

Benefits & Human Resources Newsletter

May | 2025 |
Issue 5



HR Spotlight: Public Service Recognition Week is this week!

Celebrated the first full week in May since 1985, Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW) is a time set aside to honor the people who serve our nation as government employees.

This year, PSRW is being celebrated from May 5th to May 9th. This week is one of many opportunities we take to thank our over 3,000 employees for the impactful work you do to ensure our City is inclusive, innovative, and thriving.

The City of Madison will have a gathering hosted by Human Resources on May 7th, 2025 starting at noon in Room 215 of the Madison Municipal Building (MMB). Join us for our #TeamCity awards ceremony, cake, coffee, snacks, and games!

Please join us for an extra special celebration of you!

What's New

HR Director

- Childcare Study Update

Benefits

- Improvements to Life Insurance Coverage
- Welcome to Leah and Brittany, new ELR Team Members!
- Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) Updates

Organizational Development

- City Affinity Groups
- Expanded Onboarding Process + Resources for New Permanent Hires
- New Change Management Team Training
- End of Year Summaries Available

HR-Services

- Equitable Hiring Plan
- Outreach Event Attendance
- Compensation Study Update

Childcare Study Update

Erin Hillson, Director of Human Resources



Human Resources Department

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Dear TeamCity,

In my 27 years and counting here with TeamCity, I continue to grow my appreciation for the jobs and benefits the City of Madison provides to support staff and their families. In my role, I get to see the many ways employees, unions, and associations advocate for ways both jobs and benefits can be improved. As I know from my personal experience, childcare is often an important part of that experience.

A number of staff advocacy efforts have resulted in changing internal policies to better support our working families, including expanding [paid parental leave](#) as recently as 2019 (though our 2024 HR equity analysis found that the policy could still use some improvement). The City's Community Development Division also provides childcare tuition assistance and accreditation programs as a service to the community, and has done so for over fifty years! This is a tremendous feat for a city our size and Madison is considered a national model in this area.

In response to employee requests, and to better understand the changing childcare needs of city staff, HR partnered with the LaFollette School of Public Affairs to conduct an analysis in late 2023. With the support of WIC/GET, we first surveyed staff about needs related to access and challenges faced due to job related childcare needs.

Then, together with a team of graduate students, we conducted a cost-benefit analysis on an employer sponsored childcare benefit that met all (24/7) shift care coverage needs of City staff. The study found that the costs of a City-run childcare facility (which are quite high) outweighed the benefits to City staff. That equation would change, however, if the benefits were extended to the wider community. Read the [full report and briefing](#) on the LaFollette School of Public Affairs website.

While a city-run child care center is not a viable option with current City funding levels and in the current budget environment, we are committed to continuing the discussion regarding child care options as part of the City's ongoing efforts to be one of the highest-quality employers in the local area. As always, we very much welcome staff engagement on this and other important topics.

All my best,

Erin

Benefits

Improvements to Life Insurance Coverage

Earlier this year, City HR partnered with our insurance agent M3 to survey employees and get feedback on our life and disability (wage) insurance offerings. We are pleased to share we have already been able to implement two suggested improvements to [life insurance](#) dependent coverage without any impact on premiums.

As outlined in February's newsletter, dependent coverage includes both spouses and child(ren). Eligible employees can elect 1-2 units of dependent coverage either 1) upon initial hire, 2) within 31 calendar days of a qualifying life event (such as birth/adoption or marriage), or 3) by being approved via the medical underwriting process.

While we hope employees never experience the loss of a dependent, the City of Madison feels it is vital for employee wellbeing to provide members of surviving families with adequate life insurance coverage to assist families during this difficult time. Accordingly, two changes are now in place for dependent coverage for child(ren):

- **As of March 1st, coverage amounts for dependent child(ren) have increased.** 1 unit of dependent coverage has increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for an eligible child, while 2 units of dependent coverage have increased from \$10,000 to \$15,000 for an eligible child.
- **Dependent child(ren) are now covered for longer.** The City was able to negotiate elimination of the school enrollment requirement for dependent children ages 21-25. We were also able to negotiate a change to the maximum age for dependent coverage from 25 to 26.

