

Category 7: Human Resources

Human resources are defined as all aspects of personnel administration, except those of training and competency (addressed in Category 8) and health and safety (addressed in Category 11). The heart of any organization is its people, and this category is designed to appraise the importance and results of the human resources program. Completing the human resources section may involve members from other governing entities or other elements of the community.

Criterion 7A: Human Resources Administration

General human resources administration practices are in place and are consistent with local, state/provincial and federal statutory and regulatory requirements.

Summary:

The City of Meridian has an established human resources (HR) department which provides support to the Meridian Fire Department. The human resource director is appointed by the mayor. The Meridian Fire department receives support from the HR department and assists the department with job postings, personnel matters, compensation, discipline, benefits, and initial on-boarding of personnel.

The City of Meridian's *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual* is updated and maintained by the HR department. The HR department has an easily accessible intranet page that includes the entire policy manual and other HR documents and information available to all employees. The HR department has six staff members to handle the human resource needs of the city.

Performance Indicators:

CC 7A.1 A human resources manager is designated.

Description

The City of Meridian has a dedicated, full time human resources director. The human resources director is responsible for directing human resource operations for the City of Meridian and the Meridian Fire Department. The human resources director works with the city’s senior leadership team, mayor, and city council to advance and implement the city’s mission, vision, goals and objectives.

Appraisal

The City of Meridian has had a human resources director for many years. The fire department has worked closely with the human resources director to improve hiring practices and procedures, especially during the last two years in which the department grew in personnel by over 30 percent. Working with the human resources director over the last large hiring periods has helped improve and streamlined hiring procedures within the department, including adding a better pre-employment screening tracking system.

Plan

The department will continue to use the human resources director to assist with personnel processes to include job postings, personnel matters, compensation, discipline, benefits and initial on-boarding of personnel.

References

- Human Resources Director Job Description
- City of Meridian Leadership Organization Chart
- Human Resources Department Organizational Chart

7A.2 The human resources program has adequate staffing to accomplish the human resources administrative functions.

Description

The human resources (HR) department consists of six personnel, including an HR director, a HR coordinator, two senior HR generalists, and a HR benefits specialist. The human resources director oversees the entire HR department and reports directly to the mayor. Two senior human resources generalists oversee personnel related concerns for all city personnel which include investigations, discipline, compensation, new employee hiring, employee retirement, and workers compensation claims. The human resources benefits specialist oversees all personnel benefits such as medical benefits, retirement, FMLA, city wellness programs, and disability. A human resources coordinator is responsible for the dissemination of human resources training to all city personnel, schedules random drug testing, background testing, and verification of employment. There is one administrative assistant to assist all other human resources staff and greet personnel in the front lobby of the human resources office.

Appraisal

The City of Meridian's Human Resources Department is adequality staffed with six personnel serving the human resource needs of the employees. There are no current plans to increasing staffing of the department.

Plan

The department will continue to rely on the HR department to carry out functions related to human resource needs. The HR department will assess their staffing needs internally as the city continues to grow and request any new needed positions through the annual budgeting process and comprehensive financial plan.

References

- Human Resources Director Job Description
- Human Resources Benefits Specialist Job Description
- Human Resources Coordinator Job Description

- Senior Human Resources Generalist Job Description

7A.3 Policies are established to direct the human resources administrative practices in accordance with local, state/provincial and federal requirements. The policies are reviewed annually and updated as needed.

Description

The City of Meridian has established human resource (HR) policies published in its *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual*. The manual is posted on the city's intranet for all employees. There are ten sections of policies and procedures, including general information, employment policies, classification & compensation, time off and leaves, benefits, workplace policies, standards of conduct, termination and disciplinary action, citywide finance policies and citywide information technology. Policies are reviewed and updated annually or as needed and meet all local, state, and federal requirements.

Appraisal

The City of Meridian's policies and procedures have been reviewed by the city's legal counsel for compliance with all local, state, and federal requirements. If questions arose regarding the interpretation of a city policy or procedure, legal counsel and the human resources department would meet to provide an interpretation to ensure legal compliance. A comprehensive review of all city policies was conducted in 2022, which led to each policy being broken into a policy and a procedure to increase clarity and transparency for the future.

Plan

The department will continue to operate under the policies and procedures set forth by the City of Meridian, and the HR department will continue to work with the city's legal counsel to ensure that all policies and procedures adhere to applicable laws. The HR department will continue to update and review policies and procedures on an ongoing basis.

References

- *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual*
- *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual, Table of Contents*

- *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual, Manual Overview*

Criterion 7B: Recruitment, Selection, Retention and Promotion

Systems are established to attract, select, retain, and promote qualified personnel in accordance with applicable local, state/provincial and federal statutory requirements.

