

Quality and Productivity Commission
33rd Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Empowering Innovative Solutions”

2019 APPLICATION

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

NAME OF PROJECT: JUST CULTURE: DEVELOPING A FAIR AND KIND WORKPLACE

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: JUNE 2017

(Must have been fully implemented for a minimum of at least one year - on or before July 1, 2018)

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 Since 2017, the LA County Health Agency – comprised of the Departments of Health
 2 Services, Mental Health, and Public Health – has worked with Labor partners, (SEIU,
 3 SEIU-CIR, AFSCME, UAPD, and Teamsters) through the Labor Management
 4 Transformation Council to create a “Just Culture.” The aim is to improve the safety and
 5 quality of services and programs by promoting a framework for shared accountability
 6 and continuous improvement. This approach: (a) acknowledges human error as an
 7 inevitable product of human activity; (b) prevents undesired and unintended outcomes
 8 by evaluating such events in an objective, thorough, and impartial manner that pinpoints
 9 system and human contributions, balances system and individual accountability, and
 10 avoids inappropriate blame; (c) incorporates fairness and balanced accountability into
 11 daily activities; and (d) empowers workforce members to recognize when system issues
 12 and human behaviors are associated with unintended outcomes and to proactively
 13 communicate and suggest solutions. Since its adoption, over 31,000 staff have been
 14 trained on Just Culture principles and 300 champions have supported sustainability
 15 efforts, resulting in increased engagement and decreased performance issues.

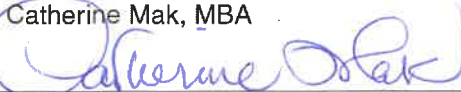
BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL AVOIDANCE \$	(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 PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213/288-8227 213/288-7787 213/738-4601
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PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Megan McClaire, MSPH	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213/ 288-8036 EMAIL MMCCLAIRE@PH.LACOUNTY.GOV
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PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) Catherine Mak, MBA 	DATE 6.28.2019	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213/288-7240 EMAIL Cmak!@ph.lacounty.gov
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DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Barbara Ferrer, MPH, MEd, PhD 	DATE 6.28.2019	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213/288-8117
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Background:

The Health Agency's mission is to improve health and wellness across LA County through effective, integrated, comprehensive, and culturally appropriate services, programs, and policies that promote healthy people living in healthy communities. The Just Culture initiative supports this mission by empowering the workforce to build trust, improve work culture, and create positive change to ensure optimal customer service and patient care.

Just Culture is a key part of the Agency's transformational journey to build health equity and embrace racial justice. The equity framework recognizes that the conditions that shape our health are rooted in resources and opportunities in our communities and that these social determinants create the context in which people make choices. The same holds true in our work environments; individual choices reflect the way work is organized.

The values guiding our community efforts should also guide how we organize our departments. Just Culture is part of the Agency's broader effort to ensure that policies and operational practices promote equitable outcomes for all. To increase organizational capacity to meet patient and community needs and engage in sustained equity work, will require that the Agency model fairness and health equity principles across its workforce. Just Culture extends the Agency's commitment to justice and equity to every workforce member, acknowledging that all employees need to be heard, respected, and treated fairly, and honors our diversity and cultural heritages.

This initiative also empowers each Departments' leadership and workforce to take an active role in improving the work environment, services, and quality of care. It aims to reduce or eliminate safety risks and enhance service delivery by identifying and preventing practices that may cause harm or errors due to system design problems and individual actions. Healthcare delivery and public health activities involve complex systems that are dependent on the actions of both individuals and systems, which has the potential for various outcomes. It is also recognized that for every adverse event or outcome that impacts a patient or client, there are numerous unsafe conditions and actual or potential human errors and behaviors that could cause harm, but fortunately don't. Acknowledging this, it is helpful to learn as much as we can about errors and system conditions that can lead to adverse events, so they can be prevented.

Workforce members are the best source of this information. To convince them to report errors and suboptimal systems in their environment, it is essential that they not be punished for reporting problems. Instead, Just Culture seeks to help them feel safe and empowered to report adverse events when they occur, and to identify actual and potential errors and unsafe conditions that could lead to future harmful events, so they can be prevented.