If you are enrolled in dependent coverage or elect dependent coverage following a qualifying event, your child(ren) are now covered through their 26th birthday regardless of school status, and also have more coverage per unit than was previously the case. These changes help bring the City in line with both industry standards and other comparable employers.

We will continue to explore other feedback provided in the survey while we revisit our wage and life insurance policies. Thank you so much for sharing your feedback to assist us with improving our benefit offerings!

Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) Updates

Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) Statements were sent out to participants in April. New this year, you can also [create an account](#) to electronically view and download your annual WRS statement!

Also, the new myETF Benefits system is still in the works. Go-live for local employers is now scheduled for **March 2026**. Stay tuned for more updates!



Welcome, Leah and Brittany!

Please join us in welcoming our new ELR team members: Occupational Accommodations Specialist Leah Reinardy (left) and Leave & Benefits Assistant Brittany Brown (right)!

About Leah Reinardy

Leah (they/she) graduated with a dual degree in Business Administration and Music from Hope College in West Michigan. Leah brings a variety of professional experiences to the Occupational Accommodations Specialist role. Over the past few years, they have worked as an HR professional, a municipal utility worker, and a music educator. Leah also brings experience as a community organizer for various disability and accessibility initiatives in communities across Michigan and Wisconsin.

Outside of work, Leah enjoys reading, learning American Sign Language (ASL), and finding opportunities to continue pursuing music. They look forward to working with individuals and agencies to provide job accommodations and to help make the City an inclusive place to work.

About Brittany Brown

Brittany (she/her) comes to the FMLA/Leave & Benefits Program Assistant position with a background in sociology and criminology, along with experience in the criminal justice field and fast-paced administrative roles. She brings strong communication skills, a detail-oriented mindset, and a commitment to approaching each challenge with an individualized, thoughtful perspective. Striving to be warm, approachable, and solution-focused, she looks forward to using her skills to help people navigate complex matters with clarity and care as part of City HR.

Originally from the greater Rockford, Illinois area, Brittany moved to Madison after graduating from Northern Illinois University. She quickly fell in love with this beautiful city and has been proud to call it home for the past few years. Outside of work, Brittany enjoys tending to her many houseplants, painting, and soaking up as much sunshine as she can during the warmer months. She also has a passion for baking and cake decorating, and loves exploring antique malls in search of hidden treasures.

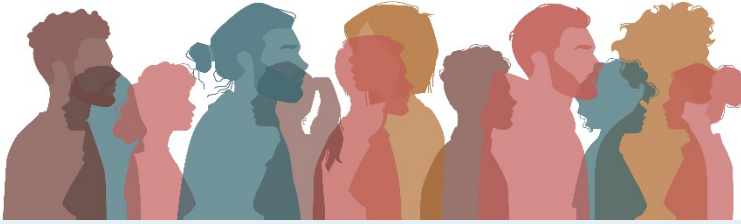
Questions?

You can reach Brittany at fmla@cityofmadison.com and Leah at accommodations@cityofmadison.com!

Organizational Development



CITY OF MADISON AFFINITY GROUPS



Did you know that #TeamCity has 7 [Affinity Groups](#)? Affinity groups are powerful communities where people with shared identities, experiences, or interests come together to find connection, support, and purpose. These groups create safe spaces for dialogue, growth, and collective action. They help members feel seen and heard, offer a platform to advocate for change, and often spark meaningful collaborations that ripple beyond the group itself. Affinity groups foster inclusion, boost morale, and remind us that belonging isn't just a feeling—it's a force for transformation.