Summary:

The Meridian Fire Department in partnership with the City of Meridian participates in recruitment efforts locally, regionally, and nationally for entry level, administrative, and executive positions. The department follows defined city policies and procedures for staffing requisition requests and job posting announcements. Internally, the department conducts a defined hiring process including prescreening, virtual and in person interviews, background checks, and physical assessments. The department has been able to successfully fill its last several recruit and lateral academies using this process. The department is actively looking at ways to expand its recruitment efforts and has established a recruitment committee with line members and administrative and executive personnel.

The department has been looking into ways to more actively recruit in the community and diversify its applicant pool. The department has supported and participated in a local women's fire bootcamp, sends members to the Women in Fire International Conference every two years, and has expanded its department recruitment website to contain more information about women in the fire service, and is evaluating the possibility of a mentorship program for prospective employees. The city is an equal opportunity employer that follows all local, state, and federal employment laws.

Performance Indicators:

7B.1 A mechanism is in place to identify and announce potential entry-level, lateral, and promotional positions.

Description

The department identifies positions on an as-needed basis due to retirements, departures, or attrition. The department follows Standard Operating Policy and Procedure 2.7, *Staffing, Selection, Promotion, and Transfer*, for job posting announcements. When a vacancy exists for an entry-level or lateral position, the department completes a staffing requisition form and submits it to the human resources (HR) department. Then, a job announcement is posted to the City of Meridian's website on the employment opportunities page. The department also posts job announcements on its social media pages such as *Facebook* and *Instagram*. The city also pays to post job announcements on *Daily Dispatch* and *Firehouse Magazine*.

Promotional announcements are posted in accordance with Article 15 of the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627. Promotional testing announcements are posted with a bibliography at every station and emailed to all department personnel no later than 90 days prior to the promotional test. Promotional lists for driver, captain of suppression, and battalion chief are established at least annually, and members are promoted off these lists when openings occur throughout the year. All lists currently do not expire per the CLA.

Appraisal

The department and city's current procedure for announcing entry-level and lateral positions has been adequate. The department successfully hired over 30 firefighters in the last two years using the current process. In 2023 the department established a recruitment committee with representatives from line personnel and administration to address the department's future recruitment and staffing needs. The department has followed the CLA regarding promotional testing and has successfully filled all promotional positions from established lists.

Plan

The department will continue to follow Standard Operating Policy and Procedure 2.7, *Staffing, Selection, Promotion, and Transfer*. The deputy chief of administration will work with HR to establish a process for determining future staffing needs based on retirement and attrition on an annual basis. The recruitment committee will develop a list of recommendations for ways to enhance hiring, including new locations to post job announcements.

References

- Standard Operating Policy 2.7 - *Staffing, Selection, Promotion, and Transfer*
- Standard Operating Procedure 2.7 - *Staffing, Selection, Promotion, and Transfer*
- Collective Labor Agreement between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627, Article 15, pg. 15-17
- Staffing Requisition Form
- Employment Opportunities Website Screenshot
- Captain Promotional Exam Announcement 6-14-2023
- Recruitment Committee Agenda
- Position Time to Fill Report

7B.2 The agency's administration and its members are part of the recruiting process.

Description

Recruitment for positions in the department occurs throughout all the levels of the fire department. The department's public information officer (PIO) posts job announcements on social media and many department members then share those postings on their own accounts. The department has a recruitment video featuring many members of its line personnel and administration. The department also has a recruitment and hiring committee with members from administration and line personnel. Several of the department's members are also fire service instructors at the College of Western Idaho's (CWI) Fire Academy program, which serves as a valuable recruitment tool.

Appraisal

Previously, members of the department were only part of the recruitment process in an informal manner. While the Treasure Valley is now a growing metro area, in the past the Meridian community was still considered to be small and much recruiting occurred through word of mouth in informal settings. As the city has grown, and fire department recruitment across the country has declined, the department created a recruitment committee to address the department's recruitment needs. The recruitment committee includes representatives from administration, operations, training, and line personnel. The department added a more comprehensive recruitment page to its website. The department also participated in the Ignite Bootcamp, a local fire camp for adult women and teenage girls and boys. This provided an opportunity for the department to reach new potential recruits through member participation.

Plan

The recruitment committee will continue to meet to identify the future hiring needs of the department and to identify new recruitment opportunities. The department will evaluate the apprenticeship programs of other local area departments and determine if a similar program would be feasible at the Meridian Fire Department through CWI.

References

- <https://meridiancity.org/fire/join-meridian-fire/>

- Recruitment Committee Agenda
- Ignite Bootcamp Booth
- CWI Instructor List
- <https://www.columbiasouthern.edu/blog/blog-articles/2023/february/emerging-trends-in-the-fire-service/>

CC 7B.3 **Processes and screening/qualifying devices used for recruitment and selection of initial, lateral, and promotional candidates are job-related and comply with all local, state/provincial, and federal requirements, including equal opportunity and discrimination statutes.**

Description

The City of Meridian is an equal opportunity employer as outline in the city’s *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual*, policy and procedure 2.1 – *Equal Employment Opportunity*. The administrative division screens all applications to ensure that minimum qualifications are met for posted positions. The city’s human resources (HR) department assists with screenings to ensure that veterans preferences points are applied correctly and that screening adheres to local, state and federal laws. All candidates who meet minimum qualifications are issued a pre-interview survey and then invited for an initial virtual interview. Applicants who pass the initial interview are invited for a second, in person interview. The most qualified candidates are given a conditional offer contingent upon successful completion of a background check and physical. The process and application workflow are managed using internal *eRecruitment* software which tracks status, notifications, veteran’s preference, screenings, and tasks.

