

Internal Review of Office of Human Resources Classification & Recruitment

Department of
Consumer Affairs

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Table of Contents

Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
Executive Summary.....	2
Department of Consumer Affairs Overview and Background	2
Improvement Opportunities Highlights.....	3
Scope and Methodology.....	4
Surveys	4
Interviews.....	4
Process Mapping	6
Data Gathering and Analysis.....	8
Review Summary.....	9
Improvement Opportunities.....	17
Summary.....	22
OHR Continuous Process Improvement Initiatives.....	22

Executive Summary

This is the fourth and final review in a series that the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA or Department) will provide to the Legislature. The Budget Act of 2018 required the Department to conduct a process improvement review of the centralized services it provides to the 36 boards, bureaus, committees, and commission (boards) it oversees. Senate Bill 840 (SB 840), by Senator Holly Mitchell (Chapter 29, Statutes of 2018), provides that DCA, in consultation with the Pro Rata Work Group, shall identify and prioritize the most critical services to be reviewed and reported to the Legislature. DCA is required to make the results of the reviews available to the Legislature as they are completed. These reviews will describe existing processes and identify opportunities to achieve efficiencies.

In response to this direction, the Organizational Improvement Office (OIO) has conducted a two-year study to identify opportunities for streamlining and improving the centralized services DCA provides to the boards. The centralized services included in this project were chosen based on discussions with the DCA Pro Rata Workgroup, interviews with members of the group, and relevant responses from the 2017 DCA Services Customer Satisfaction Survey.

In February 2019, the Pro Rata Workgroup, consisting of DCA and board executives, directed the Department to conduct a review of the Department's Office of Human Resources (OHR) Classification and Recruitment (C&R) unit. Many centralized services activities include both customer service and oversight components. In these instances, the review will attempt to improve customer service efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided while ensuring required oversight is maintained.

The Organizational Improvement Office analyzed data gathered through interviews, reports, surveys, and process mapping. Additionally, OIO interviewed other state agencies to identify potential improvement opportunities that could be implemented at the Department.

Department of Consumer Affairs Overview and Background

The Department issues licenses, certificates, registrations, and permits in over 250 business and professional categories through 36 regulatory entities. These entities set and enforce minimum qualifications for the professions and vocations they regulate, which include nearly all of California's health care fields.

DCA's 36 regulatory entities are supported by a staff of legal, technical, and administrative professionals at the Department. These professionals provide legal, human resources, information technology, investigations, professional examinations, training, strategic planning, fiscal management, and other integral support services. DCA is committed to its core mission of consumer protection, which is shared by all its boards. The individuals who serve at DCA inform and empower consumers, promote consumer interests before lawmakers, enforce consumer protection laws, collaborate with law enforcement to fight consumer fraud, resolve disputes between consumers and businesses, and promote the use of fair and valid licensing examination programs.

Improvement Opportunities Highlights

This report contains improvement opportunities to assist the OHR C&R in implementing continuous process improvement initiatives. Improvement opportunities detailed in this report align with the project charter's strategic goals and objectives and include increasing:

1. **Efficiency** - The Organizational Improvement Office recommendations are geared to streamlining business processes to allow boards to more quickly recruit and hire top candidates. Unit processes, procedures, and policies should incentivize staff to minimize processing times throughout the lifecycle of a Request for Personnel Action (RPA).
2. **Quality** - Survey responses and interviews revealed C&R customers have significant variations in experience and satisfaction levels based on the HR liaison's or hiring manager's role and level of interaction with C&R. The Organizational Improvement Office recommends OHR emphasize an internal focus and training program related to increasing customer satisfaction across all OHR staff.
3. **Transparency** - The practice of 'rolling over' RPA packages (continuing into the next fiscal year) and assigning a new number and 'date received' inflates the number of actions received and reduces the processing days as calculated from Date Received by C&R to C&R Approval or Decision Date. The Organizational Improvement Office recommends improving the tracking system of requests to adopt a more robust and reliable tracking system to accurately track processing times and volumes.
4. **Accountability** - Unit success is qualitatively measured in unsolicited feedback (compliments and complaints) from boards. The Organizational Improvement Office recommends that OHR develop and use quantitative measures for tracking performance of critical unit functions and customer satisfaction. In addition, OIO recommends working towards reporting Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) monthly to OHR leadership and hiring managers.

Scope and Methodology

The Department's Office of Human Resources provides full-service human resources support for DCA and its boards. The Department's Office of Human Resource's staff interpret laws, regulations, bargaining unit contracts, policies, and procedures to provide its customers with the necessary information to make well-informed decisions. The scope of this project is limited to C&R activities relating to RPA, hiring, and recruitment activities – essentially from when a position becomes vacant to when a program makes a hire.

The Organizational Improvement Office work involves intensive investigation necessary to develop a comprehensive knowledge of processes to resolve operational needs. This investigation requires a systematic approach with quantitative and qualitative analysis of data and processes. The Organizational Improvement Office's staff effectively identify opportunities for improving process efficiencies and develop tools and documents that will assist in increasing efficiency and effectiveness.

Surveys

Survey research is quantitative and qualitative. Variables of interest are measured using self-reports. Surveys ask participants (respondents) to report directly on their own perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors. Anonymous surveys allow respondents to provide candid and more valid answers. Accurate data stems from anonymous surveys that provide a method for honest responses.

Two surveys were developed, administered and analyzed during this review. The Office of Human Resources - Classification and Recruitment Services Survey was designed to provide data on C&R processing times, customer satisfaction, perspectives on training for select services and training delivery mechanisms. A total of 243 responses were received for a 44 percent response rate.

The second survey administered, The Office of Human Resources - Employee Survey, was an employee satisfaction survey designed to provide data related to OHR employee engagement, training programs, and perspectives on areas for process improvements. A total of 46 responses were received for a 69% response rate.

Interviews

Conducting interviews is an important part of a process improvement effort. Information gathered from interviews informs everything from preliminary discoveries to defining improvement opportunities. Using interviews can also help provide information above and beyond that of surveys because it can provide the details and context surrounding responses and prompt the interviewer to ask more probing questions. Internal customer and staff 'stories' are useful in understanding the impact of business processes on internal OHR customers (hiring units and boards), external OHR customers (prospective employees), staff morale, and engagement.

