

The Impact of Equal Employment Opportunity

A pilot analysis of how EEO and DEI programs
impact job satisfaction at a City agency, 2023-2024

May 2026



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Executive Summary

New York City voters established the EEPCC to provide independent, non-mayoral oversight over the City's employment practices. Our Charter mandate includes independent review and monitoring of the effectiveness of the City's practices. It also includes assisting agencies in furthering equal employment.

In 2023, we initiated a pilot program to conduct an in-depth review of whether the efforts of City agencies to ensure women and people of color have equal employment opportunities have borne success.

A City agency participated on the condition we would not identify them in any public presentations or reports. For this project we reviewed items documenting the agency's EEO and DEI policies, programs, and initiatives. We also interviewed 35 personnel, conducted a climate survey, and analyzed the agency's workforce. This first phase of the project lasted until 2024.

The report illustrates these findings:

- There was substantial underutilization of women and Black personnel
- The agency was about average for City agencies when it comes to underutilization
- Women and people of color stayed at higher rates than the City average
- Women and people of color were hired at rates lower than their availability
- Gaps in hiring women and people of color were greater for competitive titles
- Job satisfaction was reasonably high and did not differ widely between demographic groups
- Personnel found their work meaningful and interesting
- Personnel believed the civil service system has benefits, but can be complicated and opaque
- Participants believed favoritism is widespread
- Personnel felt opportunities for growth and advancement vary widely by unit
- Personnel felt opportunities for growth vary by supervisor
- Units varied widely in providing feedback to their staff
- Higher salaries would be great, but it was not the primary concern
- Personnel found the bureaucracy frustrating
- The agency has undertaken a lot of initiatives to address EEO and DEI. Employees' opinions of these efforts were mixed, and their impact is unclear
- Personnel believed diversity and providing equal employment opportunities are important
- Numerous personnel believed they have been treated unfairly because of a protected status
- Participants generally expressed confidence in how the agency handles claims of discrimination and harassment
- Personnel had mixed feelings about the agency's EEO/DEI efforts
- It is likely these initiatives have had positive impacts, but it is hard to be sure

Within that context, we offer the following findings and recommendations based on our research:

Performance evaluations were inconsistent in their frequency, nature, and usefulness to personnel.

The administration of performance evaluations varied widely throughout the agency. Some personnel wanted more from their evaluations, including consistent, engaged, useful feedback.

Recommendation: develop and enforce best practices for performance evaluations.

The agency should develop and enforce best practices for providing performance evaluations to staff. The best practices should address elements of the evaluation process, such as: the minimum frequency for providing evaluations, the nature of how the evaluation is developed, the nature of how the evaluation is presented to the employee, how to incorporate the employee's views on their assessment, and a guide for planning professional development.

Many personnel felt professional development opportunities have been too limited.

Many personnel found professional development opportunities limited. In practice, many personnel at the agency were unable to access training and professional development opportunities if their supervisor did not approve them doing so.

Recommendation: develop a policy for how personnel seek training and professional development opportunities.

The agency should articulate policies for professional development. This should include guidance on how personnel and their supervisors can develop professional development goals and plans, to whom requests for training and other opportunities are made, and the factors to be considered by those who decide the outcome of specific requests.

Recommendation: conduct "open houses": events where agencies and divisions make leaders and HR personnel available to answer questions from personnel about openings, relevant Civil Service exams, and job requirements.

A regular event (annually, bi-annually) that provides staff the opportunity to explore other options within the agency may help encourage retention.

There was a pervasive perception of favoritism. It is likely some agency initiatives have perpetuated that perception.

A high percentage of interview participants expressed the belief favoritism is rampant. It would be easy to assume these criticisms come largely from those who are generally dissatisfied with their job, but this view was expressed by such a high percentage of participants, including so many who expressed high job satisfaction and had been promoted, that it is unlikely the criticisms are primarily driven by personal dissatisfaction with their job.

Recommendation: develop practices to make employment decisions fairer and more transparent.

The agency has undertaken efforts to ensure employment decisions are fair and transparent. There are other practices the agency can consider to further those goals. One option is to ensure greater diversity in hiring decisions, including unit and chain of command diversity.

Recommendation: be mindful in the implementation of professional development initiatives that can help create a perception some staff move up the ladder unfairly.

In the recent past the agency has operated several professional development initiatives. These programs provide valuable opportunities for staff, including women and people of color, who may not have otherwise had the ability to interact with agency leadership. The agency must be mindful of how these programs are perceived, especially in the context of future employment decisions. Participation probably should not have an outsized impact on future hiring decisions.

