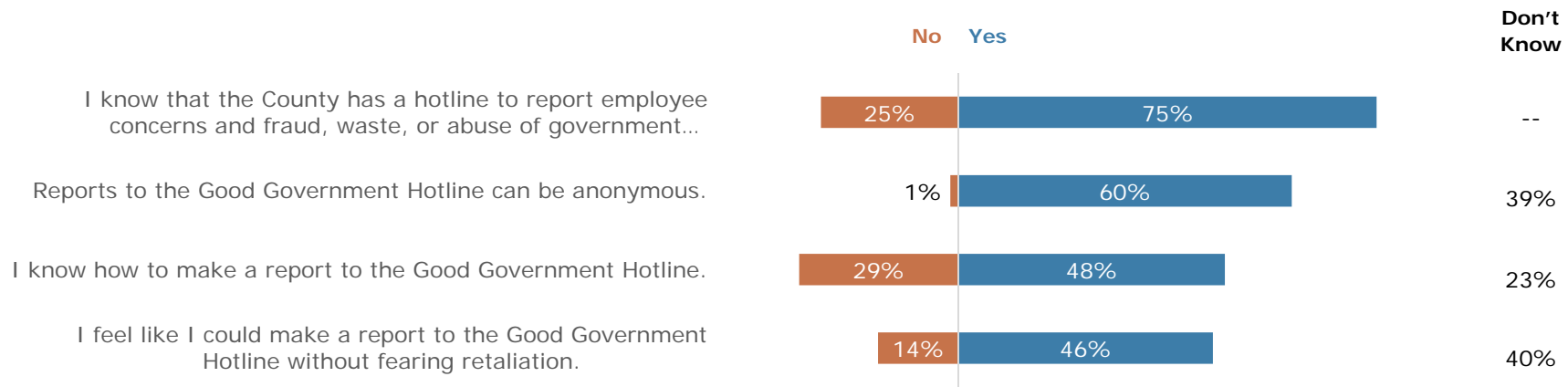
I witnessed a few unethical behaviors conducted by the managers and no actions were taken.

Awareness of the Good Government Hotline has increased.

The Auditor’s Office established the Good Government Hotline in 2007 as a way for employees and County residents to report fraud, abuse, and misuse of County resources. People can make anonymous reports to the Hotline online through links on the MultCo website, MultCo Commons, the Auditor’s web page, or by calling 1-888-289-6839. There is a feature that allows reporters to communicate with those who investigate Hotline reports, while retaining anonymity. More information on the Hotline and other resources can be found on the Auditor’s website: <https://multco.us/auditor>.

More employees now know about the Good Government Hotline than before, but there is still room for improvement.

Responses to questions about the Good Government Hotline show that a strong majority of employees know that the County has a Hotline and a majority know that reports can be anonymous, but more than one-third are not sure. Nearly half say they know how to make a report to the Hotline. Yet less than half and feel like they could report without fearing retaliation, and 40% say they are unsure.



To address a lack of awareness of the Good Government Hotline reported in 2016, the Auditor’s Office published Wednesday Wire articles, added a link to the Hotline on MultCo Commons, and presented to department workgroups about the Hotline, but more needs to be done to increase awareness. The Auditor’s Office plans to improve employee awareness on how to access and use the Good Government Hotline and will take the lead on complaints related to violations of ethics laws and conflicts of interest. The Auditor’s Office has started referring all personnel related complaints to the County Chief Operating Officer.

Employee comments show that some fear retaliation when reporting to the Hotline.

The good government hotline is a joke. To remain anonymous means nothing will happen regarding your complaint, to put your name on it would mean management would stop at nothing to see you terminated or to make your experience so awful you would want to leave.

Some employees perceived that Hotline reports were not acted on.

I and other employees have reported concerns of unethical behavior at our workplace to the hotline several times without any action being taken by the county. It is, therefore, difficult to take any of this seriously.

Nothing has been done even after reports to good government hotline and formal complaints. The behavior continues.

There is a lot of lip services around the good government hotline, but the culture is still not one of trust. Many employees in my division believe it is not confidential and have seen/experienced examples of negative attention or retaliation for those that have used it. These employees have been seen as "stirring the pot" or "complainers" or "jumping up the chain of command" rather than following policies or upholding their ethical duty.

The County is engaging in an effort to address workforce equity.

We did not ask questions about workforce equity, but many employees took the opportunity to share their opinions. We conducted this survey while the County was in the midst of efforts to improve issues of workforce equity through the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan. This effort involves work and reflection, which is inherently a messy process.

Some comments suggest concerns with workforce equity.

I think the elected officials have good intentions and that we are in a period of change and hopefully improvement as it relates to workforce equity issues. While this change is taking place employees who are part of protected classes still do not feel safe or trust that their complaints will be taken seriously.

I work in a department where an employee said a blatantly racist comment and there were no repercussions.

I think there are biases in our equity training. There is a strong push to identify and embrace communities of color (which is really positive) but during some training it was obvious that the emphasis for empathy was not intended to include gender expression biases or even all communities of color. The topic of equity shouldn't be reduced to only focus on one marginalized subset of the whole.