The Organizational Improvement Office conducted interviews with Department staff, board hiring managers, C&R managers, and C&R staff. The interviews revealed there is no formalized on-boarding or training program and no new staff training programs. There are examples related during interviews with internal customers and C&R staff that corroborate that in more than one instance the current system of roster assignments resulted in a poor 'customer' experience for both the internal DCA customer and external DCA OHR customers. Select C&R staff report early in their tenure they are assigned complex tasks, above their skill and experience level, which resulted in underperformance, delayed processing times, and informal offers being sent to candidates who did not meet eligibility requirements.

Common themes discovered during internal interviews:

- Few opportunities to learn to process specific requests if the boards in their specific rosters do not have these types of requests (e.g. RPA requiring Hiring Above Minimum).
- Lack of formal onboarding and training program for new staff.
- No defined KPIs with targeted goals.
- There is a need for consolidating information from unit meetings for reference by the entire unit.
- The unit success is measured with subjective/anecdotal inputs, customers' complaints/compliments, and staff growth/competency levels (not formally tracked).
- Select exit interviews with employees who left C&R said their work was difficult (especially minimum qualification evaluations).
- RPA escalation and problem resolution protocols are an issue; select boards go directly to the OHR Chief and C&R Section Chief with their concerns.
- Overall quality of RPAs, justifications, and duty statements submitted by hiring managers and liaisons to C&R is low and impacts processing times.
- HR Training should be offered more often and hiring managers should attend.
- Program expectations and C&R cultural attitudes tend to differ; boards view themselves as pro-rata paying customers in need of OHR assistance; C&R views its role as providing oversight as well as customer service, which leaves customers frustrated when a request is denied or additional information is required.
- The Classification and Recruitment unit has no authority over boards (HR liaisons and hiring managers report to their respective boards and not to OHR).
- HR Forums do not reflect high levels of engagement/participation (hiring managers usually do not attend).
- Board staff should be provided with direct references to statutes and regulations that drive C&R policies and process.

The Organizational Improvement Office staff also conducted interviews with external human resource organizations (California's Department of Justice and California State Teachers' Retirement System) to obtain best practice strategies. High level findings indicate similar process improvement initiatives are ongoing in many state government agencies and departments to attract and retain talent in a tight labor market. The focus of the improvement initiatives was finding creative and innovative ways to reduce processing time and add value to hiring units that allow them to quickly attract and hire top talent.

Common themes during external interviews:

- During tight labor markets, it is harder for government entities to attract top talent, and OHR recruitment processing times can have a negative impact on the ability to hire top candidates.
- Human resource organization units track and measure productivity and performance using a variety of tools including proprietary 'eRPA' systems, SharePoint issue trackers and advanced Excel workbooks stored in SharePoint for multiple users to access at one time.
- Hiring units and boards consistently submit requests with deficient documentation, which causes delays in processing and requires multiple rounds of revisions.
- Hiring units and boards ask for preliminary eligibility determinations prior to interviewing candidates, which front loads efforts to OHR in performing evaluations for candidates who will not be interviewed or will not outperform other candidates in subsequent interviews.
- Without electronic tracking systems, strict data governance requirements, regularly auditing inputs, and data analysis are subject to being inaccurate and incomplete.
- For positions that are difficult to fill, identify well-written job postings and use those as samples, making them available on the intranet.

Process Mapping

SB 840 identified process mapping as a desired methodology for identifying efficiencies in DCA's centralized services: "Reviews shall consist of process mapping with the intent to identify opportunities to achieve efficiencies." The Organizational Improvement Office created "As-Is" maps of select OHR C&R processes, drawing from interviews with subject matter experts (SMEs). The Organizational Improvement Office also reengineered select processes to reflect what the processes might look like if OHR streamlined processes and incorporated a standardized and electronic platform for tracking incoming requests from hiring units.

The Organizational Improvement Office facilitated Business Process Mapping (BPM) workshops with C&R SMEs to document processes and to find and document efficiencies. BPM provides a standard language for modeling business processes in a format that is accessible by management and line staff. During the BPM stage, OIO employed three different mapping techniques: As-Is, Value Stream Analysis, and Could-Be mapping.

The As-Is stage is defined as the visualization of the 'current state' of interrelated work tasks initiated in response to an event that will achieve a specific result for an actor in a process. During the As-Is stage, OIO Business Analysts worked with C&R SMEs in a series of workshops to map C&R processes to determine volume, roles, systems, tasks and decisions. At the end of this stage management reviewed and approved the maps before moving onto the next stage of the BPM process. See the table below.

As-Is Process Name	Estimated Volumes (Annual)	Average Processing Time (Minutes)	Wait Times (Days)	Average Annual Workload (PY)
<i>Requests for Personnel Actions (RPA) review and approval</i>	1,475	75	8-100	1.04
<i>Job Opportunity & Cert List Creation & Management</i>	1,138	172	8-14	1.84
<i>Eligibility Determinations (no Withholdings)</i>	2,374	93	2-15	2.07
<i>Eligibility Determination (Withholdings)</i>	30	168.5	1-10	0.05
<i>Pre-Employment clearance and approvals</i>	1,700	56	2-70	0.89
<i>Hiring Above Minimum salary request review and approval</i>	95	123	2-33	0.11
<i>Out-of-class assignment review and approval</i>	10	105	3-16	0.01
<i>Promotions-in-place review and approval</i>	95	68	6-16	0.06
<i>Training and development assignment review and approval</i>	10	233	6-88	0.02
<i>Exceptional Allocation Requests</i>	10	298	3-5	0.03
<i>Merit Issue Complaints</i>	5	1,013	6-14	0.05
<i>Retired Annuitants Hiring Package approvals</i>	36	195	2-13	0.07
<i>Relationship Verification Form without Memo</i>	1,315	24	1-3	0.12
<i>Relationship Verification Form with Memo</i>	160	78	3-36	0.30

Once the As-Is stage was complete, OIO conducted Value Stream Analysis (VSA). The purpose of value-stream mapping of As-Is business processes is to identify and remove waste and barriers to productivity to increase efficiency. During this process, OIO engaged staff in identifying three critical areas of efficiency: value added, business necessity, or non-value added. Tasks and activities that improve the product or service is considered to add value. An activity required by law, regulation, and/or policy is considered a business necessity. Tasks and activities that do not contribute to the product or the process are considered non-value added. VSA is an interactive process that involves both the SME and OIO staff and typically results in the discovery of operational improvements.

