

Local Government Human Resource Functions 2000

The *Local Government Human Resource Functions* surveys were mailed in spring and summer 2000 to the Human Resources/Personnel Directors in municipalities with populations 10,000 and over. Of the 2,885 municipalities and counties that received surveys, 1,312 responded (45.5%).

For more information on the ICMA's *Local Government Human Resource Functions* survey, please contact [Survey Research](#).



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Following is the survey text with the aggregate results shown in bold next to each answer. Each answer represents the percentage reporting for that question, except where noted.

1. Which of the following forms of human resources administration most closely resembles that used by your local government?
 - 47.8** Human resources department/director with no separate commission or board
 - 12.3** No one official body is responsible for human resources administration; human resources functions are **decentralized** among individual line departments
 - 6.8** Human resources department/director with an independent commission or board acting as an advisory body
 - 16.4** Human resources department/director with an independent commission or board performing specific functions (e.g., appeals, approval of rules) but without general advisory authority
 - 3.0** Independent civil service commission, human resources board, or similar body (without a separate human resources department/director)
 - 13.8** Other
2. How many full-time employees work in the central human resources department? **7** employees
3. Do you have a human resources director? **63.1** Yes **36.9** No
 - A. If "no," who performs the duties of the human resources director
 - 28.9** Manager/CAO **23.9** Department heads (decentralized system)
 - 27.5** Assistant manager/CAO **45.8** Other
4. Who appoints the human resources director?
 - 60.8** Appointed manager/CAO
 - 12.3** Appointed manager/CAO with the approval of the elected governing body
 - 7.8** Elected mayor/county executive with advice and consent of elected governing body
 - 8.8** Elected mayor/county executive
 - 2.7** Elected governing body
 - 1.7** Civil service commission/human resources board
 - 6.0** Other
5. What was your local government's total human resources department budget for the fiscal year 1999? (Include HR staff salaries if they are in the budget.) **\$941,290 (Average)**
6. Which of the following is included in your local government's human resources budget?
 - 58.7** Employee awards **53.6** Consulting services
 - 66.9** Recruitment programs **88.6** Human resources department staff salaries
 - 7.0** Relocation services **4.0** Severance packages
 - 66.0** Professional development **23.5** Other
 - 24.3** Retirement program

7. Approximately what percentage of the human resources department's budget for fiscal year 1999 was paid to outside consultants for performance of human resources administration services (e.g., compensation studies, classification systems, assessment centers)? **9.8 (Average)**

8. Please indicate by checking the appropriate box who has the **primary** responsibility for carrying out each function listed below.

	Central personnel department	Civil service commission/ board	Individual line departments	Outside consultant	N/A
a. Establishes qualification and/or examination specifications	53.4	12.9	27.1	2.2	4.4
b. Develops job descriptions	67.2	4.3	21.4	5.1	2.0
c. Recruits applicants	78.3	3.6	15.5	0.2	2.4
d. Determines eligibility of applicants and/or makes referrals for hiring	63.6	5.2	29.7	.3	1.3
e. Conducts background investigations of applicants and/or employees	53.9	1.6	38.8	2.8	2.9
f. Hires for positions	37.2	2.5	57.8	0.2	2.4
g. Determines/negotiates starting salary/compensation packages	57.4	3.9	31.4	0.7	6.6
h. Designs benefit plans	80.0	3.5	2.9	3.4	10.1
i. Develops position classification plans	73.6	6.2	4.5	8.8	6.9
j. Plans, conducts, and/or coordinates training programs	62.3	0.7	29.2	2.4	5.4
k. Plans, conducts, and/or coordinates safety programs	51.9	0.8	37.4	1.9	7.9
l. Designs human resources evaluation systems	74.1	2.0	5.6	3.9	14.4
m. Administers human resources evaluation systems	69.4	1.1	20.8	0.4	8.3
n. Monitors human resources evaluation systems	74.3	1.9	7.0	0.7	16.1
o. Develops standards for promotion	49.2	7.3	31.5	0.9	11.0
p. Engages in collective bargaining with unions and/or employee organizations	57.5	2.6	4.5	4.4	31.1
q. Operates a grievance and/or appeals board system	66.5	12.1	7.1	1.3	13.0
r. Adjudicates appeals and grievances	50.7	20.6	9.8	4.6	14.3
s. Modifies or overrules disciplinary actions	44.0	23.9	10.6	1.6	19.9
t. Reinstates employees	46.0	23.2	12.6	0.6	17.6
u. Prepares employee policy and procedure manual	88.8	1.9	3.5	1.3	4.5
v. Distributes employee policy and procedure manual	88.7	0.9	6.4	0.2	3.8

9. Does your local government use computers in its human resources system? **8.0** No **92.0** Yes

A. If "yes," which of the following functions are they used?

86.5 Payroll	46.2 Personnel policy and procedure manual in an electronic format
9.3 Job scheduling/assignments	43.2 Time and attendance
70.4 Employee records	27.7 Benefits (e.g., Direct link to health insurance carrier for enrollment)
26.5 Resume banks/applicant tracking	10.2 Computer-based training modules
32.8 Performance evaluation records	12.3 Professional development records
23.2 Skill testing	4.8 Other

10. How many FTEs were budgeted to work in the central human resources department for fiscal year 1999? **15.3 (Average)**

11. What are the major human resources issues facing your local government today?

Which of the following sources and methods are used in recruiting applicants?