I feel that ethics and respecting diversity is an extremely strong value in my workplace, happily.

The racial injustices and bigotry go unchecked and unchallenged by anyone in the County yet staff are expected to work and serve clients in that environment and remain professional and positive every day.

If you are white, male, and straight you are subjected to an extremely disturbing, bigoted and pervasive culture that treats all white males as if they are racist, chauvinist, and homophobic. I've attended a county diversity class where I was taught that, because I'm a white male I cannot be diverse, inclusive, or anything but a racist, chauvinist bigot.

The County's current ethical culture is pitting co-workers against each other rather than bringing us together and respecting our differences. Innocent non-hate dialogue and conversation by one person is being redefined as hate-speech by another. And the County fosters this, which is not okay. Before long none of us will talk to each other in fear of being reprimanded.

The County's current policies and actions are making us more divisive and pitting co-workers against each other rather than bringing us together. The rhetoric that Multnomah County has fostered is that, as a white person, I no longer have merits, just white privilege.

Rampant, unaccountable racism in my division is shameful. Shame on the County for protecting racist staff who have life-changing power over a community largely made up of people of color.

The County needs to do a better job communicating to all employees why the workforce equity initiative is taking place. Initiative materials describe the effort as being about removing structural and policy barriers to equity. The County should take care that discussions and trainings about the initiative communicate a clear message. The County should also cultivate safe spaces so that people can learn from each other.

Employees at the County can have vastly different experiences with, and knowledge of, concepts like diversity, equity, institutionalized racism, and white privilege, among others. There seems to be a need to develop a common understanding of these terms. We are pleased to see that the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan includes “a shared language, glossary and education materials about the work.”

Responses to the survey’s ethical dilemmas suggest that the County can support employees through education and by clarifying and updating the Code of Ethics.

Employees know how to comply with the Code of Ethics on some issues.

The survey included three ethical dilemmas to explore how well employees knew the Code of Ethics. Most survey takers correctly answered only one of three questions.

Can you represent the County at an event, participate in a raffle, and comply with the Code?

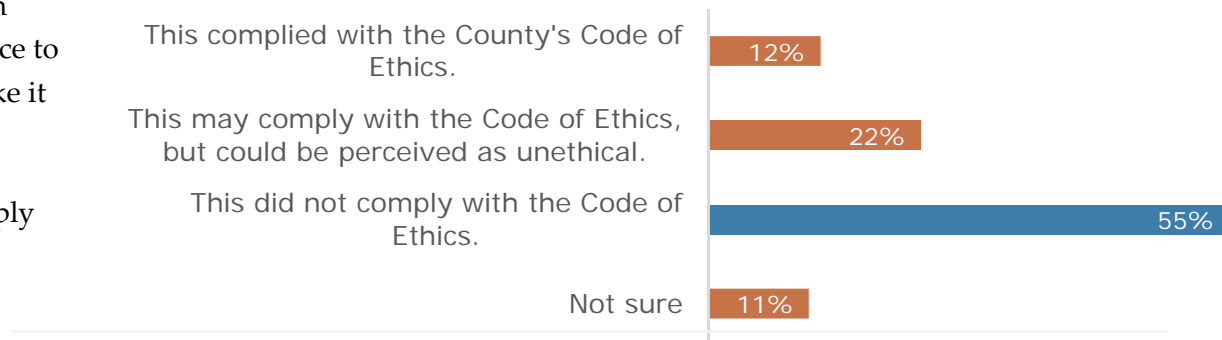
Survey statement: You represent the County at an event. You use your own money to buy a raffle ticket for a chance to win an iPad. You win the iPad and take it home.

Correct answer: This did not comply with the County’s Code of Ethics.

Why didn’t this comply?

This did not comply because employees may not use their position to obtain a financial gain that would not be available *but for* their position as a County employee. You were only able to participate in the raffle because of your position as a County employee representing the County at the event.

55% of employees answered this correctly.



Source: Multnomah County Auditor’s Ethical Culture Survey issued 2018

The Code of Ethics may not clearly address complicated ethical dilemmas.

Can you hire an extended family member?

Survey statement: You recently served on a County hiring panel and were pleased when the panel got to select the new hire - your niece! You did not disclose to anyone on the panel that you were related to the selected candidate.

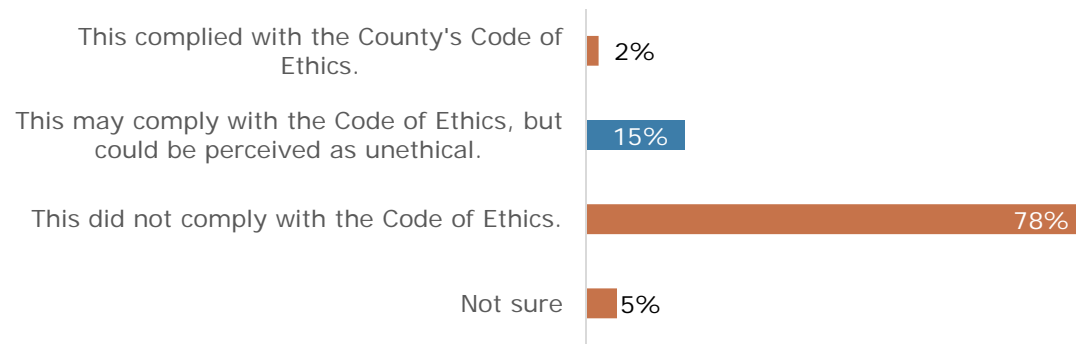
Correct answer: This may comply with the County’s Code of Ethics, but could be perceived as unethical.