On VSA maps, steps are labeled GREEN (value added), YELLOW (required by law, regulation or policy) and RED (not value-added or required). Red steps are evaluated for elimination or revision to reduce artificial barriers to increasing productivity.

Once VSA was complete, OIO moved to the Could-Be stage. The Could-Be stage is defined as maps built upon existing As-Is maps that include proposed improved efficiencies, automation opportunities, and an envisioned future process. Using C&R staff recommendations, OIO reviewed the As-Is and VSA maps to propose changes and develop recommendations. The table below shows the reduction in steps from the As-Is to the Could-Be maps.

Process Name	As-Is Total Steps	Could-Be Total Steps	Reduction in Total Steps
<i>Requests for Personnel Actions (RPA) review and approval</i>	33	27	6
<i>Job Opportunity & Cert List Creation & Management</i>	36	18	18
<i>Eligibility Determinations (includes Withholdings and Appeals)</i>	67	61	6
<i>Pre-Employment clearance and approvals</i>	19	14	5
<i>Hiring Above Minimum salary request review and approval</i>	26	26	0
<i>Out-of-class assignment review and approval</i>	21	21	0
<i>Promotions-in-place review and approval</i>	34	22	12
<i>Training and development assignments</i>	36	29	7
<i>Exceptional Allocation Requests</i>	20	14	6
<i>Merit Issue Complaints</i>	42	34	8
<i>Retired Annuitants Hiring Package approvals</i>	18	17	1
<i>Relationship Verification Form Review</i>	20	17	3
Total	372	300	72

Data Gathering and Analysis

The Department's Office of Human Resources granted OIO staff access to CalHR's HR Net website for use in researching CalHR resources and publications, and they provided access to C&R's Excel worksheets and workbooks used to track and report service request utilization and workload.

The Classification and Recruitment unit uses Excel worksheets and workbooks to track and report service request utilization and workload. The tracking consists of approximately 41 folders, each with at least one file. Some folders contain a file for each fiscal year, and some have a workbook file with separate worksheets for each fiscal year. Additional logs are kept for tracking Out-of-Class assignments, Hiring-Above-Minimum requests, ECOS Job Opportunity postings, Eligibility Determination requests, Minimum Qualifications Withholds, and Merit Issue Complaints. Finally, each analyst maintains an individual productivity log. There is significant duplication and variation in the logs and little or no data governance.

For review purposes, individual RPA tracking worksheets were combined into a single worksheet and 3,942 records were analyzed. The records were copied from the individual fiscal year worksheet and assigned the corresponding fiscal year. Due to the variation in the individual tracking spreadsheets, lack of data validation, and practice of rolling packages forward into a new fiscal year, determining accurate volumes (by program or classification) and processing times is not possible. Volumes and processing times are approximated. The significant variation in processing times and inaccurate calculations reflects C&R's lack of strict adherence to data governance and inconsistent monitoring or reconciling of data.

Review Summary

The Organizational Improvement Office's staff conducted an exploratory review and analysis of OHR C&R processes to identify areas of improvement and increase transparency, efficiency, quality, and accountability. Most of the workload for the unit involves the review and approval of RPAs, posting and managing Job Control opportunities and certification lists in ECOS, performing eligibility determinations (which include minimum qualification evaluations), and pre-employment document review and approval. As soon as a program is notified of an upcoming vacancy, an RPA request package is submitted to OHR. A significant source of wait time in the initial RPA review and approval process stems from incomplete and inaccurate information submitted by the board in the RPA package, requiring additional time to identify and document deficiencies and multiple interactions with boards to correct. During interviews, analysts reported between 30-40% of all requests are deficient and require revisions, creating wait times of one day to six weeks for RPA package deficiencies to be resolved by the various boards. In the survey of OHR employees, 72% of respondents report that 'quality of submission by boards (HR liaisons and/or hiring managers)' is the source of the most significant impact on processing timelines.

Interviews with external human resources organizations validate that hiring units consistently have difficulties in submitting accurate and comprehensive justification memorandums, duty statements, and organization charts. Further, interviews substantiate that resolving deficiencies in RPA submissions represent significant wait times and have a negative impact on the hiring board's ability to recruit and fill vacant positions in a timely manner.

The Classification and Recruitment unit's success is qualitatively measured in unsolicited feedback (compliments and complaints) from boards. Quantitative metrics for productivity and performance are not used or reported on a regular or formalized basis. Current metrics (compliment and complaint model) do not incentivize the unit to minimize processing times throughout the lifecycle of the request (initiation through final approval for appointment). The Classification and Recruitment unit's staff report they are aware of select internal processing targets; however, they are not aware of average processing time frames for final approval of requests, nor are they incentivized to reduce overall approval processing times.

The current method used to assign incoming service requests does not optimize workload or skill set resulting in increased processing times and lower customer satisfaction scores. Processing times and service quality are also negatively impacted by staff turnover and lack of a formal onboarding and training program. Service requests are assigned based on pre-determined rosters without consideration for task complexity. The employee survey reveals a significant number of OHR staff have been in their roles for less than one year (i.e. OHR 37%, C&R 40%). Interviews reveal that due to the current system of roster assignments, analysts have been assigned complex tasks with little training and resources. The tasks were above their skill and experience level. This assignment process has resulted in underperformance, delayed processing times, and informal employment offers being sent to a candidate who did not meet eligibility requirements.

Internal customer satisfaction surveys represent a way to measure organizational effectiveness from the customer's perspective. Customer satisfaction surveys measure OHR's ability to perform critical human resource functions while also keeping in mind the perspective of internal customers.

Survey responses and interviews demonstrate C&R internal customers have significant variations in experience and satisfaction levels based on roles and level of interactions with C&R. The Office of Human Resources - Classification and Recruitment Services Survey found Hiring Managers consistently rated quality of services lower than HR Liaisons and more often reported performing tasks with limited training. The table below depicts the percentage of respondents who reported service met or exceeded expectations.

