

## CONTINUITY REPORT

### SUMMARY

The 2023-24 Mendocino County Civil Grand Jury (Grand Jury) has reviewed the recommendations and responses to the investigations made by the 2022-23 Mendocino County Civil Grand Jury. The complete text of the 2022-23 reports and the responses can be accessed at the website for the County of Mendocino at <https://www.mendocinocounty.gov/government/grand-jury>. This Continuity Report addresses the responses received from the responsible entities in those reports. Although respondents did not adopt all recommendations, their responses do comply with the requirements of the California Penal Code (PC).

### BACKGROUND

The civil grand jury system in California exists to promote effective and efficient local government. The Grand Jury is empaneled by the Mendocino County Superior Court and is composed of volunteers who reside within the County. Grand jury investigations result in published reports for the residents of Mendocino County. The reports contain facts and findings that lead to recommendations for improvement. Continuity is established from one grand jury to the next by review of the mandatory or invited responses to determine if they meet the requirements of the PC.

The Grand Jury investigations are instigated by a citizen's complaint or by identifying an issue that needs to be resolved within Mendocino County government entities. Based on these investigations the grand jury issues written reports which are published with "Findings" and "Recommendations." Each finding and recommendation must be responded to by the entity which was the subject of the investigation.

The grand jury holds the respondents accountable for meeting the requirements of the PC pertaining to response turnaround time and content. Pursuant to PC §§ 916, 933 and 933.05, a response must contain specific language and an explanation.

Respondent must adhere to timelines outlined in the PC:

- "Required" responses from an elected governing body of an agency or organization are due within 90 days after receiving the report.
- "Required" responses from elected individuals are due within 60 days after receiving the report.
- "Requested" responses are an invitation to respond within 60 days after receiving the report and are not mandatory.

Respondents must adhere to specific responses outlined in the PC.

For Findings they must either state:

- "Agree with the Finding" (nothing further needed).
- "Disagree [partially/wholly]" and state which specific portion of the Finding is disputed and an explanation of why it is disputed.

For Recommendations they must either state:

- "Has been implemented" and includes a summary of the implemented action.
- "Will be implemented in the future" and provide a timeframe for implementation.
- "Requires further analysis" and provides an explanation of the scope and parameters of the analysis or study, and includes a timeframe less than six months.
- "Will not be implemented because the recommendation is [not warranted/ unreasonable]", and must explain why the recommendation will not be implemented.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Using the PC § 933.05, the Mendocino County Civil Grand Jury evaluated the responses from the reports titled “Accountability at the County - 25 Years of Transient HR Leadership and a Hobbled HR Department,” and “Creative Approach to Improve Quality of Care for Family and Children Services.”

A response is noted as “Did not meet requirements” or “Meets requirements” in the attached summary chart (Appendix A) based on whether it meets the above PC requirements.

## **DISCUSSION**

Pursuant to PC § 933.05, required responses to all recommendations were asked of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors for the “Accountability at the County” report. Responses were received and are in compliance with the PC.

Pursuant to PC § 933.05, requested responses to all recommendations were asked of the Mendocino County Department of Social Services Director for the “Creative Approach to Improve Quality of Care for Family and Children Services” report. As of the writing of this report, no responses have been received.

A list of all report Recommendations, responses received, and whether each response is in accordance with PC § 933.05 follows in Appendix A.

## **FINDINGS**

F1: All responses met CA Penal Code § 933.05 requirements.