The City supports all our employees in participating in Affinity Groups in alignment with our City's Vision – Our Madison: Inclusive, Innovative, and Thriving and our Values. Please communicate with your direct supervisor if you are interested in participating in an Affinity group. Feel free to reach out to Anne Nowak, HR-OD Manager, or Kristy Kumar, Equity and Social Justice Division Manager, with any questions or concerns.

Current Affinity Groups:

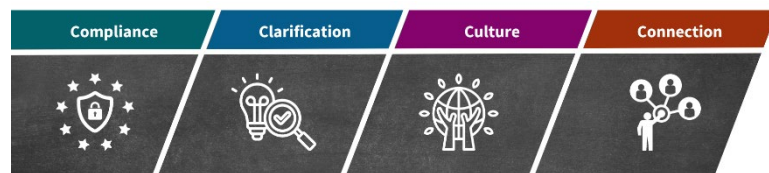
- BIPOC Care Team
- [Disability Resource Group \(DRG\)](#)
- [Gender Equity Team \(GET\)](#)
- Latinx Community Engagement Team (LCET)
- [LGBTQIA+ Social](#)
- Library Pride Group
- [Multicultural Affairs Committee](#)

HR Expands New Permanent Hire Onboarding Guidelines and Resources

A component of our Talent Management Strategy is Onboarding. Our long-term goal for onboarding is to consistently onboard employees to make sure they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be effective in their roles and feel a sense of belonging.

The City has updated and expanded our [new permanent hire onboarding guidelines and resources](#). The new guidelines follow a [Society for Human Resources Management \(SHRM\) Four-C Onboarding Model](#) to ensure new employees have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be effective in their roles and feel a sense of belonging at Team City. These guidelines outline consistent (and customizable) overall onboarding processes for each new hire's first year in their role, beyond the completion of onboarding reports.

HR expects that all supervisors will use the updated onboarding guidelines and resources to onboard each new permanent hire. If you haven't yet explored the linked page above, please take some time to do so, and if you have any questions, please reach out to the Organizational Development team at organizationaldevelopment@cityofmadison.com.



Note! 2024 End of Year summaries are available and can be found on the [HR-Organizational Development Reports webpage](#).

NEW! Change Management Team Training

For supervisors, managers, and team leads with a known and defined change only.

Does your team have a specific and defined change that impacts work coming in the near future? Are you struggling to organize your plan to support staff who may vary in their degree of buy-in for the change? Organizational Development (HR-OD) is now offering a team training to supervisors, managers, and team leads who have a specific change that needs guided change management support. This training involves a three-step process:

1. 1:1 intake conversation between HR-OD staff and the requesting supervisor to discuss team needs
2. Three-hour training session customized for your team (in person if able)
3. Evaluation and debrief after training completion

Follow up next steps may be recommended upon training completion. The sooner you reach out in your change journey the better! We are here to support you and your staff. If you are interested, please fill out [the consultation request form](#) and submit to organizationaldevelopment@cityofmadison.com!

HR-Services

Equitable Hiring Tool → Now a Plan!

We are excited to announce the long-awaited and much-improved Equitable Hiring Plan (formally known as the Equitable Hiring Tool). **Good news - we've reduced the number of questions from 60 to 20!** Every hire needs a hiring plan.

What is the EHP?

The EHP is **THE hiring plan** the City uses to ensure equitable hiring. Diverse teams critically analyze long-standing inequities built into hiring and build a process that is equitable and inclusive from start to finish. **This plan includes all the necessary steps to successfully run your recruitment process.** It's not extra – it's already what you need to do to hire a position at the City in one standardized place.

It is critical that any city staff involved in hiring processes (hiring managers, question evaluators, interviewer panelists, etc.) attend so they understand the changes and expectations. On May 15th and May 19th from 10-11:30am, there will be two opportunities for staff to [attend virtual training](#) to learn how to use the new plan.

