

MULTNOMAH COUNTY

FY 2024 Budget Work Session Follow Up

Complaints Investigation Unit (CIU)

May 4, 2023



Question 1

Commissioner Meieran (District 1): Please provide more information/data on how many of the initial complaints resulted in an alternative path under the [Resolution and Development Coordinator \(10040B\)](#).

Response: This pilot program has been operating for 8 months. In order to gather more data, CIU requests to provide the information in a briefing in fall 2023. To note: This position's metrics are not high volume, which will require CIU to continue to review the impact over time as greater statistically significant information is established.

Over the last 8 months, substantial and swift groundwork had to be laid in order for this position to have a meaningful impact on people experiencing harassment or discrimination related to protected class. Alternative paths had to be established through relationship building, resource gathering, and role clarification across departments. We integrated the perspectives of HR, Labor Relations, Equity Managers, Organizational Learning, the Office of Diversity and Equity, the unions, the core competencies identified in the WESP, and CIU feedback results to carve out a road map from the various needs of the stakeholders.

This process resulted in a variety of restorative options of addressing conflict pre-investigation, post-investigation, or in lieu of investigation that we are now developing as offerings to harmed employees and their teams.

Fortunately, after best practices were established, HR partners are now reaching out to CIU in a preventative manner to attempt Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in lieu of an investigation/prior to an issue evolving into a complaint. There are also times when a case is not fit for investigation and CIU

refers it back to the department HR. However, with this new position, those cases are being handled collaboratively and more restoratively. Fortunately, the interdepartmental relationship building we undertook along the way has led to a more graceful, natural, and easily adaptable decision making process to determine next best steps for each individual case.

The tracking and data collection process is regularly being improved and reviewed for capturing those cases which had not been executed or tracked prior to this role. Identifying a system for labeling and incorporating these types of situations/cases into our collective case manager has been a piece of the efforts.

As of now, one aspect of the position includes engaging with the parties and management during the course of an investigation, post-investigation and in lieu of an investigation. Post-Investigation actions in at least 12 cases have included facilitating an apology between the parties, following up with HR to ensure corrective actions are carried out, and serving as a liaison to connect managers with resources to support healing and skill development in the workgroup. And at least 7 cases have been referred for ADR pathways. Awareness is consistently increasing and an interest in alternative and preventative measures are on the rise. Our hope is that by providing alternative pathways we can drastically increase the speed at which affected parties' needs are met while reducing the overall traumatization that is often accompanied by an investigation.

Question 2

Commissioner Rosebaum (District 3): How does this position in the Complaints Investigations Unit ([Program Offer 10040B](#)) provide coaching and best practices to managers and HR partners differ from the function/expertise amongst all of the county's HR professionals?

This position focuses on conflict and complaint resolution in identity based conflicts. Based on feedback found in the conflict resolution gap analysis, HR members were eager for more training and support for identity based issues and conflict resolution skills. One of the initial actions undertaken by this position was to develop and conduct a three-part series of trainings/workshops with each departments' HR director, business partners, equity managers, and

other related positions. As of May 24, 2023, 5 total trainings will have been held, comprising parts one and two of the three-part series. The third series will be held one on one with each individual department over the course of summer and fall. Each series has been attended by members from each department. Those training sessions included scenarios and best practices for supporting a manager and a team that is struggling through an investigation or the aftermath of a complaint process. Much of the guidance provided by this position is new to HR team members and has a layer of complexity that this position specializes in: conflict resolution, employment law, civil rights, equity and restorative justice. These topics will continue to be included in trainings, informational videos and workshops going forward.

This role is highly relational and that includes being available for questions and consultations from HR and managers. As a liaison between the world of CIU and the day to day work of the County, this position is able to provide context and clarity to the managers and HR teams impacted by a pending investigation or follow up process. Additionally, at the conclusion of each case, this role meets with HR and other partners to discuss next steps and post-investigation actions.

What are the evaluation measures the department set to assess the performance of this position during the pilot? Beyond the limited information provided in this program offer, can you share the outcomes of the department's assessment using these measures in the first eight months of this pilot?

This position was hired near the time of a strategic planning session conducted by the full CIU team. As such, many of the goals in the strategic plan overlapped with the hopes for this position. This position meets regularly with the CIU coordinator to review the progress towards the goals in the strategic plan along with goals identified for this specific role, separate from the greater plan.

Evaluation measures

Training and development

EVALUATION MEASURE: Facilitate workshop/training sessions

OUTCOMES:

1. 5 workshops facilitated by May 24, 2023
2. 50 + participants from HR, OL, equity managers, ODE, Union leadership, from each department
3. Needs and gaps identified
4. Expanded menu of options identified and presented
5. Afterwards, departments independently initiate restorative work sessions

Process improvement

EVALUATION MEASURE: Alternative Dispute Resolution and Post Investigation methods developed

OUTCOMES:

1. Divert complaints from investigations when appropriate
2. Post Investigation process development in progress
3. ADR process development in progress
4. Corrective action follow up process established

Communications and outreach

EVALUATION MEASURE: Following an investigation, support provided for successful team reintegration via follow up emails delivered for all involved parties

OUTCOME: Template documents in review

EVALUATION MEASURE: Reduce barriers to submitting complaints

OUTCOMES:

1. Video project on CIU process for new hire orientation in progress
2. One click link to CIU from any county page in progress

EVALUATION MEASURE: Unified approach for guidance from HR to managers on how to continue to manage during an investigation

OUTCOME:

1. Notes from workshop sessions synthesized
2. Draft FAQ document in progress
3. Draft how-to video in progress

Trauma informed approach

EVALUATION MEASURE: Reduce time spent in investigations and reduce traumatic impact

OUTCOME:

- 1. Relationships established and meetings set with Jane Williams to improve work process for the team*
- 2. Post intake meetings established with investigators to increase processing time and to create options for participants*
- 3. Personal outreach after investigation to offer support and resources to the impacted parties*

Interdepartmental relationship building

EVALUATION MEASURE: Strategies employed with ODE, OL, Equity Managers, and Union

OUTCOMES:

- 1. Union set to onboard union leadership on CIU process and conflict resolution via CIU /OL collaborative training*
- 2. ODE is partnering with CIU post investigation on equity based strategies to improve underlying work unit conditions via policy and management analysis*
- 3. OL is collaborating with CIU on workshop/trainings and involved in post investigation follow-ups*
- 4. Equity managers are involved in post investigation meetings and repair process*
- 5. Increased frequency of communication with CIU team Countywide*