Why this may comply:

Although the Code of Ethics imposes restrictions on employees from making hiring decisions related to certain family members (such as spouses and parents), it does not address hiring decisions made by an aunt or uncle. While *technically* this did not violate the Code of Ethics, it was unwise. Unwise actions can cause misunderstanding, lead to negative perceptions, harm your credibility, and/or damage the County’s reputation. In this scenario, your other direct reports, colleagues, and the public may perceive the situation as similar to nepotism, which is the exercise of preferential treatment based upon relationship rather than merit. The County prohibits nepotism.

Seventy-eight percent of employees answered that this question does not comply with the Code of Ethics, yet it does comply. The County should address this disconnect by strengthening the Code. The Code of Ethics does not discuss favoritism other than nepotism. It would be beneficial for the County to evaluate how it discusses nepotism in the Code and provide guidance on avoiding favoritism or its appearance. We received a number of comments throughout the survey expressing concern that favoritism has taken place in County hiring and promotion. Providing preferential treatment to someone based on a personal relationship—or the perception that someone has received preferential treatment—seems at odds with what one ought to do. The County has an opportunity to support good hiring and promotion practices by educating hiring managers on how to avoid favoritism or its appearance.

15% of employees answered this correctly, according to County policy.



Source: Multnomah County Auditor's Ethical Culture Survey issued 2018

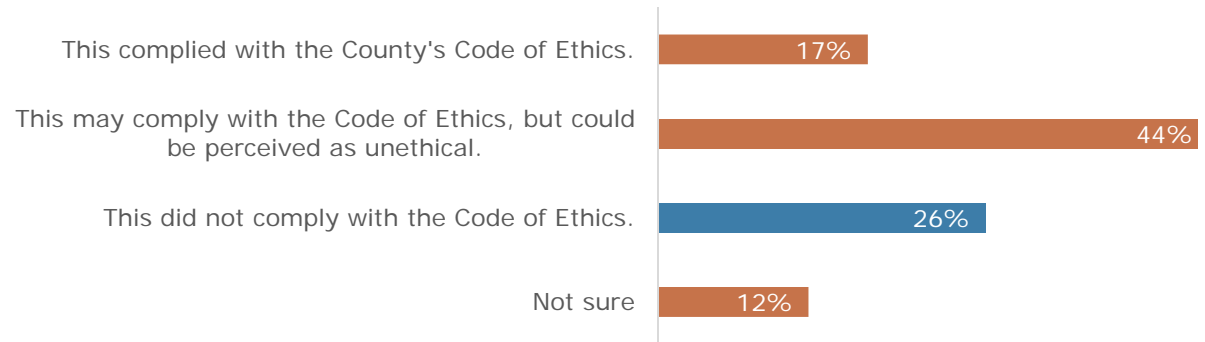
Can you receive gifts from County contractors?

Survey statement:

You used to work for a company called Workday, but are now a County employee. You regularly go to dinner at a fancy restaurant with your former co-workers from Workday. They always pay for your drinks and meals.

Correct answer: This did not comply with the code of ethics.

26% of employees answered this correctly.



Source: Multnomah County Auditor's Ethical Culture Survey issued 2018

Why didn't this comply?

Employees should know that the County has a contract with Workday, our new business process management software, which recently replaced SAP. This did not comply because gifts, including fancy dinners, from a company with an administrative interest in the County cannot exceed \$50 per year. Additionally, if your job includes any involvement administering Workday's contract with the County, you would need to disclose the ongoing relationship to your supervisor. While this example used Workday, these guidelines apply to gifts from any County contractor.

We recommend the County take the following steps.

Elected Officials

Continue to build connections with employees and help create environments in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns.

Chief Operating Officer

- New protected class complaint process should include:
 - A detailed description of what a complainant can expect from an investigation, including what information can and cannot be shared with them;
 - Clear instructions about how to report; and
 - Communications about where other types of complaints can be directed.
- Ensure that managers receive the training needed to:
 - Make staff feel comfortable raising ethical issues; and
 - Handle complaints.
- Take steps to ensure retaliation will not be tolerated, such as:
 - Provide anti-retaliation materials to all new employees;
 - Thoroughly document and track claims of retaliation; and
 - Regularly remind employees about laws and policies banning retaliation.
- Examine the Code of Ethics for alignment with best practices for ethics in public service and make the Code stronger, particularly related to hiring and promotion practices.
- Work with the DCJ director to ensure proven change management practices and culture change practices are consistently used to improve the culture at DCJ.