**APPENDIX A**

**2022-23 Grand Jury Response Summary Chart**

***Accountability at the County -  
25 years of Transient HR Leadership and a Hobbled HR Department***

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONDENT	RESPONSE	PENAL CODE § 933.05
<p>R1. Explore ways to encourage longer tenure for the HR Director role, such as including a bonus clause in the contract for a time commitment, or other incentives to stay. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Will not be implemented</b> Not warranted. The County is operating under a different model of HR leadership with HR Director duties performed by Deputy CEO and an Assistant HR Director responsible for HR operations.</p> <p><b>CEO</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R2. Prioritize hiring an HR Director, and target hiring by the end of 2023. Candidates must have HR specific education and qualifications, and either HR Director or significant HR Department experience (preferably for a county or municipality). Job posting should be live by September 30, 2023. Use all resources including recruitment agencies to get qualified candidates. (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, F10, F11, F12, F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18, F19, F20, F21, F22, F23, F24, F25)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Will not be implemented</b> Not warranted. The County is operating under a different model of HR leadership with HR Director duties performed by Deputy CEO and an Assistant HR Director responsible for HR operations</p> <p><b>CEO</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONDENT	RESPONSE	PENAL CODE § 933.05
<p>R3. Reinforce that assessments are mandatory for all employees, all levels, even step 5. Assessments should be audited and tracked by HR across the organization to ensure all are completed. This should be completed by EOY 2023. (F9, F10)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Requires further analysis</b> Determine if the current Munis system is capable of tracking assessments and audits by 10/31/23.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R4. Direct the department heads (for department level) and HR (at County level) to perform oversight/audit of performance assessments to ensure consistent, equitable, and standardized assessments across workgroups, and to assess and develop managers' performance assessment skills. This should be conducted annually beginning EOY 2023. (F8, F11, F12)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Implement in future</b> Depends upon R3 completion, by 11/30/23.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R5. Implement 180-degree assessments and employee assessments of their supervisors within 12 months of the new HR Director's hire date. (F12)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Implement in future</b> Determined new HR model of operations 6/1/23, implement 180-degree assessments by 5/1/24.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R6. Write procedural guidelines describing the updated Performance Management policy, including the recommended changes to the assessment process, as well as guidelines on implementing formal goal-setting and ongoing coaching check-ins during the year. Complete within 12 months of hiring an HR Director. (F7 F8, F11, F12)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Implement in future</b> Due to new HR model of operations 6/1/23, implement updated Performance Management policy and procedural guidelines by 4/1/24.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONDENT	RESPONSE	PENAL CODE § 933.05
R7. Update the performance assessment form before EOY 2023 to include open text boxes under appropriate ratings to require supporting details, relevant qualitative feedback, and examples that justify the rating for all employees. (F7)	BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)	<b>BOS - Implement in future</b> By 12/15/23.  <b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.	Met Requirement
R8. Update the performance assessment form before EOY 2023 to include additional sections where managers can list the goals and expectations of the past year that the employee is being assessed against, a summary and assessment of their completed work, the short and long-term objectives, and steps for improvement when necessary. (F7, F11, F12)	BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)	<b>BOS - Implement in future</b> By 12/15/23.  <b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.	Met Requirement
R9. Develop follow-up training on effective performance management for all employees (manager and frontline). This training should take the basics learned in the current Vector Solutions training and connect them to each employee's particular workplace and the County's specific PM process. Training development should begin by EOY 2023 and should be implemented in 2024. (F11)	BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)	<b>BOS - Implement in future</b> Begin training development by 12/1/23.  <b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.	Met Requirement