The longer one's tenure, the more dissatisfied they were with their job.

Some interview participants with longer tenure expressed the belief they were taken for granted, denied opportunities to work on interesting and important projects, and not provided the training they need to adjust to technological changes in the workplace. They believed newer staff have often been given preferential treatment and valued more.

Recommendation: encourage the creation of an Employee Resource Group based on length of service at the agency.

The agency should encourage staff to establish an Employee Resource Group based on one's length of tenure at the agency. Such a group may help staff with longer tenure develop a better sense of community at the agency, allow them to help each other with professional development and networking opportunities, and offer the benefits these groups are meant to provide.

Although the agency established a Structured Hiring initiative to improve diversity in hiring, there was not yet strong evidence it has had a substantial impact.

The Agency has established a Structured Hiring initiative to establish hiring practices for job titles with underutilization of people of color and/or women. There was not much evidence to suggest the initiative has had an effect on the hiring of underutilized groups. For almost half the titles in the initiative, hiring of underutilized groups did not improve in the years after the initiative was established.

This does not necessarily mean the agency should not continue requiring structured hiring for some titles and encouraging it for others. There are benefits to structured hiring that may mean it is the best approach moving forward. However, if the only, or primary, reason for doing it is to address underutilization, it was unclear if it had yet had the intended impact.

Recommendation: consider a broader conception of diversity when creating interview panels

The Structured Hiring initiative emphasized demographic diversity for interview panels. Such diversity is important but may not be sufficient in some instances. As discussed above, perceptions of favoritism may be better addressed through diversity in units and ensuring panels are not only made of managers/supervisors and their direct reports.

The agency's rate of retention in recent years has been better than the City's.

The agency's rate of retention has been better than the City's in recent years, including for women and people of color. The agency should examine what has contributed to its better than average retention rates.

Recommendation: engage in small scale surveys of agency staff and develop better incentives to encourage a high rate of participation.

When surveys are offered to City staff, it is usually the mindset to make them available to everyone. There are good reasons for that, but also downsides. Response rates are sometimes very low. The climate survey for this project is a perfect example of that. The agency may consider surveys of subsets of the population. Most would likely be of personnel chosen completely at random and those personnel could be offered a more substantial incentive to participate (e.g., a gift card in a higher denomination, an hour of overtime, etc.). This would likely improve participation rates and ensure a more diverse group of voices are heard. For other surveys, subsets could be chosen based on the nature of the survey.

We recommend the agency consider partial rollouts of initiatives to assess their effectiveness through randomized controlled trials.

The Structured Hiring initiative illustrates some potential benefits the agency could realize if there was an eye toward assessing the impact of programs from the very beginning.

The gold standard in assessing program effectiveness is a randomized controlled trial (RCT). If agencies want to determine the impact of their employment practices, they should make efforts to conduct these kinds of analyses when possible.

How an RCT would have worked in the Structured Hiring Initiative illustrates how they could be utilized in the future for other initiatives. Once the agency determined a title would become part of this effort, and if there were multiple hiring groups hiring for that title, the agency could have randomly selected some of those groups to go through the necessary trainings and hire using the procedures established for Structured Hiring; the remaining groups would have continued hiring as they were doing at that time. The agency would then conduct analyses of those hired by the different groups and compare them.

Introduction

The City of New York is committed to providing equal employment opportunities for all and fostering a diverse and inclusive work environment. The City Charter empowers agency heads to ensure their agencies do not discriminate in any manner prohibited by federal, state, or local laws. It also requires agency heads to establish measures, programs, and an annual EEO Plan that safeguard against discrimination and communicate the agency's efforts to provide equal employment opportunities.

The Equal Employment Practices Commission (EEPC) is one of New York City's tools for providing equal employment opportunities and safeguarding against discrimination. Established in 1989 by amendment to the City Charter, the mission of the EEPC is to guide New York City government in its efforts to comply with equal employment opportunity requirements. Historically, we have accomplished our mission primarily by conducting audits of agencies' employment practices. The audit process involves collecting extensive documentation of agencies' EEO policies and how they are communicated to staff, and evaluating whether the agency has complied with federal, state, and local requirements. EEPC audits can also entail a review of agencies' workforce data and their efforts to identify and remediate workforce underutilization. The audits are a fundamental part of ensuring agencies' compliance with the law. The EEPC also conducts research of the City's workforce and employment practices. In 2019, the New York City Council passed Local Law 13, which requires the EEPC to publish a report annually on underutilization in the New York City municipal workforce and offer recommendations for how to address it. In 2023, we initiated a pilot program to review and assess the efforts of City agencies to ensure women and people of color have equal employment opportunities. The purpose of this project was to better understand what City entities are doing to address underutilization, and develop practical recommendations for entities to address it.