Due Date

All recommendations will be completed by June 30, 2020.

Appendix A: Methodology

To obtain information on County employee perceptions of the County's ethical culture, we developed a survey instrument based on well-established surveys from the Institute for Local Government and International City/County Management Association, among others. We also developed scenario questions based on the County's ethics eLearning module. We reviewed the ethical dilemmas with the County Attorney's office. We revised the survey based on feedback from the 2016 survey.

We issued the survey to all County employees on November 27, 2018 using Google Forms. We downloaded survey responses from Google Forms for analysis, and conducted the majority of analyses in Excel. To encourage participation, we made the survey anonymous and did not obtain respondent emails. We also publicized the survey in the Wednesday Wire and sent out a reminder email to all County employees. We closed the survey at the end of the day on December 14, 2018.

Where we compared the demographics of survey respondents to the County workforce, we used data from SAP reports for the day we issued the survey. Based on the annual review of SAP datasets by the County's external auditor, our office has determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

Appendix B: Results for Ethical Culture Survey Statements

Department of Community Justice has the lowest percent agreement with ethical statements.

Percent of survey respondents answering "Strongly Agree" or "Agree"

Ethical Culture Survey Questions	Decline to Answer	DCJ	MCSO	DCS	HD	DCHS	DA	LIB	DCM	DCA	ND	Overall
I am expected to treat all members of the public equally regardless of their personal or political connections.	89%	91%	97%	90%	94%	94%	98%	96%	95%	97%	96%	94%
My current supervisor does not ask me to do things that violate our ethical standards, policies, or the law.	89%	88%	93%	86%	91%	94%	97%	96%	93%	93%	98%	92%
Department directors and managers do not ask me to do things that violate our ethical standards, policies, or the law.	74%	73%	82%	82%	84%	89%	92%	92%	92%	90%	89%	85%
I work with one or more trusted confidants with whom I can discuss ethical dilemmas at work.	63%	83%	83%	79%	84%	86%	77%	87%	87%	85%	95%	84%
My current supervisor treats all members of the public equally regardless of their personal or political connections.	69%	71%	85%	76%	82%	86%	84%	88%	84%	79%	96%	82%
I think Multnomah County fosters an ethical environment.	61%	55%	71%	79%	79%	82%	85%	89%	91%	89%	98%	79%
Our current elected County officials communicate to County employees that they expect us to uphold high standards of ethical conduct.	64%	69%	75%	77%	72%	75%	90%	82%	84%	84%	88%	76%
My current supervisor creates an environment in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns.	65%	64%	74%	69%	80%	82%	66%	88%	84%	85%	93%	79%
I feel respected in my position as a County employee.	54%	52%	55%	68%	76%	76%	77%	83%	86%	79%	89%	73%
If my current supervisor asked me to do something that violated our ethical standards, policies, or the law, I know who I could report it to at the County.	56%	66%	80%	74%	66%	71%	69%	67%	81%	80%	77%	70%
Department directors and managers create an environment in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns.	43%	33%	57%	60%	59%	60%	66%	72%	73%	77%	79%	60%

Percent of survey respondents answering "Strongly Agree" or "Agree"

Ethical Culture Survey Questions, continued	Decline to Answer	DCJ	MCSO	DCS	HD	DCHS	DA	LIB	DCM	DCA	ND	Overall
Department directors and managers treat all members of the public equally regardless of their personal or political connections.*	47%	43%	64%	67%	62%	65%	75%	73%	73%	71%	74%	64%
Our current elected County officials create an environment in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns.*	32%	35%	42%	45%	44%	47%	54%	53%	54%	59%	61%	47%
Our current elected County officials demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct.*	31%	35%	43%	44%	45%	47%	56%	51%	53%	59%	63%	47%
Average	60%	61%	71%	71%	73%	75%	78%	80%	81%	80%	86%	

* These questions had a high percentage of respondents selecting "Don't know." The low rates of agreement may be due to staff being unfamiliar with these individuals.

The Sheriff’s Office and the District Attorney’s Office are less aware of the Good Government Hotline.

Percent of survey respondents answering "Yes"

Ethical Culture Survey Question	Decline to Answer	DCJ	MCSO	DCS	HD	DCHS	DA	LIB	DCM	DCA	ND	Overall
I know that the County has a hotline to report employee concerns and fraud, waste, or abuse of government resources (Good Government Hotline).	67%	75%	45%	81%	77%	87%	51%	71%	86%	90%	86%	75%
Reports to the Good Government Hotline can be anonymous.	51%	58%	40%	57%	64%	69%	38%	54%	73%	67%	75%	60%
I know where I can find assistance with ethical issues at the County.	39%	54%	56%	65%	55%	60%	49%	56%	70%	67%	70%	58%
I know how to make a report to the Good Government Hotline.	39%	51%	27%	50%	48%	65%	30%	37%	55%	59%	61%	48%
Average	49%	59%	42%	63%	61%	70%	42%	54%	71%	71%	73%	

Many employees have concerns about retaliation, particularly Department of Community Justice staff.

