

Quality and Productivity Commission
31st Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
"Celebrating Quality Service"

2017 APPLICATION

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

NAME OF PROJECT: COUNTYWIDE MILITARY LEAVE PROGRAM

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: FEBRUARY 1, 2015
 (Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before July 1, 2016)

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 Our program protects the rights and benefits of 660 County employees/military
 2 reservists while ensuring compliance with Federal and State laws and County policy.
 3 Analyzed the laws and policies as the military leave subject matter expert for the
 4 County. Audited the County's practices and policies and provided direction while
 5 monitoring compliance. Reviewed and helped revise policies such as: military leave
 6 compensation, time keeping, benefit management, seniority, and equity. Investigated
 7 complaints, provided expertise, and developed appropriate resolution of 600 Military
 8 Leave cases. Identified seven cases as highly volatile due to non-compliance while
 9 minimizing the likelihood of litigation. All seven cases were resolved through mediation.
 10 Coordinated with the CEO, Auditor Controller, and Human Resource departments in
 11 developing and updating County policies. Reinstated the Board policy of 720-day cap
 12 on military leave benefits including off-set pay. All of these efforts guarantee that County
 13 reservists obtain full County pay and benefits while on active duty and ensures that the
 14 County adheres to Federal and State laws and County policy. This program aims to
 15 make the County the employer of choice for military reservists.

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(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
\$ 617,792	\$	\$	\$ 617,792	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Department of Military and Veteran Affairs 1816 S. Figueroa Street. Los Angeles, CA 90015		TELEPHONE NUMBER 877.452.8387
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Dimitri de Silva		TELEPHONE NUMBER 213.742.9552 EMAIL Ddesilva@MVA.LACounty.gov
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) Michelle Jiang 	DATE 7/5/2017	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213.765.9633 EMAIL MJiang@mva.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Ruth Wong 	DATE July 5, 2017	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213.765.9678

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1st FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project. What quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success. Use Arial 12 point font.

Challenge: The County of Los Angeles must adhere to Federal Law USERRA (Uniformed Service Employment & Reemployment Rights Act) and State Law Section 395.01 of the California Military Code. Both provide broad and complex employment protections to military reservists. In 2015, an employee/reservist brought suit against the County alleging discrimination based on military status. A settlement was reached, and the Board of Supervisors adopted a corrective action plan to include the creation of the military leave program.

Innovative Solution: In accordance with the Board of Supervisors' corrective action plan, the CEO designated the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs a Military Leave Coordinator position.

The Coordinator researched law and cases to become a military leave subject matter expert. Using this expertise, the coordinator audited the County practices and developed policies and monitored compliance. Policies included: military leave compensation, time keeping, benefit management, seniority, equity, and others. The coordinator investigated and provided expertise to 600 Military Leave cases. The coordinator analyzed Federal and State laws and regulations and county policy to ensure compliance. He then identified seven cases as highly volatile due to non-compliance, each possessing an increased likelihood of litigation. All seven cases were resolved successfully through mediation.

The Coordinator advocated on behalf of reservists in matters of federal and state legislation. The coordinator further advocated on behalf of reservists by coordinating with the Chief Executive Office, Auditor Controller, and Human Resources departments in developing County policies and practices that supported military reservists. This included a thirty-day paid military leave benefit, an uncapped off-set military pay, and various amendments to existing County benefits to ensure reservist coverage and inclusion (for example, removal of act of war disqualifiers). The Coordinator developed extensive resources and protocols to ensure uniformity and avoidance of military based discrimination. This included working with the Auditor Controller to streamline military timekeeping to ensure countywide uniformity and USERRA adherence; developing six specific event time codes that accurately track various military leave personnel actions. This ensured the employee received full compensation. The coordinator tracked all military leave statistics, including: the number of reservists on leave, the duration of leave, accounting of benefits used, and any associated costs. The coordinator used this data to develop comprehensive reports, and recommended changes to policy and practices based on the statistics. The Coordinator worked to protect our County Military Reservists while ensuring success in both their County and Military careers.