We reached out to a City agency to be the first to participate in this program, and they agreed to participate. This analysis required a deep partnership with the agency. Some elements of this initiative closely resemble an EEPC audit: the agency provided us with many items documenting their EEO and DEI policies, programs, and initiatives. We further built on that work by holding in-depth interviews with 35 personnel, conducting a climate survey available to all agency personnel, and analyzing the agency's workforce over the previous ten years.

The agency voluntarily participated in this process; they were not in any way obligated to. They agreed to participate on the condition we would not identify them in any public presentations or reports. This requirement impacts the nature of this report. We provide some details on the agency but do so in a way that does not make it obvious which it is. For example: we do not identify the exact number of personnel at the time of the project; when discussing the agency's programs and initiatives in those versions, we sometimes give them pseudonyms; we avoid identifying specific job titles. The agency's active participation in this initial phase ended in 2024, before the election of Mayor Mamdani.

At the time of the first phase of this project, the agency had a degree of underutilization that was comparable to similar City agencies. The extent of underutilization was fairly consistent over the years prior to the project, although Black personnel became increasingly represented in numerous titles in which they were previously underutilized. Placements of people

of color and women typically were below their labor market availability. This appears to have been an issue particularly with competitive civil service titles. However, this agency retained women and people of color at rates higher than one might predict, given their presence in the workforce.¹

This agency has undertaken numerous initiatives for the purposes of providing equal employment opportunities to all, and improving diversity, equity, and inclusion. Personnel had varying opinions as to whether the agency was achieving its EEO and DEI objectives. Personnel had varying levels of confidence in whether the agency addressed such issues fairly and transparently. There was a deep divide in perceptions of fairness between staff who had been at the agency for a long time and those who had been at the agency for a relatively short time.

¹ We were unable to do more sophisticated analyses of retention rates because of the limitations of the data available at the time. There are many possibilities for why the agency's retention rates were higher than other entities that have little to do with its employment policies and practices. For example, their workforce may have been younger; the agency may have had more titles unique to it than other agencies, limiting the ability of its personnel to transfer. Given the limitations of the data, we cannot make a causal claim that the agency's employment policies and practices contributed to its better than average retention rates.

Methodology

In the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2024, this agency had between 1,000 and 15,000 personnel. It had considerably more men than women. A majority of the agency's personnel were people of color.²

We used several methods to collect and analyze data.

Interviews

We interviewed 35 personnel at the agency. All but one of the interviews were conducted with only one participant at a time; one interview included three participants. The interviews were semi-structured, meaning the facilitator could skip questions if they were not relevant to the participant, had some flexibility when asking follow-up questions or skipping questions based on the respondent's previous answers, and for interviews in which time became an issue, use their judgment about which questions to prioritize.

The agency provided various organization charts that identified staff from various parts of the agency. We (mostly) randomly selected individuals from these lists, with the one additional step of oversampling female participants given their relatively low numbers at the agency.³ In most instances, the personnel from the agency conducted initial outreach to the potential participants, informing them someone from the EEPC would reach out to request an interview, and explaining the purpose and nature of the project. While this step resulted in the agency knowing who we were requesting to participate, we followed this procedure because we felt "cold contacting" personnel – and being from an agency few of them likely ever heard of (an assumption that was confirmed in our interviews) – would unduly hurt the participation rate. Having a colleague of theirs reach out first, we believe, helped increase that rate.

Three main protocols were used.⁴ One was for executives involved in the development and implementation of human resources, EEO, and/or DEI policies, procedures, and practices; this protocol focused primarily on those issues and the participant's views on their impacts. Another protocol was for general personnel (i.e., those who were not involved in the development and implementation of those policies, procedures and practices). These individuals were primarily asked about their job satisfaction, career goals, thoughts on EEO/DEI initiatives, and their experience with and opinions of the process for filing claims of discrimination, sexual harassment, and reasonable accommodation requests. We also interviewed several individuals who were active in some of the agency's EEO/DEI initiatives. Protocols for these participants were nearly identical to those of general personnel, but we asked these individuals several additional questions about their involvement in those initiatives, as applicable.