Just Culture, developed and implemented in deep collaboration with labor partners, is intended to empower the workforce to build trust, improve work culture, and create positive change to benefit the health and well-being of all LA County residents. To successfully

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build and sustain a work environment where all employees feel heard, respected, and treated fairly, Just Culture:

- Acknowledges human error as an inevitable product of human activity.
- Works to prevent undesired and unintended outcomes by evaluating such events in an objective, thorough, and impartial manner to define system and human contributions, and responding to them in a way that balances system and individual accountability while avoiding inappropriate blame.
- Incorporates fairness and balanced accountability into daily work activities to prevent undesired and unintended outcomes.
- Empowers workforce members to recognize and communicate system factors and human behaviors predictably associated with unintended outcomes.

Operationally, this means that when problems are reported, rather than finding where to place blame, the response should focus on the choices made by involved individuals and ensure that the system around the individual is designed and functions appropriately to support safe, effective care, and service delivery. This represents a radical shift in the way we plan to address problems and manage individuals.

Challenges:

The Agency strives to connect with its labor partners in meaningful ways to improve the delivery of services, promote servant leadership, and provide pathways of empowerment for its workforce. Just Culture was established within DHS in 2010 and the creation of the Health Agency in 2015 provided an opportunity for the Labor-Management Transformation Council (LMTC) to reevaluate and reinvigorate Just Culture efforts, expand it across the Departments in the Agency, and promote long-term culture change.

Solutions:

In 2016, the LMTC began to discuss adoption of Just Culture to improve the quality of care and services delivered by the Agency’s three departments, and to improve employee morale and well-being, which could increase productivity and decrease absenteeism. Adoption of Just Culture was then identified as the highest priority issue for the LMTC.

Building on prior DHS work, the LMTC developed a new Just Culture policy to be adopted by each Department, as well as the “Just Culture Systems and Behavior Response Guide”, which explains Just Culture and provides tools to help ensure that it is appropriately applied. In 2017, a new policy required that events and unsafe conditions be responded to in a manner consistent with Just Culture. During this time, the LMTC also developed a plan to train all Agency staff and tailored the training for different levels. “Champions” (subject matter experts) received a two-day training; supervisors received a four hour in-person training; and a one-hour online training was required for all employees.

To further understanding of and adherence to Just Culture principles, each Department is engaging in additional activities including: evaluating and aligning existing and new

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policies to create consistency with Just Culture and health equity principles; incorporating Just Culture principles into HR performance management practices; implementing a coaching program to provide support to staff applying Just Culture principles; developing an assessment tool to monitor and address systems issues that staff identify; and utilizing Health Transformation Advocates to continue to model and promote Just Culture.

Throughout implementation, labor and management have been mindful to act in deliberate partnership. For example, each facility/bureau has a pair of individuals, one from labor and one from management, responsible for ensuring completion of required training. Likewise, each in-person training is led by a combination of labor and management representatives.

Outcomes:

The goals of the Just Culture work are to: (a) increase understanding of Just Culture principles; (b) increase reporting of adverse events, errors, and unsafe conditions, regardless of outcome, in the Safety Intelligence risk reporting system used by DHS, DMH, and DPH; and (c) improve workforce members' perception that they are treated fairly when errors occur, that they are encouraged to identify problems and errors, and that the organization's focus is on learning and improving, rather than blame.

Early efforts have demonstrated positive results. Over 31,000 employees have been trained; 94% of Agency staff completed the required online training and 97% of supervisors completed the in-person training. In 2018, a “pulse survey” was sent to all Agency Department staff to determine a baseline level of understanding of Just Culture. Sixty-four percent of respondents indicated that they had a good understanding of Just Culture. Initial results of the 2019 survey show a significant increase (89%) in self-reported understanding and suggest that use of Just Culture principles has increased (e.g., more staff agreed that “When an error or mistake occurs, my manager looks at both the employee's actions AND operational issues to determine what led to the incident.”)

In addition, each HR unit is tracking the use of the Just Culture policy and the Systems and Behavior Response Guide among managers pursuing performance management. Preliminary findings suggest increased application of Just Culture principles, which results in decreased performance management issues. Just Culture principles are also aligned with efforts to improve service quality, such as the Agency's commitment to culturally respectful and linguistically appropriate care. Workforce development events (i.e., the Promotores, Community Health Workers, and Culturally-Centered Care workshop and the Integrated Health Multicultural Conference) highlight strategies and solicit feedback on how to integrate cultural respect in direct service efforts.

Lastly, Just Culture increased our capacity to identify systems issues that may contribute to undesired and unintended outcomes. A new labor-management Anti-Bullying Task Force developed a policy and procedure to prevent and mitigate bullying behavior, when other means of reporting (e.g. County Policy of Equity) were deemed to be out of scope.