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONDENT	RESPONSE	PENAL CODE § 933.05
<p>R10. Develop a formal process for managers to implement and track ongoing coaching sessions with their direct reports within six months of the HR Director’s hire date. (F11, F12)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Implement in future</b> Determined new HR model of operations 6/1/23, implement coaching sessions tracking by 12/1/23.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R11. Look into the feasibility of creating an Ombuds program or similar by March 2024. Responsibilities of the Ombuds would initially include training of all management staff on the process of appropriate handling of reported issues, underlining program principles of impartiality, confidentiality, independence, and informality to build trust that those raising concerns are legally protected. (F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Implement in future</b> Look into Ombuds program feasibility by 11/1/23.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R12. Authorize formal Ombuds training/certification (such as International Ombuds Association) for Ombuds at minimum, immediately following the creation of the Ombuds program. Ombuds may then train any other staff responsible for accepting or working on employee reports. (F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Requires further analysis</b> Dependent upon determination of R11.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONDENT	RESPONSE	PENAL CODE § 933.05
<p>R13. Communicate Ombuds program to all County employees underlining program principles of impartiality, confidentiality, independence, and informality to build trust that anyone raising concerns is legally protected. Complete within three months of program creation. (F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Requires further analysis</b> Dependent upon determination of R11</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R14. Direct the Ombuds to track and trend reported issues and report to leadership every six months to identify issues that may be becoming widespread. (F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Requires further analysis</b> Dependent upon determination of R11.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R15. Direct the Ombuds to document results of investigations of reported issues, as well as any action taken to address the issue. Ombuds and their leadership should regularly review and ensure that corrective actions taken are appropriate in scale and effectively remedy the issue. (F13, F14, F15, F16, F17, F18)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Requires further analysis</b> Dependent upon determination of R11.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R16. Communicate in 2023, and annually thereafter, with all employees to improve the awareness and understanding of the current discrimination and harassment policy and reporting options. (F15)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Implement in future</b> Implement communication by 10/1/23.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONDENT	RESPONSE	PENAL CODE § 933.05
<p>R17. Set timeline expectations and track the hiring timeline with a standardized report from year to year, and report on them at department level and to the HR Director. Key metrics should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time elapsed between when job was requested by department and approved, and when job was posted for hire</li> <li>• Time elapsed between when listing is posted and when list of approved applicants is given to hiring manager</li> <li>• Time elapsed between when the hiring manager receives a list of eligible applicants and when job offer is extended. (F19, F20, F21, F22)</li> </ul>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Has been implemented</b> Annual reporting has been implemented with the exception of when the job offer is extended due to current system capabilities.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R18. Provide training for department hiring managers on effective and timely hiring and interviewing to reduce the time required to interview qualified candidates. (F21, F22)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Implement in future</b> Provide training by 3/1/24.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R19. Follow-up with hiring managers if interviews have not been completed within the expected timeline of receiving the list of qualified candidates. If hiring managers fail to conduct interviews in a timely way, HR should escalate to department heads. (F21, F22)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Has been implemented</b> Standard process is to reach out to the department employee resources liaisons.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R20. Collect data on why applicants decline job offers. This data should be reported to the HR Director every six months. If there is a trend in reasons for declining, this must be reported to the BOS and to the CEO. (F21,</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Requires further analysis</b> Assess ability to collect data by 12/31/23.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>



RECOMMENDATION	RESPONDENT	RESPONSE	PENAL CODE § 933.05
<p>F22, F25)</p> <p>R21. Assign a relocation support person for new employees within six months of publication of this report. Similar to a “concierge” type concept, they will help new employees adapt to, get connected with, and settled into our County. (F23, F24)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Will not be implemented</b> Not reasonable. Professional assistance is available through realtors, Chamber of Commerce, online sources such as Visit Mendocino and Visit Ukiah.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R22. Reestablish the collapsed MCELT Recruitment and Retention team to review the prior team notes and progress, add their own recommendations, and combine those with the GJ’s recommendations to determine how best to enact the recommendations they select. Reform the team by October of 2023. (F19, F20, F21, F22, F23, F24, F25)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Will not be implemented</b> Not warranted. Retention is incorporated in the MCELT Engagement team. For recruitment, an HR-led cross-departmental team is more appropriate.</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R23 Identify positions that are particularly difficult to find applicants for due to widespread state and national shortages (such as Social Services), and research ways to support local training and certification at both high school and college level, as well as with the Mendocino County Education’s Institute of Career Education (F19, F20, F23)</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Requires further analysis</b> Research for local training and certification by 12/15/23</p> <p><b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.</p>	<p>Met Requirement</p>
<p>R24. Track vital staffing statistics such as job vacancy rates and turnover rates in the County and include those</p>	<p>BOS (Required) CEO (Requested) HR Managers (Requested)</p>	<p><b>BOS - Has been implemented</b> Scheduled reporting to be included in CEO</p>	<p>Met Recommendation</p>

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONDENT	RESPONSE	PENAL CODE § 933.05
statistics in the public CEO report. (F19, F20, F21, F22, F23)		reports  <b>CEO and HR Managers</b> none received.	