² As discussed above, the agency requested not to be identified in any public reports. To help ensure anonymity, we avoid reporting any data that may allow someone to determine the agency (e.g., reporting on the exact number of personnel, or the exact demographic breakdowns of personnel). This is done throughout the report and is the only reason more precise data are not presented. For the same purpose, we have renamed some of their initiatives and altered the interview and survey protocols to remove anything that could identify the agency.

³ We did not have demographic information on potential participants, so this was done by assumptions based on the first name of the potential participant.

⁴ The interview protocols can be found in Appendix A.

We allotted up to one hour for each interview. The overwhelming majority of participants agreed to be recorded and transcribed (and we thank them for that!). All but two of the interviews were conducted remotely, with the majority of those conducted via Microsoft Teams. A handful were conducted over the phone. For the vast majority of interviews there was one facilitator and one or two notetakers. For virtually every interview the notetakers had follow-up and clarifying questions to contribute to the discussion.

Participants in the interviews focusing on the development and implementation of HR, EEO, and DEI policies were chosen based on their role in the agency (i.e., they were not randomly selected). For the most part, the rest of the participants were randomly selected. The first several rounds of participant selection were largely random, with the additional criteria of over-sampling women relative to their presence in the agency's workforce. Outreach and scheduling was sometimes a challenge, so to achieve a sufficient number of interviews within the time allotted for this portion of the project, the handful of individuals contacted in the last round of attempts to recruit participants were chosen because of their role in one or more of the agency's EEO/DEI initiatives; this was suggested by personnel at the agency, the assumption being they would respond to requests more quickly and be more likely to participate than other personnel. These participants were also considered important because they would have unique perspectives on EEO/DEI initiatives.

Participation was confidential. However, the agency did know the individuals contacted to participate (as discussed above). We were able to coordinate interviews for less than half of these individuals, and we did not inform the agency which participants agreed and which declined. When quoting or describing participants in this report or elsewhere, we avoid using descriptions of the participants that are likely to identify them, nor do we use job titles.

Most interview participants were men (54%), but women made up a considerably higher proportion of our interview participants (46%) than they do the agency's workforce. This was by design. The percentage of participants who were White or Asian was considerably lower than their share of the agency's workforce. For Hispanic personnel it was comparable, and for Black personnel it was considerably higher. The differences in the racial and ethnic composition of the participants compared to the agency overall were by chance. Twenty percent of the participants were between the ages of 30-39, 31 percent between 40-49, 29 percent between 50-59, and 11 percent were 60 or older. No participants were between 20-29, and we do not know the age of three of the participants (9%). This is roughly comparable to the Agency's workforce. Thirty-seven percent of the participants had been at the agency for 20 or more years, 23 percent for 10-19 years, 29 percent for 5-9 years, six percent for 2-4 years, and three percent for less than two years. We did not have data on the length of agency service amongst personnel, so we do not know whether this is comparable to the workforce.

Climate survey

We also conducted a climate survey, asking participants about their job satisfaction, performance evaluations, opportunities for professional development and career advancement, and their thoughts on the agency's EEO and DEI initiatives. The survey was open to all employees and was available for almost two months. It was distributed via email, flyers were given directly to staff, and flyers were posted in common areas of the various agency buildings. The email and flyers contained both a link to the survey and a QR code a potential

participant could use to access the survey on a smartphone. The agency engaged in numerous efforts to encourage participation, including awarding gift cards to ten participants, and encouraging supervisors and managers to advertise the survey to their staff.

Several hundred personnel participated in the survey; the vast majority of those answered 80 percent or more of the questions and are included in the analyses.⁵ The population that participated in the survey differs from the Agency's personnel in several key ways. In particular, the survey participants are far more likely to be women (women made up 45 percent of the survey participants) and participants were more likely to be in a higher pay band than agency personnel. Because of these disparities, in most analyses of the survey results we weighed responses based on gender and salary band. A deeper discussion of the survey methodology is provided in Appendix C.

EEO policy and document review

The agency provided numerous documents to the EEPC; they would have been required to provide many of these for an audit, but they also provided others which they would not have been obligated to share. These include various EEO and DEI reports, such as their quarterly DEI reports, Annual Plans and EEO training completion records. The agency also provided numerous documents on various EEO and DEI initiatives. Internal analyses of their workforce were also provided which gave a detailed snapshot of the agency's workforce and included updates on how the agency is meeting its goals to address underutilization.

The documents provided gave a deeper understanding of the work of the EEO department over the years and included documents that outlined the process of establishing signature EEO initiatives. Other documents provided included the results of previous agency surveys, specifics on professional development programs, and a detailed look at the agency's efforts to reform hiring processes.

