

Quality and Productivity Commission
34th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Leading with Excellence”

2021 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: ENHANCING COUNTYWIDE EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: **MARCH 2020**

(Must have been fully implemented for a minimum of at least one year - on or before July 1, 2020)

CHECK HERE IF THIS PROJECT IS BEING SUBMITTED FOR THE COVID-19 IMPACT AWARD ONLY. (Projects must be implemented on or before December 31, 2020. **Note:** Projects implemented less than one year ago will not be eligible for any other PQA awards. In addition, once a project is submitted, you cannot submit the same project for awards consideration in subsequent years).

PROJECT STATUS: Ongoing One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 Following the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on our workforce, the
 2 Department of Human Resources (DHR) created the Countywide Enhanced Wellness
 3 Program (CEWP). The objectives of the CEWP were informed by results from a June
 4 2020 survey which revealed that employees across all departments were largely
 5 unaware of the County’s existing wellness resources and had expressed an interest in
 6 more virtual offerings. DHR was keenly aware of COVID’s impact on individuals, both in
 7 the workplace and at home, and was concerned about the growing need for mental
 8 health services. DHR responded to the urgent need to inform employees about the
 9 mental health/wellness and occupational resources already available to them, and
 10 began to develop additional programming to address wellness from a broader and more
 11 holistic perspective; accordingly, the newly convened Countywide Wellness Steering
 12 Committee (CSWC) expanded the definition of wellness to include six distinct
 13 dimensions: physical, emotional, social, occupational, financial, and intellectual. With a
 14 renewed focus on digital programming and a new communications approach, the
 15 CEWP has expanded awareness and access to wellness programming Countywide.

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE (COUNTY AND CANDIDATES)	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Department of Human Resources 500 W. Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012		TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 738-2008
PROGRAM MANAGER’S NAME Maggie Martinez MMartinez@hr.lacounty.gov		TELEPHONE NUMBER
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME) Leslie Foxvog “SIGNATURE ON FILE”		TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 974-2515; (213) 074-1528 EMAIL L.Foxvog@hr.lacounty.gov ; mgonzalez@hr.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE Lisa Garrett – “SIGNATURE ON FILE”		TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 974-2406

ELECTRONIC, WET, OR SCANNED SIGNATURES ARE ACCEPTABLE

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THE CHALLENGE

The COVID-19 pandemic implemented new stay-at-home orders and physical distancing requirements that prohibited the provision of in-person employee wellness services, leaving employees and their families without access to vital support even as their own stressors increased. A June 2020 survey revealed that employees across all departments were largely unaware of the County’s existing wellness resources and had expressed an interest in more virtual offerings. DHR responded to the urgent need to inform employees about the mental health/wellness and occupational resources already available to them, and to develop additional programming to address wellness from a broader and more holistic perspective, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

THE SOLUTION

In order to better meet the needs of employees Countywide, DHR convened an internal group of subject matter experts to evaluate existing programming, and to expand the scope of wellness services available to employees and their families. In addition to revisiting existing programming, the goal of the CEWP was to fundamentally change how services were delivered and to create new communication tools to increase awareness about wellness and available wellness resources. Recognizing that “being well” is multi-faceted by definition, the CEWP includes six (6) wellness domains (physical, emotional, financial, occupational, social, and intellectual), each with educational resources and programs now in place.

Physical Wellness Programming

As the COVID-19 crisis grew into a pandemic, the California Department of Managed Health Care issued an emergency regulation establishing COVID-19 testing within 48 hours to be medically necessary for public-facing essential workers. Though not required to do so by the regulation, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) and DHR were committed to ensuring that the County’s essential employees would have convenient access to free COVID-19 testing. DHR established a no-cost contract with Fulgent Diagnostics, LLC to operate COVID-19 testing centers and partnered with Public Library and DPSS to provide sites within all five supervisorial districts. Over 600 tests have been administered to date.

Beginning in June of 2021, DHR and DPH partnered to provide free pop-up vaccination clinics in collaboration with County Departments. Driven by the desire to provide easy access to employees and their families, and to ensure vaccines were available in hard-hit communities, DHR and DPH partnered with national pharmacy chains (i.e., Albertsons, Walgreens, and Rite-Aid) to offer vaccinations at County facilities. So far, over 1,000 employees and community members have received at least one vaccination.

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Emotional/Social Wellness Programming

The County’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) transitioned from offering in-person counseling visits to telephonic appointments at the beginning of the pandemic, and provided virtual grief support sessions with County departments as needed. A specialized Military and Veterans’ Employee Assistance Program (MVEAP) was established in November 2020 to meet the unique needs of active reserve and Veteran County employees. In collaboration with Cigna, DHR implemented the Cigna Life Assistance Program (LAP), which provides 24/7 confidential and anonymous access to licensed counselors for emergency crisis services and counseling services for County employees and their families.