Customer Satisfaction Score*
Office of Human Resources - Classification and Recruitment Services Survey
Survey Question #6 - Quality of Services

Service	Hiring Managers	HR Liaisons
Hiring methods and best practices consultation	71%	74%
Request for Personnel Action (RPA) review and approval	72%	73%
Recruitment strategies to expand candidate pools	66%	67%
Job opportunity publication	76%	80%
Certification list creation	78%	88%
Employment contact letters and candidate correspondence	85%	85%
Eligibility determination	57%	88%
Pre-Employment document review and approval	63%	84%
Hiring above minimum salary request review and approval	74%	88%
Out-of-class assignment review and approval	87%	80%
Promotions-in-place review and approval	73%	84%
Training and development assignment review and approval	83%	75%

*Percentage of survey respondents who report service met or exceeded expectation

Comparing scores for different services demonstrates C&R internal customers have significant variations in experience and satisfaction levels based on roles and possibly associated with levels of training.

Office of Human Resources - Classification and Recruitment Services Survey
Survey Question #8 - % of Respondents Reporting
'Have NOT received training but perform this task'

Service	Hiring Managers	HR Liaisons
Hiring methods and best practices consultation	33%	4%
Drafting and submitting form HR-01 for approval	27%	7%
Drafting memorandum of justification for approval	31%	11%
Drafting or updating duty statement for approval	37%	4%
Using recruitment strategies to expand candidate pools	33%	26%
Drafting and submitting form HR-01C for approval	24%	7%
Eligibility determination request package submission	28%	4%
Pre-Employment document submission	31%	4%
Drafting Hiring above minimum salary requests	27%	15%
Drafting Out-of-class assignment requests	22%	11%
Drafting Promotions-in-place requests	26%	22%

HR Liaisons not only report higher ratings on quality of services but also report significantly more favorable ratings on various training forums.

Office of Human Resources - Classification and Recruitment Services Survey
Survey Question #19 - How would you characterize the following DCA OHR offerings?

Quarterly DCA Human Resources Forum	All Respondents	Hiring Managers	HR Liaisons	Other*
Excellent, this is something I look forward to	15%	7%	41%	14%
Neutral, I attend or participate only if it is convenient	20%	14%	55%	5%
I do not attend or participate	22%	28%	0%	18%
I have never heard of this event or service	44%	50%	3%	64%
CSAT Score	35%	21%	97%	18%

DCA HR Training presented by DCA OHR	All Respondents	Hiring Managers	HR Liaisons	Other*
Excellent, this is something I look forward to	19%	13%	41%	14%
Neutral, I attend or participate only if it is convenient	27%	23%	55%	9%
I do not attend or participate	22%	27%	0%	27%
I have never heard of this event or service	32%	37%	3%	50%
CSAT Score	45%	37%	97%	23%

*Those who took the survey who identified as Other if they defined their role as anything other than an HR Liaison or Hiring Manager

Boards report the majority of C&R activities takes longer than expected, and data analysis shows C&R does not meet target processing times:

- **RPA review and approval (straight refill)** - 78% of survey respondents expect turnaround within the same week, 40% of respondents report approval is granted within the same week or less from the date of the request. RPA package review (41 packages) found slightly more than half of the requests are approved within five business days.

- **RPA review and approval (reclassification)** - 60% of survey respondents expect turnaround within the same week, and 33% of respondents report approval is granted within the same week or less from the date of the request. RPA package review (24 packages) found 50% of these requests are approved within five business days.
- **Eligibility Determination requests (which include minimum qualification evaluations)** - 80% of the survey respondents expect activities to be completed within one week, 35% of survey respondents report C&R completes evaluations within the same week, while 37% of respondents report eligibility determination approval is granted within the same week or less from the date of request.

A review of select RPA packages also found a high degree of variation in average processing times based on activity milestones and roster assignments. Requests are assigned based on pre-determined rosters. Analysts are assigned between one and ten boards on a roster. To balance the workload, analyst board rosters are revised annually or when a C&R staff leaves. Analysts act as a single point of contact for the boards assigned on their roster and process all requests for their assigned rosters. Fluctuations in processing times may be attributed to variations in analyst experience and skill levels but are also impacted by significant variations in the timing of requests. The Organizational Improvement Office's analysis on average days to process a request and related activity milestones could only be performed on reviewed RPA packages.

**Request for Personnel Action Business Processing Days†
Selected Activity Milestones from January 2017 – February 2020**

Activity Milestone	# of Packages Reviewed	Average Processing Days	Target Processing Days
Cancelled Requests	19	138	None Defined
Board Signature to OHR Receipt	135	1.9	None Defined
Days for Position Control to Send to Budgets	135	1.48*	1
Budget Approval (if required)	58	5.4	2
C&R Received Date to C&R Approval Date**	135	13.5*	None Defined
Action Type Refill, no change in duties (subset of above)	41	6.7	2
Action Type Reclassification (subset of above)	24	47.6	5
RPA Analyst Approval Date to JC Posting Date***	82	69	2
Application Release Date to Eligibility Request Date****	62	35	None Defined
Eligibility Request Date to Approval Date	90	7.1	3 - 15
OHR Date Stamp to OHR Final Approval Date	135	107	None Defined

†Processing Days could include how long the boards take to conduct interviews.

*Two packages were excluded from average, (758 and 554 days). These requests were for classification 8610 for DOI and may have been resubmitted to budgets for approval after multiple recruitment attempts.

** Calculated from either date Position Control sent copy to Budgets or Date of Budget Approval to date C&R Analyst approved RPA for job opportunity posting.

***JC posting dates which resulted in eligibility request determination were recorded (longer processing times may reflect need to repost positions). Not all requests require posting.

**** Calculated as Date applications are 'revealed' to program plus five days to Date of Eligibility Determination Request

To determine utilization and volumes, tracking spreadsheets are manually 'counted.' This tally is used to report annual workload and to adjust analyst rosters. There is no mechanism for reporting current unit workload and open actions by C&R analysts, board, request type, and/or aging by date of request.