Analysis of the workforce

The EEPC used workforce reports available in CEEDS to conduct analyses of the agency's workforce. We conducted underutilization analyses similar to those conducted by the City, with some key differences. We also conducted analyses of the agency's new hires, separations, and promotions.

⁵ The survey can be found in Appendix B.

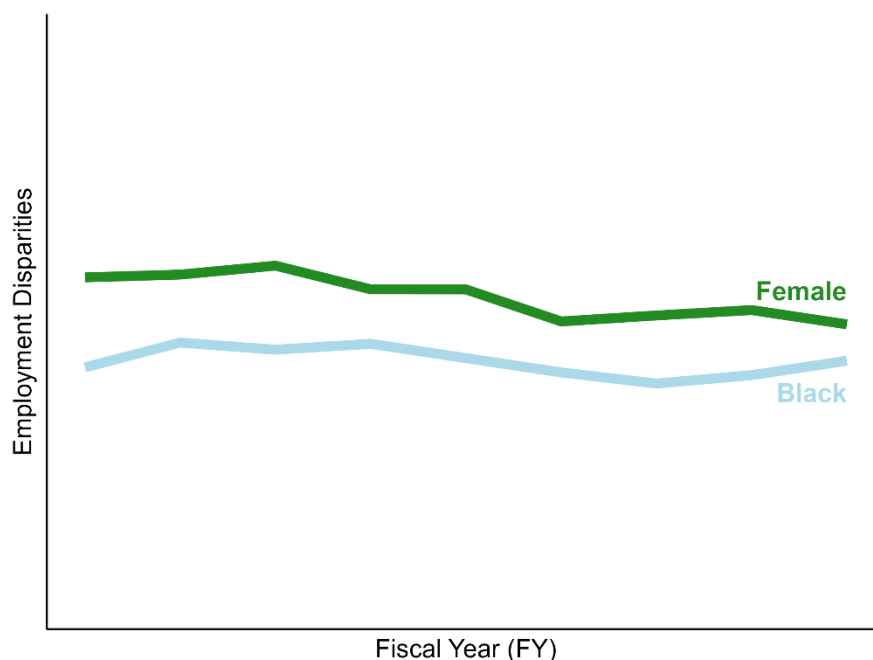
Underutilization

There was substantial underutilization of Women and Black Workers

Underutilization occurs when women or people of color are employed at lower rates than their labor market availability. The employment disparity is the difference between the actual workforce headcount and the expected workforce headcount, given labor market availability.

Figure 1 presents trends in the agency's total employment disparities for women and Black workers. The plot lines show, for each demographic group, the agency's total employment disparities for several recent years, and only in the job groups with underutilization. These disparities represent, for each demographic group, the differences between the number of expected and actual personnel at the agency.

**Figure 1 - Total Employment Disparities
in Job Groups with Underutilization**



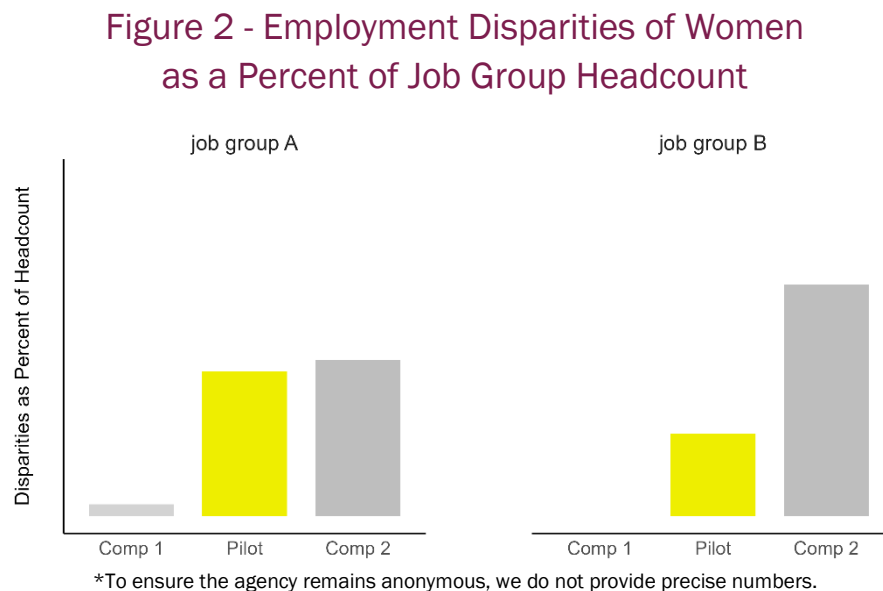
*To ensure the agency remains anonymous, we do not provide precise numbers.