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Cost Effectiveness: The Countywide Military Leave Program was developed, implemented, and managed by a single individual holding the Administrative Services Manager title; resulting in a very high level of cost effectiveness. Over 600 cases were managed, analyzed, and successfully resolved in two years. The most powerful cost savings was the successful resolution of seven volatile cases; by avoiding litigation, & substantial damages in all cases.

Cost Revenue/Avoidance:

The total estimated benefits for the County is approximately \$617,792.

Results: The program has earned federal recognition for its success and support of Reservists, and was awarded the ESGR Federal Patriot Award for 2017. The Coordinator has also been awarded the Department's prestigious 2017 Director's Award. In addition, more than 800 County Veterans have been educated on Federal, State, and County protections and benefits. Over 16 workshops have been conducted with Reservists; increasing Military related benefit knowledge by 96 percent (measured with pre- and post-session exams).

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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.

County Strategic Plan Goal 1 – Operational Effectiveness (Obj. 1, 2, & 3 below)

County Strategic Plan Goal 2 – Community Support/Responsiveness (Obj. 1, 4, & 5)

County Strategic Plan Goal 3 – Integrated Services Delivery (Objectives 2, & 3)

1. **EDUCATE LA COUNTY WORKFORCE RESERVISTS** - Improve County Reservists' knowledge of their protections and benefits under Federal/State Law, and County policy, procedure, and guidelines. Over 800 County Veteran/Reservists educated on USERRA, and LA County Military Protections and Benefits. Conducted over 16 informative training sessions with Reservists. Increased USERRA and Military related Benefits and Protection knowledge by 96 percent on average (measured with pre-session and post-session exams). Developed extensive reference and informational guidelines. Developed, distributed, and trained all County Department Leave Coordinators.
2. **EDUCATE LA COUNTY DEPARTMENTS ON USERRA-** Assess and improve County Departments' understanding, process, and efficiency when managing Military Reservists leave. Worked with CEO, DHR, and A/C to develop and improve countywide policy, procedure, and practices related to Military Leave. Properly and completely identified, managed, and resolved seven highly volatile cases. Individuals threatened litigation, and Board/Media elevation. Successfully resolved cases, mitigating liability and ensuring sound conclusion through mediation.
3. **LA COUNTY DEPARTMENTAL USERRA COMPLIANCE-** Improve LA County Military Reserve policy, procedures, and practice by serving as County Military Reservists Leave subject matter expert. Over 600 specific Military Leave cases/issues from departments or individual Reservists resolved. Worked with Sheriff, Fire, and DPSS (departments with the highest concentration of Reservists) to improve Reservists related practices, policies, and procedures.
4. **LA COUNTY RESIDENT RESERVISTS SUPPORT-** Serve as an ombudsman for Veteran organizations and Reserve units to educate them on Military Reservists Leave protections and benefits, and connect them with the County and its resources.
5. **LA COUNTY PPGs COMPLIANCE WITH USERRA** - Coordinate with centralized County Departments (CEO, A/C, DHR, etc.) to revise, amend, & improve County Reservists' policy, procedure, practice, protections, & benefits to ensure proper protections and complete compliance.

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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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The total annual benefits to the County is the estimated cost avoidance. The estimated annual cost avoidance includes two parts: legal review of military reservist case cost and potential case settlement cost. The legal review of military reservist case rate is the same as County Counsel’s rate. The County Counsel has two rates: “Document Review” rate, which is \$252.80 per hour and “Advocacy/Written Advise” rate, which is \$126.40 per hour. The total annual estimated hours working on the military reservist cases review are 2,160 hours. Within the 2,160 hours, 75 percent are pertinent to “Document Review” and 25 percent are for “Advocacy/Written Advise”. The total annual cost for legal review of military reservist cases are \$477,792 based on below calculation.

$$(2,160) * 75\% * 252.80 = \$409,536. (2,160) * 25\% * 126.40 = \$68,256.$$

$$\$409,536 + \$68,256 = \$477,792$$

Within the two years period, there were seven cases that may have resulted in litigation. All seven cases were successfully resolved. According to our research of similar settlement cases with other public organizations, the estimated settlement charge for each military reservist is \$20,000. The total estimated cost avoidance for these potential settlements is \$140,000. The calculation is shown below.

$$\$20,000 * 7 = \$140,000$$

The total estimated benefits for the County is approximately \$617,792.