The HR department receives all internal applications for promotions and screens all applicants for minimum qualifications, such as education, participation in required development programs, and certifications. An eligibility list is then sent from HR to the deputy chief of operations.

Appraisal

The recruitment and selection procedures employed have proven to be suitable and dependable. The department has successfully collaborated with the HR department to carry out multiple successful recruitment and promotion initiatives in the last several years, both for entry level, lateral, and administrative level positions. These endeavors have resulted in accepted selections, with no objections raised against the process. The city's recruitment and selection process has adhered to all local, state, and federal laws concerning equal opportunity and anti-discrimination measures.

Plan

The department will continue to work with HR to ensure that all selection and promotional processes comply with local, state, and federal equal employment and anti-discrimination laws. The department will continue to use the *eRecruitment* software to manage its hiring process.

References

- Standard Operating Policy 2.1 – *Equal Employment Opportunity*
- Standard Operating Procedure 2.1 – *Equal Employment Opportunity*
- *eRecruitment* Applicant List Screenshot
- *eRecruitment* Screening Checklist Screenshot

7B.4 The agency's workforce composition is reflective of the service area demographics, or the agency has put forth a reasonable effort by instituting an effective recruitment plan to achieve the desired workforce composition.

Description

The City of Meridian is 88.3 percent Caucasian, 6.9 percent Hispanic/Latino, 1 percent Black/African American and 4.8 percent other. The city is 50.3 percent female and 49.7 percent male. The department's line personnel are 96 percent Caucasian, 2 percent Hispanic/Latino, and 2 percent Black/African American. The department is 98 percent male and 2 percent female. The department actively engages in a variety of recruitment efforts to increase diversity. The department supports and participates in the local Ignite Fire Bootcamp for young women and teenage girls and boys, is a member of Women in Fire, and promotes women in the fire service on its recruitment website. The city is also a designated Affirmative Action Employer and maintains a written affirmative action plan according to the *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual*.

Appraisal

Comparing city to department demographics, racial and ethnic minorities have been moderately underrepresented in the fire department, whereas women have been dramatically underrepresented, especially in line positions. The department established a recruitment and retention committee to help bolster diversity hiring. The department also enhanced the recruitment section of the department to highlight opportunities for women. The department has been a member of Women in Fire for several years and has sent members to the Women in Fire International Conference and participated in the National Fire Academy's first ever "Women's Weekend" in partnership with Women in Fire. The department has had several members instruct at the College of Western Idaho's Fire Academy program which serves the Treasure Valley, including the city of Meridian. The CWI program also places academy graduates in apprenticeship programs with local departments, however the Meridian Fire Department has not yet taken advantage of this program.

Plan

The department will utilize the recruitment and retention committee to provide recommendations for hiring practices and targeted recruitment. The department will examine additional recruitment opportunities including an apprenticeship program as well as utilizing the local College of Western Idaho fire academy as a more robust recruitment tool. The department will continue to support its underrepresented personnel through educational opportunities.

References

- Meridian Fire Department Demographics
- NFA Women's Weekend
- Women in Fire International Conference
- Ignite Bootcamp Booth
- MFD Website Women in Fire screenshot

7B.5 A new-member orientation program is in place.

Description

All newly hired employees, on their first day of employment, attend a new hire orientation and onboarding meeting with the human resources (HR) department. New employee orientation includes information on the city's history, vision, values, organization, city policies, paperwork, insurance, benefits, intranet and security, and standards of conduct. Any personnel hired into a negotiated position with the Meridian Professional Firefighters Local 4627 (the union) also receive an orientation during their academy from the union to explain their specific hours of work, benefits, and conditions of employment governed by the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA). All new fire department personnel receive additional onboarding from the administrative division including uniform fittings and issuing gear, as well as department specific program orientations such as chart writing software, computer aided dispatch, etc. All entry level and lateral employee also complete an 18- or 6-week academy, respectively.

Appraisal

The new employee orientations from the city and the department have been an effective tool to educate and inform new members of city policies and procedures, as well as benefits and other work conditions. Orientations with the union have been effective but have not been scheduled regularly during academy.

Plan

The department will continue to work with HR to schedule day-one onboarding for all new employees. The HR department will be responsible for providing initial city orientation with the most up to date information. The department will work with the union to provide a fire department-specific orientation using a more standardized timeline for the next academy.