There has been modest improvement in the employment disparities of women in underutilized job groups at the agency, although the number of titles with underutilization of them has not changed much. There has also been underutilization of Black workers, although the primary issue with that demographic group has been the number of titles in which they have been underutilized, rather than their overall employment disparities in the agency. There have been considerable improvements for Black workers in recent years.

The agency was about average for City agencies when it comes to underutilization

For further comparison we have compared the agency's workforce to two comparable agencies. These agencies were chosen because of some similarities in their workforces. This agency has fared better than one in utilization of people of color and has not fared as well as the other.

Figure 2 shows the employment disparities of women in two job groups; at the agency (the yellow bar labelled "Pilot"), and the two comparison agencies (labeled "Comp 1" and "Comp 2") for the 4th quarter of Fiscal Year 2024.

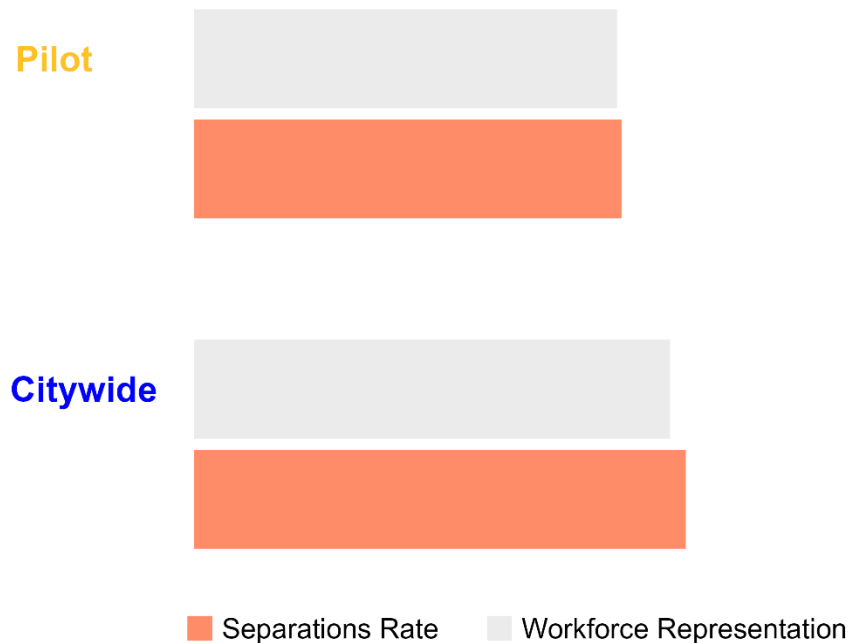


The employment disparities are shown as a percent of the job group headcount. We ran analyses for each demographic and for several job groups and the results showed a similar pattern: the agency was about average Citywide and among peers.

Women and people of color stayed at higher rates than the City average

Addressing underutilization requires, in part, retaining personnel at a rate that at least equals their presence at the agency. At the time of the project and in years before, the agency retained women and people of color at a rate that exceeded their presence at the agency, although in 2024 women and people of color left at a higher rate than they had in previous years, as illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3 - Workforce Representation versus Separation Rates



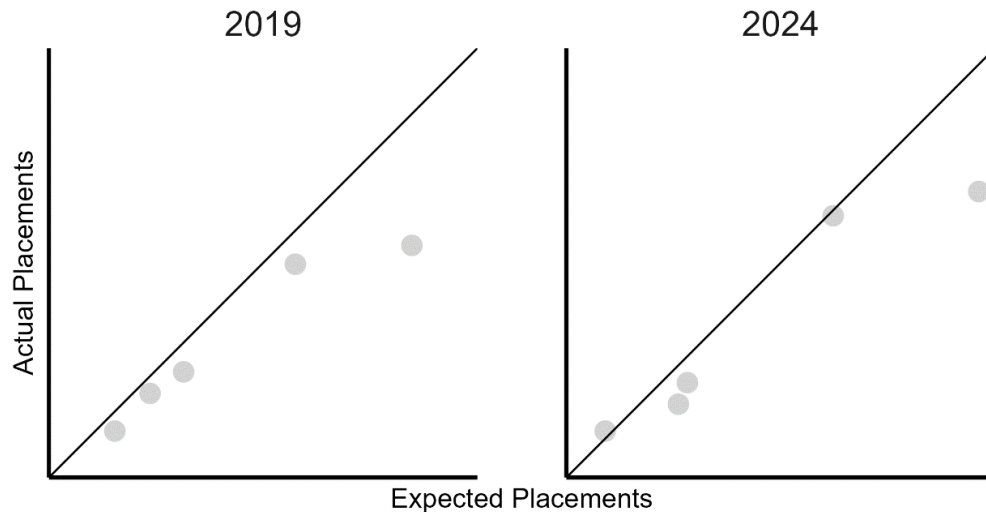
*To ensure the agency remains anonymous, we do not provide precise numbers.