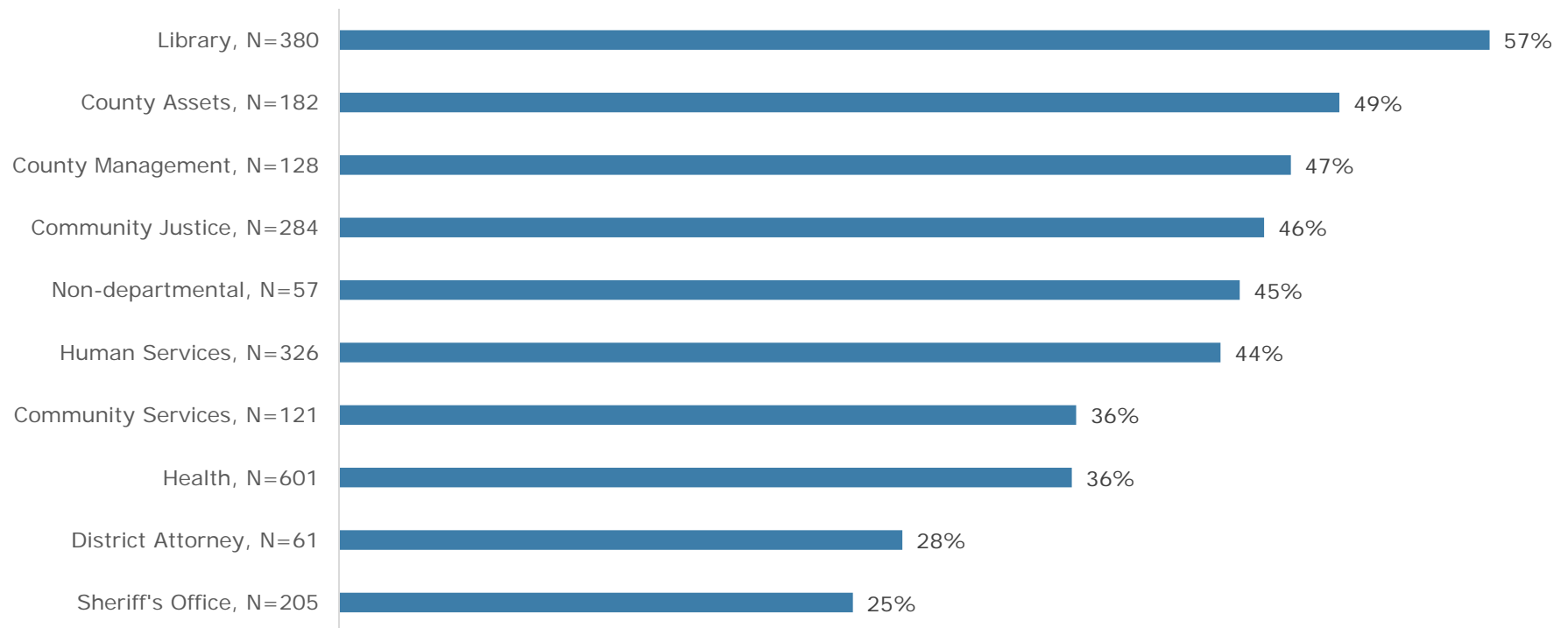
Percent of survey respondents answering "Yes"

Ethical Culture Survey Question	Decline to Answer	DCJ	MCSO	DCS	HD	DCHS	DA	LIB	DCM	DCA	ND	Overall
I feel like I could make a report to the Good Government Hotline without fearing retaliation.	17%	31%	31%	42%	48%	49%	33%	50%	63%	62%	68%	46%
Do you feel that if you were to report unethical behavior, action would be taken to correct the behavior?	18%	19%	38%	44%	36%	31%	39%	42%	45%	52%	61%	37%
Do you feel you can report unethical behavior without fear of retaliation?	11%	19%	35%	40%	37%	35%	34%	43%	47%	53%	54%	37%
	15%	23%	34%	42%	40%	38%	36%	45%	52%	56%	61%	

Survey Response Rate Varied by Department

Overall, 42% of County employees responded to the survey, 2,417 employees. There were 72 people who declined to report their department. “N” indicates the number from each Department who responded.

Ethical Culture Survey Response Rate



Appendix C: Survey Instrument

2018 Multnomah County Ethical Culture Survey

The Multnomah County Auditor's Office is conducting this survey to better understand our County's ethical culture. Strong ethical cultures prioritize employee rights, fair procedures, and equity in pay and promotion. These cultures also promote tolerance, compassion, loyalty, and honesty in how employees and the people we serve are treated.

This survey is similar to the one we sent out in 2016, but we've made some changes in response to employee comments to the previous survey.

We will use this information to create a report that will be available to all employees and we will present the findings to the Board of County Commissioners. This information will also help determine which County operations we need to audit, in order to support a strong ethical culture at the County. We've added a few questions at the end to address some issues related to risk.