DHR partnered with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the DMH-UCLA Public Partnership for Wellbeing to develop and promote a series of trainings and tools to assist our workforce and their families through all phases of the COVID response and recovery process. Resources included establishing a new Employee Wellbeing Line catering to the unique needs of first responders and health care workers; free access to the Headspace meditation/stress reduction application; and the creation of a one-stop website for County employees to easily access mental health resources and trainings. In addition, a series of interactive workshops, town halls and trainings were developed specifically for the Department Heads, Chief Deputies, and the County workforce with over 13,500 views for all events combined.

Occupational/Intellectual Wellness Programming

The abrupt shift to working remotely and the implementation of emergency telework created new stressors and demands for employees and supervisors Countywide. The need for programming to support change management, remote communication and supervision, employee engagement, as well as occupational wellness in a remote setting were critical. DHR curated curricula to meet this need through Udemy for Business, an online library of over 3,000 on-demand training courses. From March 2020 through March 2021, more than 24,000 employees engaged in more than one (1) million hours of Udemy learning. DHR expanded knowledge of invaluable trainings to support remote work for both line staff and supervisors.

Financial Wellness Programming

As of October 2020, DHR offered 11 specialized webinars to support the financial wellbeing of employees Countywide. Webinar topics ranged from buying a home, debt reduction, and budget strategies. These webinars have had over 4000 views since implementation.

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Enhanced Communication & Support

As part of a consistent and systematic approach to educating and supporting staff and management Countywide, DHR launched a new COVID-19 Inbox and implemented the Employee COVID Hotline at the start of the pandemic. These services were, staffed by trained HR personnel to quickly respond to employees including questions about new leave provisions, quarantine guidelines, access to testing, concerns about reporting to work and vaccinations. To date, the COVID-19 inbox has addressed over 700 inquiries and the Employee COVID Hotline has responded to over 2,000 calls from 34 County departments.

DHR convened weekly COVID-Emergency Response meetings for Departmental HR Managers (DHRMs) and Administrative Deputies. These meetings, which continue today, were designed to provide education on a variety of timely topics associated with the pandemic. Each meeting includes a cutting-edge topic around new guidance, response of recovery issues, or health officer orders and is capped with “Take 5” - an employee wellness segment hosted by a psychologist from DHR’s Psychological Services Unit.

The DHR COVID-19 DHRM Liaison Team was formed to support access to key information for DHRMS. Each liaison is assigned to a group of Departments to serve as a conduit to resources in the Office of Emergency Management, DPH, and to subject matter experts in DHR on issues such as hiring, performance management, and safety in the workplace.

DHR created the **Did You Know!? (DYK)** Newsletter, a monthly email communication that is sent to all County employees, to enhance knowledge of wellness resources offered by DHR and other County departments. Topics have included emotional wellness around the holidays, COVID-19-specific support resources, tools for enhancing your County career, financial wellness techniques, and more.

BENEFITS, OUTCOMES & SUCCESSES

The implementation of various strategies to provide support, training, guidance, and resources, has positively impacted the lives of employees and their families. The implementation of these proactive and preventative measures can be tied to reductions in absenteeism and presenteeism, increases in productivity, supportive change management, and increased engagement, enhancing the well-being of the County workforce. Later phases in the evaluation of this work will focus on quantifying the cost savings.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY’S STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal III. Realize Tomorrow’s Government Today

The enhanced employee wellness program addresses Goal III of the County’s Strategic Plan (Realize Tomorrow’s Government Today) by being an innovative, flexible, effective, and transparent partner focused on the mental health and wellbeing of our employees. Mental health and the focus on mental wellbeing is at the forefront of government’s of the future and DHR has enhanced the County’s ability to enhance its workforces wellbeing by:

- Supporting employee wellness and development enables the County workforce to perform at its best, which enhances the level of services they provide to the public. These efforts are closely aligned with the Countywide Strategic Plan, Goal III.1. In order to remain a competitive employer and to attract, engage, and retain a talented workforce, the County must demonstrate its commitment to the well-being of its employees. The multi-faceted approach of the CEWP strives to bring that commitment to life. **(Continually Pursue Development of Our Workforce - Strategy III.1).**
- Providing digital content in support of employee mental health and wellbeing. **(Embracing Digital Government for the Benefit of our Internal Customers and Communities - Strategy III.2).**
- Leveraging technology to bring mental health town halls to all County employees virtually right to their homes. **(Leverage Technology to Increase Visibility of and Access to Services - Strategy III.2.2).**
- Enhanced communication and support meant that DHR was able to utilize and implement technology in order to further the goal of mental wellness in order to ensure an efficient workforce. **(Prioritize and Implement Technology Initiatives That Enhance Service Delivery and Increase Efficiency - Strategy III.2.3).**
- Ensuring the mental wellness of our workforce allows the County to pursue operational effectiveness even during a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic. **(Pursue Operational Effectiveness, Fiscal Responsibility, and Accountability - Strategy III.3).**

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12-point font

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County or to other entities.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County or by other entities.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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FOR COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS ONLY

(For single department submissions, do not include this page)

DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 6 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 7 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____