Women and people of color were hired at rates lower than their availability

The pattern of hiring was very different than that of retention. In the vast majority of titles, the share of new hires who were women or people of color was below their labor market availability rates, as illustrated in Figure 4. This has been an issue Citywide and is reported annually in the EEPC's Local Law 13 Reports.

Figure 4 illustrates the actual and expected placements, in 2019 and 2024, in job groups where women were underutilized at the start of each year. If a point is to the right of/underneath the diagonal line, it indicates the number of placements – the combined hiring and promotions – of women was less than the expected placements, or if placements of women in each job group was proportional to the labor market availability of women.

Figure 4 – Actual vs. Expected Placements
in Job Groups with Underutilization of Females



*To ensure the agency remains anonymous, we do not provide precise numbers.

Gaps in hiring women and people of color were greater for competitive titles

Hiring disparities⁶ for women and people of color were greater (in actual and relative terms) for competitive titles.⁷ One of the most fundamental distinctions for New York City municipal job titles is between those classified as “competitive” and those classified as “non-competitive.” A competitive job title is one for which an individual is typically required to take and pass a Civil Service exam. Individuals who do so and who meet all minimum requirements for the position are placed on a list ordered primarily by one’s score on the exam. When City agencies seek to fill a vacancy in a competitive title, the City agencies are usually limited to filling the positions with one of the top three candidates on the list. “Non-competitive” titles do not require an exam, and agencies have more leeway when filling those positions, although specific requirements for the job must be met. This suggests the agency’s disparities in hiring have been driven partly by the Civil Service system, and it may have had a bigger impact on this agency than others.

⁶ Hiring disparities refer to the gap or difference between the number of individuals *expected* to be hired and the actual number of individuals who were hired, for each demographic group. The expectation is employers would hire individuals at equal rates to the labor market availability estimate. When the hiring rate is less than the availability estimate, a disparity occurs.

⁷ The disparities are greater relative to the number of competitive versus non-competitive positions at the agency. Like most agencies, this one has far more competitive positions, so for almost every City agency the raw size of the disparity will be greater in competitive titles than non-competitive ones.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was reasonably high and did not differ widely between demographic groups

Job satisfaction at the agency was reasonably high. Most of the staff we interviewed liked – and for many it would not be an exaggeration to say loved – their jobs. The survey results were also positive, although probably not as favorable as what we heard in the interviews.⁸ There were some differences between demographic groups in their level of satisfaction, but these differences were usually not substantial.

Survey respondents were disproportionately female and disproportionately in a higher income bracket than the agency’s workforce, as discussed above. To make the survey analyses more representative of the agency’s workforce overall, we weighed responses⁹ by gender and salary, not unlike how polling firms use weighting when determining the results of a political poll.

The average job satisfaction score from the survey was 7.1 on a scale of one to ten. White personnel indicated the highest job satisfaction (7.2) and Asian personnel the lowest (6.7). There was little difference between men and women (7.1 versus 7.0). Differences between field staff and office staff were a bit more noticeable (7.3 versus 6.9). There was a slightly positive correlation between one’s age and job satisfaction, and a negative correlation between one’s length of employment at the agency and their job satisfaction.

Personnel found their work meaningful and interesting

Most agency staff believed their work has had a positive impact on the community. Virtually all the interview participants felt the work of their agency matters, and most felt their contribution to that work was important. Many spoke with pride about working to make New York City better. The survey also illustrated this sentiment: 90 percent of personnel agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “my work has a positive impact on the community.”

Most staff found their work interesting. Eighty-five percent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “my work is interesting” and virtually all interview participants had good things to say about the challenges and complexity in their work. This was true even for many who liked their jobs less than average.