Major changes include:

- HR Analyst will **require** an EHP prior to posting the job
- HR Analysts provide baseline minimum qualifications
- More focus on “Skilled Through Alternative Routes”
- A hiring committee approach
- More focus on **all** aspects of the hiring process
- More examples of equity focused interview questions and benchmarking guidance
- More citywide tracking of EHPs

Do you have questions about the Compensation Study? **Check out the [FAQ!](#)**

Outreach Event Attendance

Quarter 2 has been HR's busiest quarter yet in terms of Outreach Event attendance. In April alone, HR attended seven partnered events, totaling over 21 hours of public service.

Below is the list of events attended in the month of April:

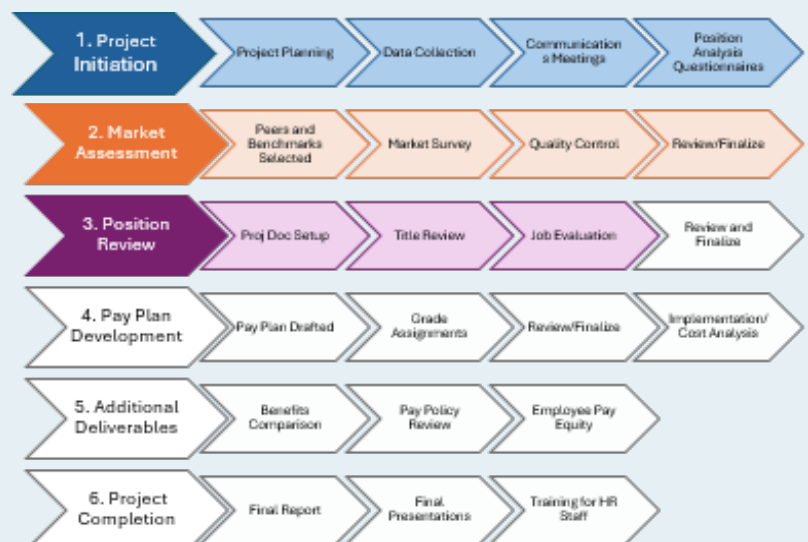
Outreach Event	Date
Parks Hiring Fair	4/2/2025
OPEN Career Fair Vendor Orientation	4/15/2025
LWA Career Fair (3)	4/17/2025
Centro Hispano Speed Networking	4/21/2025
Open Career Fair - LBTQ Career Fair	4/23/2025
Parks Hiring Fair (2)	4/24/2025
Mock Interviews w/ Centro Hispano	4/28/2025

Compensation Study Update

In Q1, our Steering Committee met on a couple of occasions to make key decisions related to our process. Some of those decisions included:

- Moving from a 9-factor evaluation method to an 8-factor evaluation method at the recommendation of Baker Tilly (see [the slide deck](#) on our website for more information)
- Modifying our project timeline to complete the additional deliverables prior to receiving a finalized report
- Identifying all of the organizations we wanted to compare ourselves to

We have now completed the Market Assessment (phase 2), and Baker Tilly is working through the Position Review phase of this work – in particular, getting our data in final form prior to Pay Plan Development. We will be updating you again when we begin Pay Plan Development. For those who prefer to see our progress more visually, please see the project flowchart below!





Contact Information:

You can reach out to Human Resources mainline at (608) 266-4615 or at the email addresses listed below.

- **Human Resources** – HR@cityofmadison.com
- **Benefits** – Benefits@cityofmadison.com
- **Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** – FMLA@cityofmadison.com
- **Accommodations & Access** – Accommodations@cityofmadison.com
- **Organizational Development** – OrganizationalDevelopment@cityofmadison.com
- **Inclusive Workplace** – InclusiveWorkplace@cityofmadison.com

Common Resource Quick Links:

- [Benefits Information](#)
- [City of Madison Jobs](#)
- [Human Resources Website](#)
- [Pay & Benefits](#)
- [Performance Excellence](#)
- [Organizational Development](#)
- [Supervisor Resources](#)
- [Upcoming Courses](#)

Was this communication helpful? ✉



Take this quick survey to let us know!