Request for Personnel Action Business Processing Days to RPA Approval*
Average Days by Roster and Action Type**
January 2017 – February 2020

Roster Assignment	Blanket Request	Other	Reclassify	Redirect	Refill, change in duties	Refill, no change in duties
Roster 1	3.7	8.9	17.3	6.0	2.0	10.4
Roster 2	< 1	< 1	8.7	5.0	19.5	7.7
Roster 3	5.0	3.3	No Actions	4.0	No Actions	6.3
Roster 4	6.0	No Actions	168.4	5.0	5.5	8.7
Roster 5	4.3	1.0	5.0	No Actions	3.0	2.7
Roster 6	< 1	No Actions	3.0	No Actions	3.5	< 1
Roster 7	6.0	No Actions	No Actions	< 1	No Actions	9.5
Roster 8	1.7	< 1	13.5	No Actions	5.0	7.3
Vacant	91	71.3	< 1	No Actions	No Actions	4.3
Grand Total	6.5	13.0	47.6	< 1	7.4	6.7
Target Processing Days for Approval			5.0			2.0

*Calculating business processing days from date of budget approval (or courtesy copy) to date of RPA approval.

**A Roster is defined as the list of boards assigned to that specific analyst.

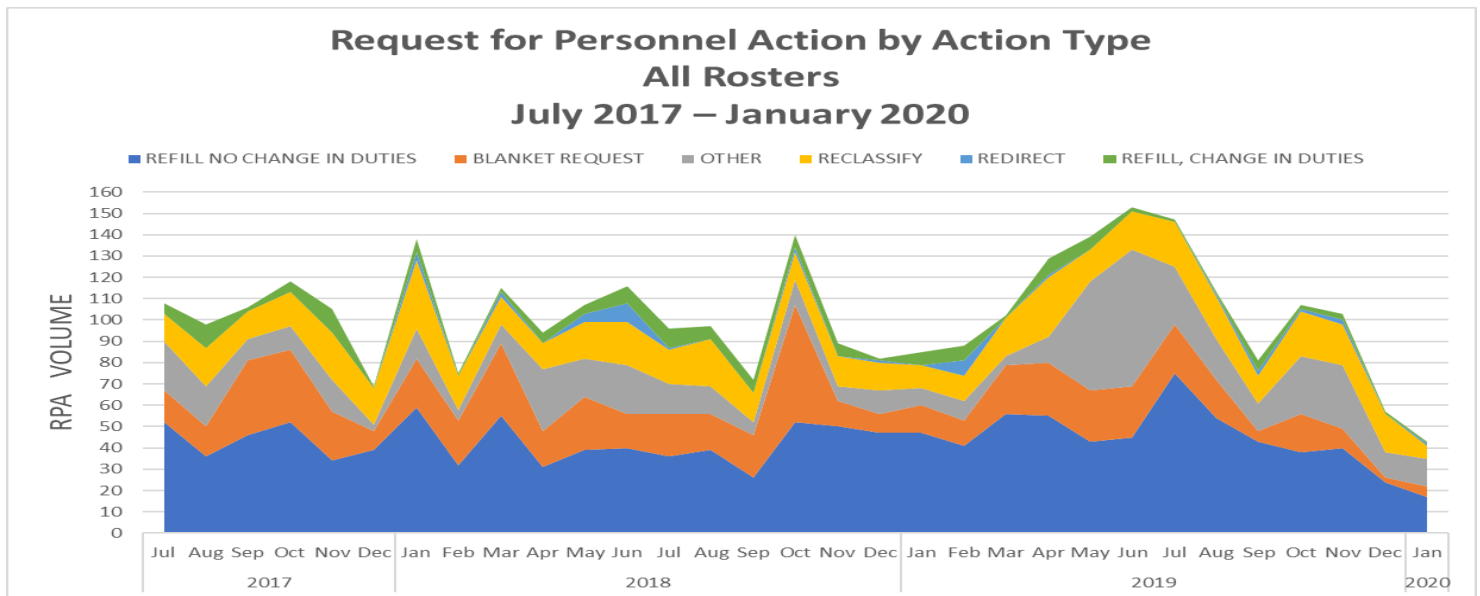
Volatility in rates of submission and the difference in complexity of requests by roster are a factor in the significant variation in processing times. In October 2018, there was a significant increase in the number of requests (140 versus average of 102) compared to September 2018 (72 requests) and November 2018 (89 requests). In addition, there were 46 requests (44 Blanket Requests) for Roster 5, which accounted for a third of the requests received in that month while Roster 7 only received a total of four requests for the same period (3% of total requests received).

**Request for Personnel Action
 Request by Roster and Action Type
 October 2018**

Roster Assignment	Blanket Request	Other	Reclassify	Redirect	Refill, change in duties	Refill, no change in duties	Total Requests Received
Roster 1	No Actions	9	2	No Actions	No Actions	12	23
Roster 2	4	1	0	No Actions	No Actions	7	12
Roster 3	1	2	5	No Actions	No Actions	7	15
Roster 4	No Actions	No Actions	No Actions	No Actions	3	4	7
Roster 5	44	No Actions	No Actions	1	No Actions	1	46
Roster 6	3	No Actions	1	No Actions	1	3	8
Roster 7	1	No Actions	2	No Actions	No Actions	1	4
Roster 8	2	No Actions	3	1	12	1	19
Vacant	No Actions	1	No Actions	No Actions	No Actions	5	6
Grand Total	55	12	13	2	6	52	140

Request action types also have varying levels of complexity (i.e. tasks associated with 'Refill, no change in duties' represent the least complexity, whereas 'Blanket Requests' and 'Other' requests may represent more complex actions).

See below for the monthly distribution of requests for the period of July 2017 through January 2020 by request action type for All Rosters. Examination of requests received by roster, month, and action type indicates there is no seasonality or predictability in the rates of requests. Distributing the workload by roster type (pre-assigned boards) does not efficiently utilize unit resources. Periodic adjustments based on a previous period also do not efficiently utilize unit resources.



The Classification and Recruitment unit's analysts are also responsible for performing determinations and evaluations for the boards in their assigned roster. Eligibility determination requests are submitted for the top three candidates after boards complete interviews. The Classification and Recruitment unit's analysts verify the candidates meet minimum qualifications and are 'reachable' on the certification list. The Classification and Recruitment unit's analysts also determine transfer eligibility, if applicable. If the candidate is initially found not to satisfy the minimum qualifications, OHR sends a written request specifying which minimum qualifications are not satisfied and the reason(s) why. The California Code of Regulations (CCR) §249.4 (Verification of Minimum Qualifications Prior to Appointment) requires candidates be given ten working days to respond and establish that he or she satisfies the minimum qualifications of the classification. Target processing times for eligibility determination requests are three days for requests that do not require additional information and up to 15 days for requests requiring additional information from the candidate.