References

- MFD Full Academy Schedule, Pg. 1
- City of Meridian New Employee Orientation

- [Union Benefits Enrollment Guide](#)
- [Union Benefits FAQ](#)

CC 7B.6 **A supervised probationary process is used by the agency to evaluate new and promoted members based on the candidates' demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities.**

Description

The department has an outlined 12-month probationary process for all entry-level personnel. All recruit and lateral entry-level firefighters are issued a probationary task book. The probationary year and task book are broken up into several phases. During phase one probation, new hires receive performance evaluations from captains every shift and from battalion chiefs every month. During phase two of probation, captains evaluate probationary hires monthly (or as needed) along with a monthly battalion chief's evaluation. At the end of each phase, probationary fire fighters complete a written exam and a practical evaluation. Each phase includes skill reviews and individual performance standards that probationary firefighters must be signed off on. Three weeks before the probationary period ends, probationary firefighters complete an end of probation interview with the Training Division. Entry level firefighters who are also paramedics must complete a paramedic training phase with a field training officer, complete a paramedic task book, and then pass a practical examination with the department's medical directors.

Members wishing to promote to the rank of engineer, captain, or battalion chief must first complete a development class provided by the department. Then each position has a position specific task book that must be completed prior to testing for a promoted position.

Appraisal

The department's probationary and promotional processes have ensured that all members meet a department standard for their respective roles. All probationary firefighters, whether they are entry level or lateral hires, were required to complete the same written and skills evaluations and were evaluated using standard criteria. All promoted positions have followed the same standard of completing a development course and task book which has ensured that all applicants meet the minimum standard for promotion prior to testing.

Plan

The department will continue to follow a standardized process for new hires, lateral hires, and internal promotions. The training division will be responsible for overseeing the probationary process and provide adequate training to all company officers who are responsible for probationary firefighters. All promotional positions will require a task book and development course prior to testing. The training division will evaluate the task books for all positions at least annually to determine if any changes or updates are needed.

References

- Probationary Firefighter Task Book
- Driver/Operator Task Book
- Captain Task Book
- Battalion Chief Task Book

7B.7 The agency has an employee/member recognition program.

Description

The department's *Meritorious Service Awards* policy outlines the member recognition program specific to the department. Peers can submit Meritorious Service Award Recognition Forms in recognition of personnel who go above and beyond to the established awards committee. The department holds an employee recognition event at least annually and presents a variety of awards, including suppression employee of the year, non-suppression employee of the year, unit citations, chief's award of excellence, distinguished service award, medal of valor, medal of courage, and longevity awards. The City of Meridian also has an internal recognition program called the "Shining Star" award, which supervisors may bestow to employees in recognition of exceptional work and demonstration of the city's values.

Appraisal

The department's *Meritorious Service Awards* policy has been in place since 2011 and has been regularly utilized by all members. Members have been able to submit recognition forms year-round but usually do so when prompted by administration. The annual awards ceremony has been well attended and has also served as an opportunity for members' families to participate in department events.

Plan

The department will continue to follow the *Meritorious Service Awards* policy and encourage members to submit recognition forms on a regular basis.

References

- AP 525 – *Meritorious Service Awards* Policy
- AP 525 – Meritorious Service Awards Form
- Shining Star Award
- Shining Star Award Instructions

7B.8 The agency's working conditions and environment accommodate diverse and qualified applicants and retains a tenured workforce that is reflective of the community.

Description

The department works closely with the Meridian Professional Firefighters Local 4627 (the union) to offer competitive wages, benefits, and working conditions to help attract and retain employees. The department also encourages membership to be involved in various committees and programs, and offers regular promotional testing and development programs to encourage career growth. The department has a recruitment committee that is tasked with improving hiring efforts and examining barriers to the department.

Appraisal

The department has been able to attract and retain a qualified workforce. Despite national and local downward trends for firefighter recruitment, the department has been able to successfully fill its last several lateral and entry level academies with qualified applicants. The average department tenure is 9.4 years, which includes the large number of new firefighters hired in the last year. In addition, the department has had a turnover rate of less than 5% annually for the last several years, which includes administrative personnel and academy cadets who did not pass minimum standards. Prior to 2014, the department also employed volunteers and has only been tracking retention recently. The city recently completed a comprehensive wage study which lead to an increase in salary for many administrative positions.

Plan

The department will continue to work with the local and HR department to offer competitive wages, benefits, and conditions of employment. The department will continue to track department tenure and turnover and watch for any changing trends.

References

- Fire Department Turnover Rates
- Department Tenure List

- City of Meridian Wage Study Overview

7B.9 The agency conducts exit interviews, periodic employee surveys or other mechanisms to acquire feedback for improving policies and procedures.

Description

The department does not regularly conduct exit interviews. The human resources (HR) department regularly conducts exit interviews in accordance with Standard Operating Policy 8.2 - *Termination of Employment*. Interviews are conducted by HR to obtain information and suggestions from the employee that may help to improve the quality services and the work environment, identify areas of improvement, and advise the employee of benefits and benefit conversion privileges for which the employee may be eligible. Exit interviews are voluntary. The department also sends out surveys to the membership to acquire feedback on department policy, mission, values, and long-term vision. The department also has regular meetings with Meridian Professional Firefighters Local 4627 (the union) in labor management meetings and policy committee meetings to improve policies and procedures.