62.8	Public announcement of exam	34.3	Job vacancy telephone recordings
98.3	Advertisements in local newspapers/professional or technical publications	13.7	Participation in interjurisdictional recruitment
49.4	Requests to minority, female, and other special interest organizations	25.9	Internship/co-op in local government
36.1	Requests to unions, trade, and professional associations	78.7	Internal recruitment
44.8	Requests to state or private employment/referral agencies	53.5	Referrals from current employees
67.4	On-line job vacancy information (e.g., Internet)	32.5	Job announcements on local cable channels
		7.0	Kiosks in public places
		17.2	Placement agencies/search firms
		52.2	College/university career placement center
		6.3	Other

12. For which of the following characteristics does your local government test applicants in filling positions?

70.1	Job knowledge	15.0	Job-related English language proficiency
22.1	Intelligence	44.9	Writing ability
39.8	Aptitude	56.3	Computer skills
79.7	Performance skill(s) (e.g., typing test)	30.1	Cognitive thinking skills
69.6	Job-related physical agility/strength	9.7	Other
45.3	General health		

13. Which of the following criteria and screening methods are applied when making selections?

97.4	Training and experience
62.1	Specific local government experience
89.8	Level of education
33.3	Assessment center
7.4	Height/weight requirements
61.8	Minimum scores on administered tests
86.0	Background investigation
33.2	Polygraph
52.7	Psychiatric/psychological screening
34.1	Finger printing
87.5	Reference checks
6.5	Other

14. Does your government use the rule of "n" certification process (by which the top number "n" of eligible candidates are certified) to determine the final list of candidates to be considered for a particular position? **33.3** Yes **66.7** No

15. Which of the following compensation features does your local government offer to some or all of its employees?

Compensation features	Some employees	All employees
a. Shift differential pay	93.0	7.0
b. On-call pay	92.5	7.5
c. Separation pay	60.7	39.3
d. Longevity pay	47.1	52.9
e. Hazardous duty pay	91.6	8.4
f. Hiring above minimum pay level	71.5	28.5
g. Compensatory time for overtime	70.0	30.0
h. Temporary assignment differential	71.7	28.3
i. Ad hoc cost-of-living raises	36.0	64.0
j. Cost-of-living raises tied to a standard index	31.0	69.0
k. Supervisory differential pay	25.6	74.4
l. Benefits	24.1	75.9
m. Deferred compensation	39.4	60.6
n. Other	39.5	60.5

16. Which of the following fringe benefits does your local government offer to some or all of its employees (excluding benefits offered solely to police, fire, education, or court employees)? Please indicate whether the benefit cost is in the HR budget or another department budget. (Check all applicable, indicating whether the benefit is offered to either **some** or **all** employees.)

Fringe benefits	Some employees	All employees	In HR budget	In other department budget
a. Pay for unused sick leave	39.5	60.5	3.6	96.4
b. Conversion of sick leave to vacation leave	36.4	63.6	4.4	95.6
c. Other sick leave incentive plans	36.8	63.2	3.4	96.6
d. Paid maternity leave (distinct from other leave)	28.2	71.8	2.9	97.1
e. Paid paternity leave (distinct from other leave)	26.4	73.6	2.3	97.7
f. Administrative leave	53.2	46.8	1.3	98.8
g. Funeral leave	14.6	85.4	1.1	98.9
h. Educational leave	34.3	65.7	4.4	95.6
i. Tuition assistance	30.6	69.4	24.0	76.0
j. Relocation expenses	91.8	8.2	11.7	88.3
k. Credit union availability	6.2	93.8	6.7	93.3
l. Deferred compensation (e.g., 457 or 401 plan)	13.8	86.2	8.5	91.5
m. Difference between pay for jury duty and regular pay	10.1	89.9	21.1	97.9
n. Dental plan	20.7	79.3	14.5	85.5
o. Health care plan	18.5	81.5	13.2	86.8
p. Vision plan	24.1	75.9	15.6	84.4
q. Periodic medical exams not covered by health care plan	66.9	33.1	32.3	67.7
r. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	9.8	90.2	49.9	50.1
s. Short-term disability plan	30.4	69.6	10.7	89.3
t. Long-term disability plan	28.9	71.1	14.6	85.4
u. "Cafeteria" selection of fringe benefits	21.4	78.6	12.3	87.7
v. Flexible spending account for medical/child care expenses	14.8	85.2	24.2	75.8
w. On-site day care	41.7	58.3	12.5	87.5
x. Subsidized daycare	64.7	35.3	33.3	66.7
y. Flexible work hours	80.1	19.9	1.9	98.1
z. Job sharing	86.9	13.1	1.4	98.6
aa. Telecommuting	79.2	20.8	3.3	96.7
bb. Life insurance	20.4	79.6	14.0	86.0
cc. Commuting subsidies	41.5	58.5	16.7	83.3
dd. Other	32.2	67.8	22.9	77.1
ee. Other	25.0	75.0	14.3	85.7