**Number of Eligibility Determination and Minimum Qualification Evaluation requests
 Top Five Classification Codes
 January 2017 – February 2020**

Classification Code and Description	# of Requests	% of total Requests	Avg Days to Complete
<i>1139 Office Technician</i>	1,030	14%	4.29
<i>5393 Associate Governmental Program Analyst</i>	904	12%	4.60
<i>9928 Program Technician II</i>	838	11%	3.74
<i>5157 Staff Services Analyst</i>	753	10%	3.48
<i>8610 Investigator</i>	312	4%	5.07
<i>All Others (each < 300 requests)</i>	3,606	49%	3.68
<i>Total</i>	7,443	100%	4.14

There are no elements in the tracking logs to indicate the rate of deficiencies in the documentation provided. The Classification and Recruitment unit's analysts claim that many candidates do not respond to their requests for providing additional information. The tracking log does not contain data elements to easily distinguish between the two types of evaluations (those requiring additional information and those for which it is not required). Analysis of the processing days shows the average processing days:

- 3,978 / 7,443 (53%) completed within 3 days
- 2,751 / 7,443 (37%) completed between 4 – 15 days
- 714 / 7,443 (10%) took longer than 15 days to complete

It is unclear as to why the determinations should not all be closed by day 16, and given the limitations in the data elements tracked, there is no way to validate the number of days to complete the above work. Interviews with C&R analysts reveal that some candidates do not respond to OHR requests for additional information.

Work performed by C&R is subjective, and analysts interpret written narrative statements regarding a candidate's level of skills and experience differently. Analysis of resumes and application statements for minimum qualification evaluations are areas where boards appeal to OHR leadership for overturning a C&R analyst's decision. Survey results indicate eligibility determination requests and pre-employment document reviews received the lowest customer satisfaction scores of all C&R services. Supporting survey statements indicated there is limited information available as to exactly which pre-employment documents are needed to complete the eligibility determination process.

There is no formalized process for boards to appeal a decision by an analyst, and this situation leads to appeals directly to the highest levels of OHR leadership, which bypasses unit staff and managers. Communication regarding overriding decisions is made directly to boards, and analysts report very little direction, guidance, or training is provided to the analysts regarding the need for a re-evaluation of the candidate's skills and experience. There is no tracking mechanism for identifying trends in requests for re-evaluation and no follow-up training provided to the C&R staff or boards.

The DCA OHR intranet page for C&R provides a listing of the unit's primary responsibilities. Providing consultation to management and HR liaisons regarding various aspects of personnel, such as best hiring methods and practices, is the first service listed, and collaborating and strategizing with boards on their recruitment efforts to expand candidate pools is listed as the third service in the listing of the unit's primary responsibilities. There are no specific, discrete activities that directly relate to analysts performing these services.

Surveys conducted with hiring managers and HR liaisons found 33% of hiring managers report that they use 'hiring methods and best practices' and 'recruitment strategies to expand candidate pools' despite having limited training. Ninety-four percent of survey respondents report using C&R 'hiring methods and best practices consultation' service once monthly or not at all. Ninety-six percent of survey respondents report using C&R 'recruitment strategies to expand candidate pools' service less than once monthly or not at all. The OHR staff survey found the factors that have the most significant negative impact on processing timelines are the quality of the submissions by boards and the lack of responsiveness of internal customers.

Best practice would involve assigning an analyst to a hiring manager before an RPA is initiated. C&R SMEs report that this service is underutilized by boards and does not represent a significant activity in performing their daily duties. DCA's Office of Human Resources staff report a high percentage of errors in RPA package submission. Errors and deficiencies increase processing timelines as packages are returned to boards for corrections and revisions.

The Classification and Recruitment unit's processes are manual and paper-driven and can result in 'lost' requests, either prior to being received by OHR or misfiled within OHR. The Classification and Recruitment unit's management and staff confirm there is no statute or regulatory requirement requiring original signatures and hard copy request package submissions to their knowledge. This business process of requiring original signatures adds to processing times. There is no consistency in the requirements for hard copy submission of requests, and many internal customers report they hand deliver physical hard copy package requests and submit them as soft digital copies, which may lead to duplication in recording requests.

Most interviews with internal customers and C&R staff indicated an electronic platform for submitting, storing, and possible automating functions would increase transparency and lead to increased productivity and decreased processing times. Interviews with external human resources organizations indicate a preference for electronic submission, storage, and tracking of requests. The Department of General Services recently unveiled an 'eRPA' system, and other entities report using SharePoint (either to share Excel advanced workbooks or as issue trackers).

The most meaningful measure of performance is the reduction in total time from a board initiating a request to new hire approval. Of the 154 RPA packages reviewed, 135 had an OHR Date Stamp and Final Approval Date. For reviewed RPAs received between January 2017 and February 2020, it took an average of 107 days for C&R to grant Final Approval. According to DGS, their target processing goal for making new hires is 45 days. Achieving a similar goal would require shared commitment from both the boards and C&R.