Appraisal

A recent survey sent out the membership regarding the department's long-term vision had an over 30 percent response rate. Survey responses were a key point of the departments 10-year vision planning meeting. The department's regular meetings with the policy committee and labor management have ensured that policies are co-created with the union and have membership input.

Plan

Given that the department has a low turnover rate primarily due to retirement or academy withdrawals, the department does not foresee a need to conduct its own exit interviews in the future. The department will create a process with HR to respond to any concerns brought up on exit interviews from department employees. The department will continue to work with the union through labor management meetings and policy committee meetings to solicit membership feedback.

References

- 10 Year Vision Survey Responses

- 10 Year Vision Meeting Agenda
- Standard Operating Policy 8.2 – *Termination of Employment*
- Standard Operating Procedure 8.2 – *Termination of Employment*
- AP 218 – *Meetings and Committees*

7B.10 The agency conducts workforce assessments and has a plan to address projected personnel resource needs, including retention and attrition of tenured and experienced employees/members.

Description

The Deputy Chief of Administration is responsible for reviewing upcoming retirements and attrition to determine the personnel resource needs of the department. The deputy chief of administration then creates personnel needs list for line personnel, executive positions, and administrative support personnel, and follows city policy for staffing requisition requests. According to the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627 (the union), the department must fill all entry-level firefighter vacancies within one year, and maintain a current promotional list for engineers, captains, and battalion chiefs.

Appraisal

The department has successfully identified position needs and created hiring lists using retirement projections. The City of Meridian has directed all departments to not over hire or fill positions prior to them being vacated, which has not allowed the department to fill positions prior to a vacancy occurring. This has led to an increasing number of lateral hires to more quickly fill positions.

Plan

The deputy chief of administration will continue to be responsible for reviewing vacancies and determining hiring needs due to retirements and attrition. The deputy chief of administration will work with the division chief of training to evaluate attrition rates in lateral and entry level academies. The department will continue to work with the human resources department and the city's elected officials to improve the hiring process to allow for over hires in anticipation of retirements or vacancies, or due to anticipated attrition in academies.

References

- Collective Labor Agreement between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627, Article 14, pg. 14

- Staffing Requisition Form

Criterion 7C: Personnel Policies and Procedures

Documented personnel policies and procedures are in place to guide both administrative and personnel behavior.

Summary:

The City of Meridian's *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual* maintains all policies regarding code of conduct, workplace policies, employee policies, and standards of conduct. This includes disciplinary procedures for non-bargaining unit personnel, standards of conduct, conflicts of interest policies, and discrimination policies. The Meridian Fire Department also has its own department-specific policies regarding code of conduct, discipline, and discrimination. The line personnel of the Meridian Fire Department are governed by a collective labor agreement which also outlines discrimination policies, discipline, and grievance procedures. All city, department, and labor documents are updated regularly and posted on the city's intranet.

Performance Indicators:

CC 7C.1 Personnel policies, procedures, and rules are current, documented and communicated to all personnel.

Description

The City of Meridian publishes its employee handbook, the *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual*, and provides a copy to all new employees and posts it on the intranet for all personnel to access. Personnel policies and procedures are part of this manual and are reviewed annually and updated as needed. The department also has internal personnel policies and procedures that are also published on the intranet for its members, and are also distributed to new hires. The Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627 (the union) also dictates many personnel policies and practices for line personnel, and is also published on the intranet.

Appraisal

The human resources (HR) department has maintained and updated the city's employee manual. City personnel policies and procedures were completely overhauled in 2022 to provide more clarity and transparency to personnel. HR has regularly reviewed policies and procedures annually and updated them as needed. All city employee policies have been reviewed by the city's legal counsel to ensure compliance with state, local, and federal law. The department's internal policies are created in policy committees which include representatives from administration and the union. The CLA is updated and reviewed each time it expires during contract negotiations. All city and department policies and the CLA have been posted on the city's intranet for all personnel.

Plan

The HR department will continue to be responsible for updating the employee manual and providing updates to all personnel. The department will work with the union to create a more regular meeting schedule of the policy committee so that policies can be regularly reviewed and updated. The department will be responsible for posting updated policies on the intranet and providing them to all department members. The union and the city will

meet during contract negotiations to update the CLA and then communicate any changes with the membership and post an updated CLA on the intranet.

References

- Employee Policy Manual Intranet Screenshot
- Department Policies Intranet Screenshot
- Collective Labor Agreement Intranet Screenshot
- *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual*
- Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627

CC 7C.2 The agency has a policy that defines and prohibits harassment, bias and unlawful discrimination of employees/members based on sex, race, disability or other legally protected characteristics, and describes the related reporting procedures. The policy and organizational expectations specific to employee behavior are communicated formally to all members/employees and are enforced.