17. Does your local government have a formal performance appraisal system? **19.2** No **80.8** Yes

A. If "yes," please indicate which of the following techniques are used as part of the system.

- 44.3** Forced-choice forms
- 22.7** Performance in critical events
- 33.4** Interviews
- 21.1** Special management appraisals
- 38.0** Appraisal by objectives
- 26.8** Self-appraisal
- 56.2** Written performance standards consistent with duties and responsibilities covered in employees' job descriptions
- 26.1** Interim appraisal of job performance
- 4.7** Peer review
- 14.6** Review of supervisor by staff (upward appraisal)
- 3.5** Other

18. Does your local government include both supervisors and employees in the development of performance standards?
68.3 Yes **31.7** No

19. Does your local government formally evaluate the effectiveness of its appraisal system(s)? **38.8** Yes **61.2** No
20. Are pay increases tied to performance appraisals? **38.9** No **61.1** Yes
 A. If "yes," is your system described as a
67.5 Merit system **26.9** Pay-for-performance system **5.7** Other
 B. If "no," does your local government automatically provide a salary increase (other than cost-of-living) on an annual basis? **65.4** Yes **34.6** No
 a. If "yes," do all employees receive the same percentage of increase? **63.3** Yes **36.7** No
21. Was the average percentage of increase in salary that your local government employees received in the most recently completed fiscal year?
 a. Average schedule or range adjustment **3.4** %
 b. Average general or cost-of-living increase **2.8** %
 c. Average merit or pay-for-performance increase **3.3** %
 d. Total increase **4.7** %
22. Does your local government offer one-time bonuses/cash awards to employees for superior performance?
21.6 Yes **78.4** No
24. Does your local government offer one-time bonuses/cash awards to employees for serving on in-house committees/task forces?
2.2 Yes **97.8** No
25. Has your local government introduced gainsharing in any department(s)? **97.1** No **2.9** Yes
 A. If "yes," What performance criteria are used to determine incentive payments?
86.5 Savings **29.7** Achievement goals
32.4 Productivity improvement **10.8** Other
26. Has your local government introduced any other group incentive plan in any department? **93.5** No **6.5** Yes
 A. If "yes," What performance criteria are used to determine incentive payments?
26.8 Savings **35.4** Achievement goals
30.5 Productivity improvement **48.8** Other
27. Does your local government offer any of the following nonmonetary performance incentives?
11.8 Lunch with the manager/CAO
87.7 Certificates of appreciation/employee awards
64.6 Recognition in a newsletter
15.6 Other
28. Which of the following discipline and grievance procedures are used by your local government?
96.9 Formal disciplinary procedures
83.3 Possibility of appeals on disciplinary actions
75.9 Possibility of appeals on termination
29. Does your local government

	Yes	No
a. Limit the partisan political activities of employees?	58.1	41.9
b. Regulate the hiring of current employees' relatives?	71.5	28.5
c. Formally prohibit sexual harassment?	99.0	1.0
d. Have a formal AIDS policy?	18.0	82.0
e. Have a policy prohibiting employees from smoking in the workplace?	88.5	11.5
f. Conduct employee attitude surveys?	24.1	75.9
g. Have an internet use policy?	69.3	30.7
h. Have a suggestion system?	42.0	58.0
i. Have an employee ombudsman?	7.7	92.3
j. Have a labor-management committee?	34.9	65.1

30. Do you have a workplace diversity training program? **71.9** No **28.1** Yes
 A. If "yes," is participation required for all employees? **65.7** Yes **34.3** No
31. Do you have a workplace ethics training program? **82.5** No **17.5** Yes
 A. If "yes," when is training conducted?
 18.1 Only upon hiring **20.6** Only periodically
 38.7 Upon hiring and periodically **22.5** Occasionally or on a "when needed" basis.
32. Do you have an in-house training department? **21.7** Yes **78.3** No