Improvement Opportunities

Based on the activities conducted as mentioned, OIO has identified the following opportunities for improvement:

1. **Efficiency – Lengthy processing times have created the need to re-advertise positions and conduct additional rounds of interviews as preferred candidates are no longer available or interested in the employment offers by the time the hiring boards are approved to make initial job offers.**
 - 1.1. **Undertake a pilot project to triage and assign incoming requests to analysts based on workload and analyst skill level/experience.** The current method used to assign requests does not optimize workload or skill set resulting in increased processing times and lower than expected quality ratings on surveys. Processing times and service quality are expected to be positively impacted by changing from current roster assignments to a more dynamic process that allows management to maintain quality and processing times while onboarding new staff. The Organizational Improvement Office recommends assigning requests to the next available analyst according to current workload and business rules based on the analyst's level of experience. To address uneven volumes, OHR should use a triage method to balance workloads and reduce processing times for all customer requests.
 - 1.2. **Provide formalized consultation services to include best practices in hiring methods and targeted recruitment strategies.** The Organizational Improvement Office recommends modifying C&R analyst responsibilities to perform a more customer focused leadership role. In this new capacity, they will edit and provide assistive feedback for Memorandums of Justification, Duty Statements (as needed), and RPA forms for approval by boards. DCA's Office of Human Resources staff report a high percentage of errors in RPA package submission. Errors increase processing timelines as forms are returned to boards for corrections and revisions.
 - 1.3. **Expand existing pilot programs to allow boards to post job opportunities after RPA approval and to perform preliminary evaluations of up to five candidates per round of interviews.** The

Organizational Improvement Office recommends allowing boards to post job opportunities while still providing this service to boards without resources or training. The Organizational Improvement Office also recommends expanding the pilot program for eligibility determinations to perform determinations on up to five candidates prior to interviews. Surveys and interview respondents report a high degree of dissatisfaction with the requirement to perform interviews before finding out if a candidate is eligible and is 'reachable' on the certification lists.

1.4. Evaluate business processes to allow for receiving, storing, and tracking electronic submissions.

The Classification and Recruitment unit's processes are manual and paper-driven. This system of record can result in misplaced requests, either prior to being received by OHR or misfiled within OHR. The Classification and Recruitment unit's managers and staff deny there is any statute or regulatory mandates requiring original signatures and hard copy package submissions. Requiring hard copy paper submission adds to processing times. There is no consistency in requirements for hard copy paper submissions, and internal customers report they hand deliver hard copy original paper packages in addition to submitting 'soft' digital copies, which may lead to duplications in recording the requests. (Please note the survey was performed prior to COVID-19 impact. DCA's Office of Human resources has transitioned to accepting the submission of electronic documentation on a more routine basis.)

1.5. Define system requirements and procure a system for automating acknowledgments, alerts, and decision notifications for internal and external customers. Interview subjects indicate an electronic platform for submitting, storing, and automating select acknowledgment and notifications would increase productivity and reduce processing times.

2. Quality - Survey responses and interviews demonstrate C&R internal customers have significant variations in experience and satisfaction levels based on their roles and level of interactions with C&R.

2.1. Ensure all analysts are trained and proficient in processing service requests that represent the highest volumes of requests. The employee survey reveals a significant number of OHR staff have been in their roles for less than one year (OHR 37%, C&R 40%). DCA's Office of Human Resources staff interviews indicate there is no formalized on-boarding or new staff training program. This situation results in analysts with the least amount of experience being assigned complex tasks and activities early in their tenure, before they have mastered basic skills required for the less complex requests. Survey responses and interviews reveal the perception that C&R analysts with less tenure provide less reliable information.

2.2. Encourage internal focus on customer service levels and add customer service training in onboarding, new hire, and ongoing staff training. The C&R would benefit by analyzing anonymous customer satisfaction survey results to determine staff training needs and providing a forum for discussion on the survey results during unit meetings. The Organizational Improvement Office recommends using an improved tracking system to identify opportunities for training board staff and to more effectively utilize existing unit staff.

2.3. Define specific customer roles (Hiring managers, HR Liaisons and Executives) as segments and assign unit managers to advocate for customer segments within the C&R. The Organizational Improvement Office recommends defining specific customer roles as segments (e.g. Hiring Managers, HR Liaisons and Executives) and assigning each C&R manager as an advocate for

specific customer roles. Each C&R manager should hold regular forums with their assigned segment to learn about issues and concerns for each segment and report back to the unit to identify best practices for increasing satisfaction across all customer segments. The Organizational Improvement Office recommends creating specialized communication plans, trainings, and forums for each customer segment focused on the customer role, their unique expectations, and specific concerns.

2.4. Create a standardized business process to receive and track internal customer complaints.

There is no formalized process for boards to appeal a decision by an analyst, and this leads to appeals directly to the highest levels of OHR leadership, which bypasses unit staff and managers. Communication regarding overriding decisions is made directly to boards, and analysts report very little direction, guidance, or training is provided to the analysts regarding the need for a re-evaluation of the candidate's skills and experience. There is no tracking mechanism for identifying trends in requests for re-evaluation and no follow-up training provided to the C&R staff or boards.

2.5. Complete a C&R Strategic Plan with corresponding Mission, Vision, and Values (MVV) statements.

The Organizational Improvement Office recommends C&R work with SOLID Planning to develop a Strategic Plan with goals, objectives, and MVV. During this project's external interviews, it was discovered other state department hiring and recruitment operations, were focused on how to attract and retain top talent in a tight labor market. The C&R Strategic Planning process will produce a competitive proactive focused vision, define strategies that support boards, and serve as an actionable way to reach the Department's goals. Final documents associated with this planning effort should be posted on the C&R intranet page.

3. Transparency - There is no formal tracking system and no consistent approach to how information is entered into the various tracking logs.

3.1. Improve the tracking system of requests to adopt a more robust and reliable tracking system.

The Organizational Improvement Office recommends improving the tracking system to facilitate tracking of all incoming requests to the unit. The Classification and Recruitment unit should develop the capability to summarize individual records into a dashboard and reporting to display open actions with aging related to the date the board initiated the request and accurately reporting closed actions by board, action type, classification, and activity milestones used to calculate accurate processing times. The Classification and Recruitment unit should work towards providing KPI Reports monthly to OHR leadership and internal customers. Organizations use KPIs at multiple levels to evaluate success at reaching targets. High-level KPIs may focus on overall performance, while low-level KPIs may focus on processes and activity milestones. The most meaningful measure of productivity for the unit is the reduction in total time from a board initiating a request to new hire approval (start date may be dependent upon final medical clearances, Criminal Offender Record Information [CORI], and/or new hire availability). The Organizational Improvement Office recommends adopting realistic and aggressive goals for granting Final Approval of hiring requests and activity milestones. By monitoring and reporting average days to Final Approval and activity milestones, C&R will be able to measure and record unit performance and productivity by analyst, board, classification, Position Action Types, etc. and practice continuous process improvement initiatives aimed at reducing overall processing timelines to facilitate boards' ability to hire the best candidates.