The survey is anonymous. We are not collecting your email address. We ask only two demographic questions, both of which are optional. The results to this survey will be reported at a high level, using broad categories, to protect individuals. Survey data will be retained by the Auditor's Office.

The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete. It is okay to complete this survey on County time, during your work hours.

We hope you will take the time to participate because your perspective matters.

Please contact our office at 503.988.3320 with any questions or comments.

County Auditor: mult.auditor@multco.us

Good Government Hotline: 888.289.6839, <https://multco.us/services/good-government-hotline>

*** Required**

Skip to question 1.

County Culture Questions

2018 Multnomah County Ethical Culture Survey

1. Ethics is based on well-founded standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans ought to do, usually in terms of rights, obligations, benefits to society, fairness, or specific virtues. We will only report aggregated results. Your answers are anonymous. Please choose the response that most closely matches your experience. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
I think Multnomah County fosters an ethical environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am expected to treat all members of the public equally regardless of their personal or political connections.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I work with one or more trusted confidants with whom I can discuss ethical dilemmas at work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel respected in my position as a County employee.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Please choose the response that most closely matches your experience. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
My current supervisor creates an environment in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My current supervisor does not ask me to do things that violate our ethical standards, policies, or the law.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My current supervisor treats all members of the public equally regardless of their personal or political connections.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2018 Multnomah County Ethical Culture Survey

3. Please choose the response that most closely matches your experience. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Department directors and managers create an environment in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Department directors and managers do not ask me to do things that violate our ethical standards, policies, or the law.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Department directors and managers treat all members of the public equally regardless of their personal or political connections.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Please choose the response that most closely matches your experience. These questions are about our current elected officials. Please do not consider former elected officials or officials who will take office in 2019 when selecting your responses. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Our current elected County officials communicate to County employees that they expect us to uphold high standards of ethical conduct.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our current elected County officials demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our current elected County officials create an environment in which staff are comfortable raising ethical concerns.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. What comments do you have about this section?

6. Please choose the response that most closely matches your experience. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
If my current supervisor asked me to do something that violated our ethical standards, policies, or the law, I know who I could report it to at the County.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Do you feel that if you were to report unethical behavior, action would be taken to correct the behavior? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

8. Do you feel you can report unethical behavior without fear of retaliation? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

9. What comments do you have about this section?

Ethical Dilemma Scenarios

For the next few questions, we will ask about some ethical dilemmas you might face as a County employee. For each scenario, please choose the response that you think is the correct answer.

After the survey is closed, we will share the correct answers with all County employees.

10. **You recently served on a County hiring panel and were pleased when the panel selected the new hire - your niece! You did not disclose to anyone on the panel that you were related to the selected candidate. ***

Mark only one oval.

- This complied with the County's Code of Ethics.
- This may comply with the Code of Ethics, but could be perceived as unethical.
- This did not comply with the Code of Ethics.
- Not sure

11. **You used to work for a company called Workday, but are now a County employee. You regularly go to dinner at a fancy restaurant with your former co-workers from Workday. They always pay for your drinks and meals. ***

Mark only one oval.

- This complied with the County's Code of Ethics.
- This may comply with the Code of Ethics, but could be perceived as unethical.
- This did not comply with the Code of Ethics.
- Not sure

12. **You represent the County at an event. You use your own money to buy a raffle ticket for a chance to win an iPad. You win the iPad and take it home. ***

Mark only one oval.

- This complied with the County's Code of Ethics.
- This may comply with the Code of Ethics, but could be perceived as unethical.
- This did not comply with the Code of Ethics.
- Not sure

13. **I know where I can find assistance with ethical issues at the County. ***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

14. I know that the County has a hotline to report employee concerns and fraud, waste, or abuse of government resources (Good Government Hotline). *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No

15. I know how to make a report to the Good Government Hotline. *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No
 Not sure

16. Reports to the Good Government Hotline can be anonymous. *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No
 Not sure

17. I feel like I could make a report to the Good Government Hotline without fearing retaliation. *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No
 Not sure

Safety questions

We mentioned in the introduction to this survey that we would use your responses to help determine which County operations we need to audit, in order to support a strong ethical culture at the County.

To help make these decisions, we've added some questions here related to the risk area of workplace safety, specifically physical safety and health.

18. Please choose the response that most closely matches your experience. These questions are about workplace safety, specifically efforts to ensure physical safety and health. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Workplace safety is a top priority at Multnomah County.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workplace safety is a top priority in my department.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My department encourages the reporting of safety incidents and accidents as a means to identify and correct hazards in the workplace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My current supervisor takes concerns about safety seriously.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Demographic Questions

19. Are you a supervisor? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Decline to answer

20. Please indicate your department. *

Mark only one oval.

- DA - District Attorney
- DCA - Department of County Assets
- DCHS - Department of County Human Services
- DCJ - Department of Community Justice
- DCM - Department of County Management
- DCS - Department of Community Services
- HD - Health
- LIB - Library
- MCSO - Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
- ND - Non-departmental
- Decline to answer

21. What additional comments do you have about the County's ethical culture? Please include your contact information if you would like us to follow up with you.