Description

The City of Meridian's *Unlawful Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation* Policy and Procedure is published in the city's *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual*. The policy prohibits harassment based on legally protected characteristics and outlines the reporting procedure. The department also has an internal Code of Conduct policy which also includes an anti-discrimination clause. Furthermore, the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627 has an anti-discrimination article which also prohibits discrimination of union members.

Appraisal

All department personnel have been provided access to the city's *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual* and the department's internal *Code of Conduct* policy. All bargaining members have been provided a copy of the CLA through the intranet or in union meetings.

Plan

The city and the department will continue to post and communicate the appropriate anti-discrimination policies to the membership. The HR department will continue to follow procedures for handling discrimination complaints as outlined in the employee manual.

References

- Standard Operating Policy 2.3 – *Unlawful Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation*
- Standard Operating Procedure 2.3 – *Unlawful Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation*

- AP 400 - *Code of Conduct*
- Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627, Article 2 – Discrimination, pg. 2

7C.3 A corrective actions system, which ensures accountability, is in place.

Description

The department's disciplinary policies, procedures, and processes are outlined in department policy AP 210 – *Discipline* and Article 28 of the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627. The discipline process outlined in department policy defines both informal and formal discipline and defines how progressive discipline should proceed. The CLA adds due process and just cause to disciplinary procedures and outlines timelines for how long disciplinary records may be maintained for personnel.

Appraisal

The disciplinary process has been fair and legal and mutually agreed to by the city, the department administration, and the union. The disciplinary process has been effectively communicated to the membership and has been made available on the department intranet.

Plan

The department will continue to follow the disciplinary process outlined in department policy and the CLA. Any changes to the disciplinary policy will take place in policy committee meetings with representatives from the local. The department will continue to abide by all local, state, and federal laws regarding Weingarten representation, Garrity Rights, and Loudermill hearings.

References

- AP 210 – *Discipline*
- Collective Labor Agreement between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627, Article 28, pg. 30-32

CC 7C.4 An internal ethics and conflict of interest policy is published and communicated to employees/members.

Description

The City's Standards of Conduct is published in the City of Meridian's *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual* in Policy and Procedure 7.5. The *Standard of Conduct* Policy also requires that employees abide by the State of Idaho's Code of Ethics sections 18-1351 through 18-1362; The Prohibition Against Contract with Officers Act sections 59-201-209; and the Ethics in Government Act sections 59-701 through 59-705 and any other state statutes that govern city government. The city also has a published *Conflict of Interest* Policy and Procedure 6.18. The department also has an internal *Code of Conduct* policy in AP-400. All department and city policies are published on the department intranet.

Appraisal

The department and the city's standards of conduct, code of conduct, and conflict of interest policies are all provided to employees upon hire and are published and updated on the city's intranet. The city has had an anonymous compliance and ethics help line for the last 6 years to provide employees a third-party outlet for conduct and conflict of interest anonymous reporting.

Plan

The department and the city will continue to publish and update the Standards of Conduct, Conflict of Interest, and Code of Conduct policies and follow all state, local, and federal laws.

References

- Standard Operating Policy 7.5 – *Standards of Conduct*
- Standard Operating Procedure 7.5 – *Standards of Conduct*
- Standard Operating Policy 6.18 – *Conflict of Interest*
- Standard Operating Procedure 6.18 – *Conflict of Interest*

- AP 400 – *Code of Conduct*
- AP 400 –Code of Conduct Reference, State Statutes

7C.5 An employee/member grievance/complaint process is published and communicated to employees/members.

Description

Article 16 of the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627 (the union) outlines the established grievance procedure. The grievance procedures states that members and administration should attempt to resolve grievances at the lowest level possible. It also outlines the timeline and methodology of the grievance process from first complaint until final resolution, including possible arbitration.

Appraisal

The negotiated grievance procedure has suited the needs of the department and been an effective tool for resolving issues between the membership and the department. The department has never had a grievance unresolved or had to use the arbitration process in the last 5 years.

Plan

The department will continue to comply with the established grievance procedure, attempt to resolve conflicts and grievances at the lowest level possible, and maintain an up to date copy of the CLA on the department's intranet.

References

- Collective Labor Agreement between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627, Article 16, pg. 17-20

Criterion 7D: Use of Human Resources

Human resources development and utilization is consistent with the agency's established mission, goals and objectives.

Summary:

The Fire Department's mission is to protect and enhance our community through professionalism and compassion. The department aims to retain a highly professional and tenured workforce through professional development programs, a strong labor-management relationship, and a strong organizational structure with defined roles and responsibilities for each job description.

Performance Indicators:

CC 7D.1 A position classification system and a process by which jobs are audited and modified are in place.

Description

The City of Meridian has an employment classification system as defined in the *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual*, policy 3.1 – *Employee Classification*. The human resources (HR) department is responsible for administering the policy and conducts periodic reviews of positions to ensure appropriate classification. The Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627 (the union) defines all negotiated positions and classifications including entry-level and probationary firefighter, engineer, suppression captain, battalion chief, training captain, and captain fire inspector.