3.2. Formalize meetings between C&R staff and clients at least once per month, or quarterly, (depending on board availability and need) to assist boards with issues and preparation. This innovative approach would increase transparency regarding C&R decisions, requirements, and expectations and would provide specific training scenarios for board staff. It would also help strengthen the relationship between the boards and DCA.

3.3. Continue development of an online Human Resources Operations Manual (HROM) with step-by-step guidance and resources. DGS has a well-developed and public facing hiring toolkit website. The hiring toolkit was developed to provide DGS Hiring Managers and Employee Resource Liaisons resources to successfully collect and prepare RPAs in order to minimize delays in recruitment efforts and make a hire within 45 days. The Organizational Improvement Office recommends C&R elicit customer feedback on HROM from different customer segments and develop/tailor interactive tools to target needs by roles or segments. During the development of resources, C&R should solicit feedback from customer segments in focus groups and from surveys to ensure training and resources effectively address concerns from various stakeholders, including internal and external customers. In addition, C&R should consider partnering with a focus group of customers, OIO, and the Office of Information Services to develop a step-by-step intranet guide related to the hiring process. This guide would include step descriptions, expected durations, required forms, resources, templates, and tips. This guide would cover six phases of the hiring process (1. Submission of RPA, 2. Preliminary Interview Activities, 3. Interview and Selection, 4. Minimum Qualification Determinations, 5. Documenting the Hiring Decision, and 6. Preparing for the Start Date).

4. Accountability - Unit success is qualitatively measured in unsolicited feedback (compliments and complaints) from boards.

4.1. Evaluate and monitor customer service levels by sending automated customer satisfaction surveys after completion of requests for services. Survey responses and interviews report C&R internal customers have significant variation in evaluations related to the quality of services provided by C&R by role. The Organizational Improvement Office recommends developing automated processes to send out surveys to hiring managers and HR liaisons to continually identify ways to increase satisfaction across all customer segments. Further, C&R should send customer service surveys at the conclusion of activities related to each request and solicit recommendations from boards on improvement opportunities related to each request. The Classification and Recruitment unit would benefit by incorporating survey ratings and improvement opportunities into KPIs.

4.2. Compile customer service survey results monthly and review with OHR leadership, managers, and staff. By regularly analyzing customer satisfaction surveys, C&R could identify recruitment practices that lead to higher and/or lower than average processing times and develop and promote best practices in hiring and recruitment in the unit and across boards/Department.

4.3. Reference specific statutes and regulations in communications with internal customers. Board personnel are typically well versed in interpreting and applying statutes and regulations for their own business processes and would benefit from accessing the statutes which govern the C&R and drive its policies. For example, when communicating the need for more specific or revised

Memorandums of Justification or Duty Statements, C&R should include references to specific statutes and regulations, when applicable, to allow board staff to better understand and comply with the directives.

- 4.4. Incentivize C&R to minimize processing times throughout the lifecycle of the request (initiation through final approval for appointment).** The Organizational Improvement Office recommends using enhanced tracking and reporting to engage unit staff in continuously monitoring processing times throughout the request lifecycle. The Classification and Recruitment unit should also solicit staff ideas and customer input to adopt and implement innovative and creative methods of reducing timelines for various activity milestones (i.e. the time it takes boards to screen, interview, and identify top candidates; wait times related to management reviews, etc.)
- 4.5. Hold 'open house' events, customer forums, and specialized trainings for individual customer segments.** Meeting with stakeholders will better align unit staff to boards and enhance accountability to board stakeholders and staff.

Summary

The primary focus of this review was the Department's Office of Human Resources Classification and Recruitment unit. Findings and recommendations included in this report are centered on the customer service aspect of the work performed by C&R and are intended to incrementally increase efficiency, quality, transparency, and accountability with the goal of reducing processing times for requests related to hiring and filling vacancies within the Department. In addition to improvement opportunities outlined in the review, it is recommended that the unit perform a time study and workload analysis after implementing the concepts in this report.

Office of Human Resources Continuous Process Improvement Initiatives

The Department's OHR is to be commended for previous continuous process improvement initiatives and pilot programs. Past efforts have produced measurable productivity gains and reductions in processing times. In 2018, OHR undertook a Lean Six Sigma effort to review Classification and Pay (C&P) unit processing times related to adverse actions. This effort led to a reorganization of the C&P unit and duties. The C&P unit was renamed C&R and employee performance management duties were transferred to a newly created Performance Management unit. Eligibility determination performed prior to interviews for select Job Control Opportunity postings were reassigned to C&R. The realignment was expected to reduce processing times related to determinations and evaluations; review of the OHR tracking logs related to eligibility determinations found a reduction in the average processing days.

**OHR Average Processing Days for Eligibility Determination Requests
 Calendar Year 2017 – 2020***

<i>Calendar Year</i>	<i># of requests</i>	<i>Average Processing Days</i>	<i>Unit</i>
2017	2,323	4.19	ESU
2018	2,213	4.14	ESU
2019	2,190	3.58	C&R
2020*	464	2.78	C&R

*Calendar year 2020 YTD to 2/25/2020

The Classification and Recruitment unit has also created three pilot programs focused on improving quality and/or reducing processing times:

- Eligibility determination and minimum qualification evaluations submission prior to interviews for select Job Control Opportunity postings
- Job Control Opportunity posting by select boards
- Certification Lists saved electronically to ECO

DCA's Office of Human Resources leadership and staff are to be recognized for their ongoing commitment to servicing DCA internal customers and focus on continuous process improvements to reduce processing times, enhance quality of services, and drive increased unit performance.

DCA's Office of Human Resources leadership and C&R management have implemented significant business process improvements, which have had a measurable impact on processing timelines. The Organizational Improvement Office's review and recommendations are intended to document the previous process improvements and incrementally supplement these positive changes.

DCA's Office of Human Resources staff and management were actively engaged in the review. There was tremendous participation in the workshops, interviews, and follow up, which directly led to specific recommendations. The interactions were highly beneficial and contributed to the review. All members of the team were helpful in identifying past process improvements and making suggestions for future initiatives. DCA's Office of Human Resources management team is to be commended for their commitment to continuous process improvement and past projects to drive business process enhancements and drive increased staff performance. Without their direct engagement and cooperation, completing the review would not have been possible.