

Quality and Productivity Commission  
**28<sup>th</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
*"Los Angeles County: Ahead of the Curve"*

**2014 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):  
**NAME OF PROJECT: ABSENCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION:** JUNE 30, 2012  
(Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before June 30, 2013)

**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. Summarize the problem, solution, and benefits of the project in a clear and direct manner.

**PROBLEM:** The Board of Supervisors identified that timely and appropriate management of County employees' use of leave was a priority for departments and that failure by departments to manage their individual leave programs had resulted in high dollar settlements of lawsuits and inefficient management of employees on extended leave. **SOLUTION:** In a collaborative effort, The Department of Human Resources and the Chief Executive Office-Risk Management Branch, implemented a new web-based Absence Management System (AMS) to address the County's need to better manage employees on leave. **BENEFITS:** County departments have easy access to a web system that applies the most current federal and State laws, such as Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and California Family Rights Act (CFRA), and County policies, to an employee's employment status and reason for leave, delivering consistency throughout the County to the process of managing employees on leave.

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(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST 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

<b>SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> Department of Human Resources 500 West Temple Street, Room 579 Los Angeles, CA 90012	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213-974-2406
<b>PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME</b> Eliza Carrillo, Senior Human Resources Manager  	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213-738-2255  <b>EMAIL</b> ecarrillo@hr.lacounty.gov
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small> Shawn Atin, Assistant Director, Department of Human Resources  	<b>DATE</b> 7/15/14  <b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213-974-2631  <b>EMAIL</b> atins@hr.lacounty.gov
<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> Lisa M. Garrett, Director of Personnel  	<b>DATE</b> 7/15/14  <b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213-974-2406

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1<sup>st</sup> FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project.

PROBLEM

Federal and State leave laws, such as Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), California Family Rights Act (CFRA), and Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL) require timely and appropriate action when employees request to take leaves of absence for mandated reasons. The County's process of administering leaves of absence prior to implementation of the AMS was not effective in providing consistent and timely application of the required actions dictated by Federal and State regulations. Leave management was manual using departmental customized processes that proved difficult in tracking leaves and were less efficient in reporting leave duration and leave reasons. The result is that many employees did not return to work timely and may not have received the entitlement mandated by law. As a result of this lack of consistency, Department of Labor investigation findings were less favorable for the County, and many high dollar settlements resulted from employee-filed lawsuits. Furthermore, this affected operational effectiveness by not assisting employees in timely return to work from leaves of absence.

SOLUTION

In an effort to bring consistency throughout the County to the process of managing employees on leave, the Department of Human Resources (DHR), in collaboration with the Chief Executive Office Risk Management Branch, sought a comprehensive Absence Management System (AMS) to capture and manage data related to employees' use of leave. ACS/Buck offered a web-based AMS that could address the County's need to better manage employees on leave, and that could provide robust reports and dashboards to promote accountability in leave management. This web-based system provided easy access to the most updated Federal and State laws as well as County policies governing employees' use of leave.

The implementation took place in three phases. The first phase was a pilot between DHR and Department of Mental Health in April 2012. Prior to the pilot, individual historic data spreadsheets were compiled from CWTAPPS and long-term leave absence reports. These spreadsheets were disseminated to departments, and included pertinent information on employees currently on leaves of absence. Inconsistencies required extensive review of the data. DHR worked diligently to examine the data for accuracy and completeness in order to assist departments with correcting and populating the required fields prior to Go Live. The magnitude of this undertaking was huge. As an example, one large department had over 22,000 intermittent leaves and 3,400 continuous leaves.

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The revised spreadsheets were then uploaded to the AMS to populate the database of employees on leaves of absence. Once the pilot was successfully completed, the next phase to implement the AMS Countywide involved 25 small to mid-size departments and was effectively completed on June 30, 2012. The final stage of implementation included seven large departments with many leaves and users, and was successfully completed on August 31, 2012.

The AMS has replaced all manual entry leave systems and is the repository for all leaves of absence in the County of Los Angeles. Currently, there are over 8,500 leaves of absence in the AMS, and over 500 RTW Coordinators and Managers use the AMS to manage their employees on leaves of absence.

#### BENEFITS

The AMS complements other automated tools and processes such as e-HR, Geniris, the workers compensation claims system, and long-term disability and long-term disability claims administration performed by Sedgwick. It provides departments with an automated "rules-based" system that will apply the most current Federal, State, and County policies based on the employee's status and the reason for leave.

Additionally, the AMS:

- Generates correspondence and leave packets
- Features a comprehensive audit trail of all actions performed over the lifetime of the leave
- Sends automatic tasks to Return-to-Work Coordinators to assist them in timely leave management and follow-up
- Allows for document storage and management, reducing the need for physical paper files
- Instantly generates departmental summary reports, eliminating the need for departments to produce and submit time-consuming long-term leave of absences reports to DHR.

Recently, the Department of Labor reviewed and approved all correspondence generated by the AMS for various Federal and State mandated policies, and praised the County on its efforts in automating leave management to ensure compliance with all required statutes and laws. In summary, we believe that because of the implementation of the AMS, the County will see a reduction in absenteeism and costly settlements and litigation, as well as an increase in regulatory compliance.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS):

**THE AMS SUPPORTS THE COUNTY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS OF ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE.**

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**COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFIT):** If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. 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.

**Cost Avoidance:** Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

**Cost Savings:** A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

**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)*

<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE 500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 750 LOS ANGELES, CA 90012	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>  JERRY RAMIREZ, PRINCIPAL ANALYST - CEO	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>  BILL T FUJIOKA, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT NO. 6 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b>	
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b>