Appraisal

The City of Meridian conducted a city employee compensation, job classification and wage study in 2022 through Gallagher Human Resources and Compensation Consulting. As a result, job descriptions and classifications for some city employees were rewritten and received changes to their compensation.

Plan

The HR department will continue to be responsible for the regular review and audit of city employment positions. The department will work with the union to update descriptions and compensation for negotiated positions through the collective bargaining process.

References

- City of Meridian Wage Study Overview
- Collective Labor Agreement between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627, pg. 22-23, Appendix A, Appendix E

7D.2 Current documented job descriptions exist for all positions, and incumbent personnel have input into revisions.

Description

The department maintains a current file of all job descriptions for all department positions, including negotiated positions. All job descriptions are available on the city's intranet. Job descriptions for open positions are available on the department's public facing website employment opportunities page. Current employees outside of the bargaining unit have the opportunity to discuss and modify their positions with their supervisor. Position descriptions for union employees are defined by the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627 (the union) and negotiated with administration and the city.

Appraisal

The City of Meridian conducted a city employee compensation, job classification and wage study in 2022 through Gallagher Human Resources and Compensation Consulting. As a result, job descriptions and classifications for some city employees were rewritten using employee inputs through a questionnaire. The Administrative Services Division Manager of the Fire Department also completed a Division Growth Plan which included the rewriting or reclassifying of certain administrative support roles. The plan is currently being reviewed for incorporation in to the city's long-term financial plan. Negotiated positions are revised or discussed during contract negotiations or using memorandums of understanding. In 2022 the union and the city successfully negotiated a newly created Captain of Logistics position.

Plan

Job descriptions will be managed, updated, and published by the Human Resources department in accordance with Employee Classification Policy 3.1. The department will continue to negotiate position descriptions with the union.

References

- City of Meridian Wage Study Overview

- Collective Labor Agreement between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627, Appendix A
- Collective Labor Agreement between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627, Appendix E
- Standard Operating Policy 3.1 – *Employee Classification*
- Standard Operating Procedure 3.1 – *Employee Classification*

7D.3 A personnel appraisal system is in place.

Description

The City of Meridian conducts annual employee performance reviews according to Standard Operating Policy and Procedure 3.4.3 – *Performance Increases to Salary*. The department uses *Tenzinga* software for its performance management of its line personnel. Performance management of line personnel is defined by department policy AP-505 - *Performance Management*. All supervisors are expected to complete annual evaluations for their crew members, as well as provide regular performance logs throughout the year.

Appraisal

The department has been using *Tenzinga* for several years but has not seen the program used to its full capabilities. All supervisors have completed evaluations throughout the year for their subordinates, but performance evaluations have not been used in a meaningful way by the department. All administrative personnel have been evaluated according to city policy.

Plan

The department will evaluate whether the *Tenzinga* software is useful to the department or if the department should evaluate other performance tracking systems. The deputy chief of operations will be in charge of determining if crews require more education on the software or if the department should seek an alternative platform. The department will continue to follow city policy for performance evaluations and complete them annually for all employees.

References

- Standard Operating Policy 3.4.3 – *Performance Increases to Salary*
- Standard Operating Procedure 3.4.3 – *Performance Increases to Salary*
- AP-505 - *Performance Management*
- *Tenzinga* Screenshot

7D.4 The agency has a policy or program for receiving employee/member input or suggestions.

Description

The department has multiple standing committees defined in policy including a policy committee, apparatus committee, equipment committee, EMS committee, and health and wellness committee, that allow department personnel to give input or suggestions to the department. The department also sends out department surveys when it completes a new Strategic Plan or when planning its 10-year vision to solicit member feedback.

Appraisal

The standing committees have proved a valuable medium for members to provide input into department operations and mission. The recently created recruitment committee was able to provide input into a new website section on the department's page, and plan for involvement in a local bootcamp to introduce women to the fire service. A recent survey sent out to gain input into the department's 10-year planning vision received over 30% response rate.

Plan

The department will continue to provide regular avenues for members to give feedback, including standing committees and department surveys. The department will work with the union to revise the committee policy to require meeting minutes so that all committee proceedings are transparent.

References

- AP 218 - *Meetings and Committees*
- 10 Year Vision Survey Responses
- Recruitment Committee Agenda

7D.5 Career and professional development programs are in place for all members and encourage the pursuit of professional credentialing.

Description

The department's training division provides annual engineer and officer development programs (EDP and ODP) for all members, as well as a chief officer development program. Development programs are a requirement to test for promotion according to the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627 (the union). Members are also actively encouraged to attend the National Fire Academy (NFA) and participate in credentialing programs through the NFA or the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). Currently the department has one captain who has completed the managing fire officer program and two more who are enrolled. The department also employs four Executive Fire Officer graduates, three CPSE Chief Fire Officers, and a CPSE Fire Marshal. The City of Meridian also offers tuition reimbursement according to Standard Operating Policy and Procedure 5.4 – *Education Reimbursement*.