22. If you have concerns or comments about other aspects of County culture or operations, please share them here. Please include your contact information if you would like us to follow up with you.

Audit Staff

Fran Davison, Principal Management Auditor

Nicole Dewees, Principal Management Auditor

Response Letters



Deborah Kafoury Multnomah County Chair

501 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 600
Portland, Oregon 97214
Phone: (503) 988-3308
Email: mult.chair@multco.us

March 13, 2019

Auditor Jennifer McGuirk
501 SE Hawthorne Ave, Suite 600
Portland, OR 97214

Dear Auditor McGuirk,

Thank you for your office's work on the Multnomah County Ethical Culture Survey and analysis. An ethical culture is a key feature of a just and equitable organization, integral to serving the people of Multnomah County and maintaining public trust.

I am pleased to see that the overall county ethical culture is strong and that there is widespread understanding of our expectations for employees. Additionally, it is encouraging to see that a large majority of our employees are working alongside colleagues whom they trust to share and discuss ethical challenges or dilemmas.

At the same time, the results affirm and highlight concerns and opportunities for improvement that have been raised by employees over the last 18 months.

In 2017, employees from multiple departments came to the Board of Commissioners to publicly detail their experiences with discrimination in the workplace and how that has impacted individual employees, our overall culture and services.

The Countywide Employee Survey affirmed these experiences, highlighting the critical role of managers. The Human Resources Trends report uplifted data that showed clear disproportionality in promotions, terminations and probationary experiences. It was clear that we had significant work to do to bridge the gap between our intent and our impact.

Employee voice and experience have been central to the development of the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan - which has provided a pathway and metrics that the County and departments will use to track progress on key recruitment, retention, promotion and culture efforts. In Fall 2018, the Jemcott Rollins Group -- a consultant team we employed to examine how our policies and structures could be improved -- recommended large organizational shifts that we are also committed to implementing and recently added to our workforce equity plan. The findings and recommendations contained in the Ethical Culture survey reinforce the need to move those recommendations forward thoughtfully and with urgency.

I remain committed to transforming policy and practice at Multnomah County and strengthening the County's culture to better reflect our values around inclusion, respect, ethical behavior and equitable treatment. The recommendations included in the survey integrate with, and add value to, our current efforts.

Independent Complaints Unit

The County is pursuing the creation of an independent Complaints Unit. This unit will help the County better manage complaints with consistency and accountability. As part of this work, the county will also be ensuring there are strong communications channels with complainants, clear pathways for employees who want to report complaints, and support services to help individuals and work units manage conflict resolution and restoration.

Leadership Development and Accountability

Multnomah County's more than 800 managers have a critical role to play in supporting employees and creating conditions that support an ethical culture. The County is also pursuing a reorganization of Talent Development and Talent Acquisitions resources to help build a stronger organizational model for training and building leadership skills. As part of this work, there is a considerable focus on managers and ensuring managers receive the training, coaching and evaluation that will strengthen workforce equity and meet the recommendations in this analysis.

Department of Community Justice

Employees in the Department of Community Justice were less likely to agree with many of the statements highlighted in the audit. This pattern, too, mirrors what the Countywide Employee Survey found and what DCJ employees have publicly shared.

This department has experienced extraordinary change within the last 12 months. There have been three department directors, several protected class complaints and major policy decisions that have impacted morale and conflict in the workplace.

Erika Preuitt, Interim Director of the Department of Community Justice, has provided a response to results in the survey. I am committed to supporting Interim Director Preuitt and the employees of DCJ to improve culture, practices and policies. DCJ has a vision of community safety through positive change. Behavior change and system change are core elements of the department's model for working with the community in a fair and just way. Those are the same elements we must support internally. I would like to highlight some of the efforts that Interim Director Preuitt is moving forward:

- Forming workgroups to deepen staff voice and input into department changes and priorities.
- Working with Talent Development to plan specific training for Community Justice Managers (CJM).
- Hiring an equity and inclusion manager and working with consultants to provide managers the tools needed to support equity and inclusion efforts.
- Utilizing the DCJ Diversity and Equity Steering Committee to guide the department in implementing their Workforce Equity Strategic Plan.

Code of Ethics

Thank you for highlighting an opportunity to examine Multnomah County's Code of Ethics and consider changes that might align with our workforce equity initiatives and supporting policies. I look forward to engaging with you and your office in next steps.

We are in the midst of the most significant investment in workforce equity in Multnomah County's history. This transformation will not happen overnight but with consistent, collaborative and focused effort, we will make lasting change. As Chairwoman of the Board, I remain committed to modeling ethical behavior and continuing efforts to engage with employees in ways that support a strong ethical culture in our organization.

Sincerely,



Deborah Kafoury

Department of Community Justice

Director's Office



501 SE Hawthorne Boulevard, Suite 250
Portland, Oregon 97214
(503) 988-3701 phone (503) 988-3990 fax

TO: Multnomah County Auditor Jennifer McGuirk
FROM: Erika Preuitt, Interim Director
DATE: March 14, 2019
SUBJECT: Response to County Ethical Culture Survey Results

I have read and reviewed the Ethical Culture Survey Report conducted by the Multnomah County's Auditor Office. The report shows DCJ staff scoring lower than the County average in several areas.

