



MEMORANDUM

Date: June 17, 2024

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Leshner 
County Administrator

Re: **Update on Full Time Employees and Vacant Positions in the Fiscal Year 2024/25
County Budget**

Throughout the development of the proposed Pima County Budget for Fiscal Year 2024/25, significant time and attention has been given to personnel related concerns. The following summarizes elements of this work and notes the decrease in the number of employees proposed for the next Fiscal Year, the noteworthy efforts to eliminate vacant positions and the ongoing efforts to identify those positions that are difficult to fill in this current employment market.

Total Workforce

The total number of Full Time Employees (FTE) budgeted for Fiscal Year 2024/25 is 7,094.58 a decrease of 29 positions included at the time of Tentative Budget Adoption and six (6) less than Fiscal Year 2023/24.


As noted in a memorandum to the Board of Supervisors on June 4, 2024, the proposed total number of FTEs includes 35 additional, unfunded Correction Officer positions. These positions were added so that the Sheriff's Department has the ability to transition Corrections Officers from one level to the next and fill the vacant position created by the promotion immediately. Without these unfunded positions, the Department would have to wait until a promotion was complete and the lower position vacated before a process could begin to fill that position. The addition of these positions does not increase the budget or the actual number of Corrections Officers employed.

In addition, the impact of the Presidential Election results in the need for an additional 14 FTEs for the next year in the Records Office.

When the 49 positions represented by the unfunded 35 FTEs in the Sheriff's Department and the additional staff necessary for the Presidential Election are considered, the total FTEs would represent a year-over-year decrease of 54 positions.

Vacancies

The June 4, 2024 memorandum also highlighted the fact that the subject of vacant positions has continued to be an area to which considerable attention has been focused, including the recent adoption of BOS policy D 22.16 – Vacant Positions. As noted previously, this issue was taken into consideration throughout the budgetary process, starting with implementation

JUN 17 24 PM 02:03 PCD CLK OF ED 

of budget mitigation efforts as a result of concerning economic indicators as reported in the quarterly Economic Decision Guides.

Reports on vacancies by Department are regularly reported to the Board and the public. A recent report indicated that there are nine (9) departments that have more than 15% of their positions currently vacant. The following provides a brief summary of the status of the vacancies in those departments.

Behavioral Health – 36.6 % Vacancy Rate. This represents a total of 14 vacant positions of which 10 have been vacant for less than 90 days. They include eight (8) positions created to staff a recently received grant and six (6) non grant funded positions that include a Chief Psychiatrist, social workers and justice navigators.

Community Workforce Development – 16.6 Vacancy Rate. A total of 20 of the 24 vacant positions are grant funded and nine (9) have been vacant for less than 90 days. All positions, including a Deputy Director and summer youth workers are in active recruitment.

Economic Development – 20% Vacancy Rate. This number represents the one open intern position.

Elections – 21.1% Vacancy Rate. There are currently four vacant positions in the Elections Department, all of which are in active recruitment, including three (3) elections staff members and a warehouse manager.

Facilities Management – 26.2% Vacancy Rate. Of the 37 open positions, 10 have been vacant for less than 90 days. Many of these open positions represent some of the County's hardest to fill positions, including HVAC specialists (5 current openings) and trades maintenances specialists (7 current openings).

Health – 27.3% Vacancy Rate. A total of 86 of the 114 open positions are grant funded and 40 have been vacant for less than 90 days. All positions are in active recruitment, including epidemiologists and environmental health specialists.

Juvenile Court – 16.6% Vacancy Rate. Of the 56 open positions, six are grant funded and 10 have been open for less than ninety days. The vacancies include probation officers, detention and surveillance officers, and therapeutic specialists.

Project Design and Construction – 19.9% Vacancy Rate. A total of four of the nine vacant positions have been open for less than 90 days. All positions are in active recruitment, including three architects.

Real Property – 18.2% Vacancy Rate. One of the two vacant positions has been open for less than 90 days and includes a real property acquisition specialist.

Normal turnover or successful recruitment of an employee following the creation of a vacancy takes approximately 90 days. A full 33% of the vacancies in the departments that have more than a 15% vacancy rate have been open for less than 90 days. To ensure that the information regularly reported to the Board of Supervisors is a useful tool, future reports will note the number of positions open less than 90 days and focus on those that have been vacant for more than 240 days to identify possible cost savings or hard to fill positions.

It should be noted that as the General Fund Departments identify how they might achieve the mandated 2% reduction for Fiscal Year 2024/25, Departments are being encouraged to eliminate vacant positions to achieve the required savings.

Hard to Fill or "In-Demand" Positions

As the County has eliminated positions that have been open for more than a year, the vacancy rate now provides a very useful tool to help the County identify those positions that are historically very hard to fill or, as described in the May 31, 2024 memorandum, "In-Demand". The elimination of positions that were not being actively recruited allows us to focus on those positions that remain open but need to be filled to provide benefit to Pima County residents or which a lack of workers could have a significant impact on the County's ability to maintain daily operations.

A job classification is reviewed as possibly being "In-Demand" when:

- The job classification's impacts the County's ability to perform its daily operations;
- There is an absence in the labor market for qualified, experienced workers who possess specialized training/skills in the specified job classifications; and
- There is an inability to fill County openings and/or retain current workers.

Trades Specialty Classifications and Veterinarians were the first classifications to be deemed "In-Demand".

Staff will continue to review vacancy reports and flag job classifications as potentially "In-Demand" based on the days the position has remained vacant. Each open position will be reviewed to verify:

- The number of applicants who met the minimum qualifications for the position;
- The percent of each requisition by classification that is filled;
- The rejection rate following an offer of employment; and
- The percent of voluntary turnover in a classification.

Initial Impact of the Classification and Compensation Study and a Review of Benefits

As reported in a September 5, 2023 memorandum to the Board, for the past several years the County has taken steps to actively adjust employee compensation, benefits, and

The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
Re: **Update on Full Time Employees and Vacant Positions in the Fiscal Year 2024/25 County Budget**
June 17, 2024
Page 4

workplace flexibility to assure it can support our existing employees and actively recruit and retain talented individuals for all County departments.

Pima County has seen a vacancy improvement, notably due to key investments and employee-focused adjustments to County policies, benefits and compensation as approved by the Board of Supervisors. Specifically, over the three years, the County has focused strategies (pertaining to employee recruitment and retention) through 1) compensation adjustments, 2) growing the existing employment benefit packages, 3) flexible work schedules, 4) focused operational improvements to recruitment timelines, and 5) improvement to reporting and transparency on employment data including vacancy and turnover rates, termination reports, and updates on retention and recruitment.

The attached chart illustrates the significant increase in the number of applications received each month, which is a direct result of the Board of Supervisor's focus on establishing and maintaining Pima County as an Employer of Choice.

JKL/dym

Attachment

c: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer
Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator
Cathy Bohland, Director, Human Resources
Ellen Moulton, Director, Finance & Risk Management

Monthly Applications