Appraisal

The department has been supportive of employee development through a variety of sources. The training division has had regular sustained enrollment in all of its professional development programs and has not had to cancel a class in the last 5 years due to lack of interest. The department has had multiple members attend the NFA and several pursue the managing fire officer program. Many employees have taken advantage of the tuition reimbursement program annually.

Plan

The department will continue to offer professional development programs annually. The department will continue to support and encourage members to attend the NFA or become credentialed through CPSE, and provide regular information and support to members seeking to further their higher education through the tuition reimbursement program.

References

- Standard Operating Policy 5.4 – *Education Reimbursement*

- Standard Operating Procedure 5.4 – *Education Reimbursement*
- Meridian Fire Professional Development Overview
- Education Assistance Requests FY24

7D.6 The agency has a succession plan that incorporates mentoring.

Description

The department is currently developing a succession plan. Succession planning incorporating mentorship was identified in the Meridian Fire Department Strategic Plan 2022-2024 Goal 2D.1, to evaluate and develop a department succession plan, and Goal 2C.2, to develop a mentor plan for new members. Mentorship is currently included in the probationary task books. It is the responsibility of the captain to assign a mentor, and new firefighters are required to have regular check ins with their mentor throughout their probationary year.

Appraisal

The department lacked a succession plan or a formal mentoring plan for many years. The department identified these deficiencies during the strategic planning process for the current strategic plan. The mentorship program was only recently implemented by the training department and has not been formally evaluated since its implementation.

Plan

The department will continue to develop a succession plan to be in place by 2025. The training division will evaluate the mentorship program for new firefighters at the end of 2023, and consider developing a mentorship program for other positions such as driver and captain.

References

- Meridian Fire Department Strategic Plan 2022-2024, pg. 25
- Probationary Firefighter Task Book, pg. 10, 14

Criterion 7E: Personnel Compensation

A system and practices for providing employee/member compensation are in place.

Summary:

The City of Meridian offers a comprehensive and competitive benefits package to all city employees. Benefits for bargaining unit members are contained within the Collective Labor Agreement between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627. Benefits for all employees are posted on the city's intranet. The city's intranet benefits page also includes extensive benefit information including open enrollment forms, flex spending account how-to instructions, employee assistance program benefit portals, and information on the Public Employment Retirement System of Idaho.

Performance Indicators:

CC 7E.1 **Rates of pay and compensation are published and available to all employees/members.**

Description

Pay rates and compensation for union members are published in Appendix A of the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627 (the union) and available on the intranet. Rates of pay and compensation for non-union fire employees, including administrative and executive personnel, are published on the department's intranet on the human resources page. Salary ranges are posted on all open job applications. All employees are paid monthly as outlined in the City of Meridian's *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual*, policy 3.3 – *Payroll*.

Appraisal

Pay rates for non-union employees have been posted on the intranet for many years. The CLA has been posted on the intranet and updated after each contract negotiation with up to date wage and pay information.

Plan

The city will continue to post pay rates for union and non-union employees on the city's intranet, follow Policy and Procedure 3.3, and post salary ranges with all open job positions.

References

- Collective Labor Agreement between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627, Appendix A
- Job Classification and Pay on City Intranet Screenshot
- Standard Operating Policy 3.3 – *Payroll*
- Standard Operating Policy 3.3 – *Payroll*

7E.2 Member benefits are defined, published, and communicated to all employees/members.

Description

Benefits for union members are governed by the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627 (the union). The CLA is published on the city's intranet and is also provided to all line personnel by the union upon hire. The City of Meridian *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual* defines benefits for all administrative and executive fire department personnel in Section 4 – Time off and Leaves, and Section 5 – Benefits. All employees have competitive benefits including health, dental, and vision insurance, sick leave, vacation leave, holiday leave, disability and life insurance, and enrollment in the Public Employment Retirement System of Idaho (PERSI). The City of Meridian's *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual* is published on the city's intranet and also provided to all city employees upon hire. There is also a benefits page on the city's intranet providing more detailed information on each benefit employees are eligible for, including enrollment forms. The Human Resources (HR) department provides a new hire orientation for all employees, which also helps employees familiarize themselves with their benefits package.

Appraisal

All employee benefits for both union and non-union personnel have been published on the city's intranet for many years. Benefit plans have been provided to all new employees. The HR department has given a new employee orientation to all new employees.

Plan

The city will continue to post all benefit information for union and non-union employees on the city's intranet. The HR department will continue to be responsible for managing and administering all employee benefits and providing support and assistance as needed.

References

- Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) between City of Meridian and Meridian Firefighters IAFF Local 4627, pg. 5-14, Appendix A, Appendix D

- City of Meridian *Standard Operating Policy and Procedure Manual*, Section 4, Section 5
- Benefits Page on Intranet Screenshot
- Employee Policy Manual Intranet Screenshot
- City of Meridian New Employee Orientation