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Linkage to the County Strategic Plan – 1 page only. Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12 point font

The aims and outcomes of the Health Agency’s Just Culture initiative are well-aligned with the County’s vision, mission, values, and strategic goals, particularly those that promote effective and caring service, collaboration across Departments, honesty, transparency, accountability, inclusivity, compassion, and a commitment to meet the needs of patients and customers. For instance, the Just Culture framework:

- Empowers leaders and workforce members across DHS, DMH, and DPH to play an active role in improving the work environment, Departmental services, and the quality of care delivered to our patients and our communities.
- Aims to build a work environment in which employees feel safe and empowered to report adverse events, to identify organizational policies and systems that could lead to future poor outcomes, and to suggest solutions.
- Promotes fairness, fosters equity, and encourages engagement from all levels of staff to solve operational and systems issues.

These support County values and goals and may lead to improved patient safety, enhanced services and customer service experiences, and increased employee morale.

While the initiative addresses a variety of goals in the County’s strategic plan, it is particularly well-aligned with “Goal III: Realize Tomorrow’s Government Today,” which includes several strategic objectives that relate to strengthening workforce development.

Just Culture clearly supports the overarching focus of this goal, which is to “work towards attracting and retaining a talented workforce committed to providing public services.” The Health Agency’s Just Culture initiative also directly supports three of four of the goal’s foci:

- Pursuing development of our workforce
- Pursuing operational effectiveness, fiscal responsibility and accountability
- Engaging our customers, communities, and partners.

Finally, through collaboration with labor partners and implementation across the Health Agency, it contributes to achievement of several of Goal III’s strategic objectives:

- III.1.1 Develop Staff Through High Quality Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to Training: Implement training models that envision learning and professional growth occurring over time that includes relevant departments, academia, labor, and other stakeholders.
- III.1.2 Develop Effective Manager-Leaders: Recruit, train and equip County executives and managers with the technical, problem solving, and relationship skills characteristic of professional and effective leaders.

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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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\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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FOR COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS ONLY

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

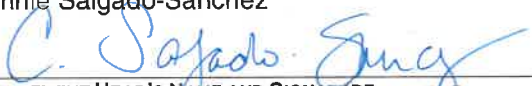

DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES 313 N. FIGUEROA STREET, 9 TH FLOOR, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
Signature on file	Signature on File
CONNIE SALGADO SANCHEZ EMAIL: <u> COSANCHEZ@DHS.LACOUNTY.GOV </u>	CHRISTINA GHALY, MD EMAIL: <u> CGHALY@DHS.LACOUNTY.GOV </u>
DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH 550 S. VERMONT AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90020	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
Signature on File	Signature on File
LETICIA XIMENEZ, PHD EMAIL: <u> LXIMENEZ@DMH.LACOUNTY.GOV </u>	JONATHAN SHERIN, MD, PHD EMAIL: <u> JSHERIN@DMH.LACOUNTY.GOV </u>
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: _____

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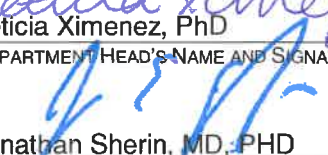
SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES 313 N. FIGUEROA STREET, 9 TH FLOOR LOS ANGELES, CA 90012		TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 288-7787
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Arun Patel, MD, JD, MBE		TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 288-8283 EMAIL: APatel3@dhs.lacounty.gov
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small> Connie Salgado-Sanchez 	DATE 6/27/19	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-288-8483 EMAIL: COSANCHEZ@DHS.LACOUNTY.GOV
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Christina Ghaly, M.D. 	DATE 6/27/19	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 288-8050

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NAME OF PROJECT: JUST CULTURE: BUILDING A FAIR AND KIND WORK ENVIRONMENT

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH 550 S Vermont Avenue Los Angeles, CA 90020	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 738-4601
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME EDGAR SOTO	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 738-2891 EMAIL ESoto@dmh.lacounty.gov
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small> <i>Saine Waldman for Leticia Ximenez</i> Leticia Ximenez, PhD <i>Saine Waldman@dmh.lacounty.gov</i>	DATE 6/27/19 TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 639-6305 (213) 220-6504 EMAIL LXimenez@dmh.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE  Jonathan Sherin, MD, PHD	DATE 6/27/19 TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 738-4601