The report also recommends the following as it relates to DCJ:

- Work with the DCJ director to ensure proven change management practices and culture change practices are consistently used to improve the culture at DCJ.

DCJ has experienced high levels of change within the last year. This has been driven by successive leadership changes on multiple levels of the organization. Most notably, there have been three department directors within that time and the current director is serving in an Interim role. Additional challenges include receiving a high level of equity complaints and negative media attention regarding allegations of racism in our department. There was also a major policy decision that impacted the Adult Services Division which limited what staff could have in their work spaces. Facility issues have also compounded low morale due to the prolonged start of renovations at our East County campus. This delay has impacted conditions at several buildings.

We acknowledge that DCJ has had a history of challenges that have existed prior to the leadership changes mentioned above. We also understand we have a range of issues to address and this has led us to examine the importance of the role that each of us play in contributing to a culture of safety, trust, and belonging. For the past eight months, our current leadership team has been working to find meaningful ways to be available to staff to express their ideas and concerns.

Some of the steps we have taken are:

- Scheduling regular Director Dialogue meetings across the department with all units at least 3 times a year. The goal of these meetings is to provide updates as well as reserve time for staff to express concerns or ask questions.
- Increasing our level of communication about department wide initiatives, policies, programs, and budget development through both a monthly depart wide newsletter as well as increased email communication from the Interim Director.
- Scheduling our leadership team who work in our administration building to work at field offices on a regular basis in an effort to be accessible to staff.
- Reminding staff of our anonymous comment line they can use to provide feedback, observations, or suggestions. We have historically utilized this during our budget process but repurposed it to provide an additional avenue for communication.
- Prioritized funding in FY 2019 to create an Equity and Inclusion Manager. We are currently in the interview phase of the recruitment.
- Using our Diversity and Equity Steering Committee to guide the department in implementing our Workforce Equity Strategic Plan.
- Meeting regularly with members of the County's Employees of Color (EOC) resource group. Our Interim Director is working with EOC to begin planning several town hall meetings for our staff to share their personal views of how race and equity issues manifest in the DCJ workplace.
- Convening a department wide workgroup of diverse staff to develop a department wide policy to operationalize how we promote a respectful and safe workplace. This group has met a number of times and will soon be proposing department wide values for a safe and respectful workplace which will include workplace guidelines with the goal of implementing these guidelines in the next 3 months.
- Rolling out a training plan for managers that will be implemented over the next year.

The efforts outlined above are in progress and more work remains. We take the concerns outlined in this survey very seriously. We are committed to continue our focus on ways we can keep learning about the experiences of our staff, being transparent on our decision making, being accessible to our staff, giving them voice and strengthening in areas needing improvement. We appreciate the focus that the Auditor has placed on this issue and will prioritize implementation of the recommendations articulated in this report.



Multnomah County Sheriff's Office
501 SE HAWTHORNE BLVD., Suite 350 • Portland, OR 97214

MICHAEL REESE
SHERIFF

Exemplary service for a safe, livable community

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503 988-4500 TTY
www.mcsso.us

March 1, 2019

Multnomah County Auditor's Office
Attn: The Honorable Jennifer McGuirk
501 SE Hawthorne, #601
Portland, OR 97214

Dear Auditor McGuirk,

The Multnomah County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) is in receipt of the 2018 County Ethical Culture Survey Results.

As Sheriff, I believe an ethical culture furthers local governance that is efficient, effective, equitable, transparent and accountable to the public. Public safety professionals are charged with providing services that adhere to this County-wide mission. As a result, I appreciate and respect the efforts of the Auditor's Office, to learn how MCSO members in particular perceive the County's ethical culture.

First and foremost, I accept and intend to implement the Survey Results recommendations; it was disconcerting to read that some survey participants and Department members including those within the Sheriff's Office, had negative perceptions on some survey questions. It is critical all employees trust their chain of command to ethically lead, to comprehend how ethics applies to their respective positions, and to feel comfortable reporting any concerns within the workplace.

As public employees, MCSO members are required to comply with ethics law, including state law, Human Resources Personnel Rules, and MCSO Policy and Procedure, and be mindful of even the appearance of impropriety. Because ethics law is detailed and nuanced, conduct that could appear dishonest to a reasonable observer will undermine public trust, even if the conduct is not prohibited.

Ethics is a foundational pillar of my efforts to continue to support MCSO's success. I have shared these results with my Executive Team and will release the results to my entire staff, in an effort to communicate the importance of ethics in our daily performance. As next steps, MCSO will be reviewing its ethics policy through its public, policy development process and will provide training to members upon enactment. Additionally, MCSO would appreciate being a part of any County-wide work group that may convene to study best practices for local government ethics programming and/or adjustments to our Code of Ethics.

Thank you again for this effort and for your professionalism; this feedback is valued and will inform our operations moving forward.

Respectfully,

Michael Reese
Michael Reese
Sheriff