Personnel considered opportunities for advancement limited

Most (but certainly not all) of the interview and survey participants indicated a desire to advance into higher positions at the agency. Views on opportunities for advancement were

⁸ See Appendices A and B for the interview and survey questions.

⁹ Demographics and salary that were underrepresented in the survey relative to the workforce (e.g., men) were upweighted, or given more of a weight than compared to the unweighted survey results alone. The survey weights were derived using the “raking” technique. Details on the methodology can be found in Appendix C.

rather diverse. Interview participants mentioned numerous factors they felt impacted one's ability to advance in the agency and City government.

Personnel believed the Civil Service system has benefits, but can be complicated and opaque

A high majority of employees at the agency (and citywide) are in competitive job titles. Those who want to be hired into such titles are required to take civil service exams, and those who want to be promoted usually have to follow defined lines of progression, which require additional civil service exams. Competitive civil service jobs have defined job responsibilities and qualifications, and – theoretically – anyone who meets the minimum qualifications, requirements, and who passes the exam has an opportunity to be considered for a vacancy. Participants shared anecdotes of their experience navigating the civil service system, with some expressing the view that its rules have facilitated their professional development and provided fairness in employment decisions.

One of the main purposes of civil service systems – it is generally agreed – is to create processes in which individuals are hired and promoted based on one's ability to do a job (it is based on “merit” and “fitness”) rather than personal connections or other factors considered irrelevant to one's ability to do the work. To achieve that purpose, civil service systems require some degree of transparency. For civil service systems to function well it is also necessary they do not become so complicated that stakeholders do not understand their rules and how they function.

Numerous participants – including many who spoke positively of New York City's civil service system overall – expressed concern and frustration with how it works in practice. In one sense, many participants expressed the view the civil service system as it has often worked in practice has allowed for too much discretion: many expressed the view it often has not prevented those making hiring decisions from basing those decisions on personal connections or other factors considered irrelevant to one's ability to do the work. Numerous participants felt that those who make hiring decisions have often violated the spirit of the civil service system when hiring and promoting staff. One participant shared, “I've seen people who've passed the test, but because they didn't get along with who they reported to, being passed over. It's too subjective.” Another suggested the one-in-three rule¹⁰ was responsible for employees being mistrustful and skeptical of the selection process, stating, “there's all shenanigans you can pull so people don't get called.” This participant said the agency can usually “finagle” the system to select the candidate they want.

At the same time, the civil service system can still be inflexible and overly bureaucratic. The qualifications and requirements for some titles are often viewed as unnecessary, and unable to account for other skills and experience that are useful to the agency. Many participants also expressed concerns about what they perceive to be the inability of the civil service system to assess and value relevant qualifications that may be difficult to capture in the exam process. Employees assert the process does not adequately account for employees'

¹⁰ Under New York State Civil Service Law, the “one in three” rule provides City agencies with the discretion when hiring to select one of the three eligible candidates scoring highest on the ranked eligible list of exam passers. The “one in three” rule means agencies cannot interview a fourth applicant without making a hiring decision with the prior three candidates. The three eligible candidates could be the first three candidates from the first List Certification or theoretically from multiple List Certifications.

experience within an agency. Multiple employees spoke of the barrier posed by degree requirements to their progression, despite subject matter expertise, industry-recognized credentials, and extensive institutional knowledge. Some staff suggested those who make employment decisions have sometimes perpetuated that inflexibility. Multiple participants suggested those who make employment decisions do not understand the skills and goals of their staff outside the confines of one's title and job responsibilities. Many of these participants felt their opportunities for professional development and promotions have been limited as a result.

Some participants expressed frustration with the length of time it has usually taken to be selected from a list. Several participants spoke of achieving high scores on exams, but were either never called for an interview, or had to wait for what they felt was an unreasonable amount of time to be called. Civil service systems in general have a reputation for being slow and unresponsive, and it is not a surprise to hear personnel echo such concerns. It is almost certainly the case the system has operated for some of these participants in a way many would consider problematic. The length of time it takes for one to be called from a list, and for lists to expire, varies tremendously; also, it is often not known how long a list will stay in effect after it is certified. Such experiences can certainly be frustrating.

Taking all of that into account, these sentiments sometimes still struck us as representing an unrealistic expectation of employment practices: we interpreted some participants as wanting a level of certainty about being hired or promoted, and/or knowing the timeframe for such a decision, that may not be realistic. Still, the agency (and agencies in general) could do things to address these kinds of frustrations, for example by providing personnel realistic assessments of exam takers' chances, and how long the process can take, at the time those personnel are considering signing up for an exam.

Several of the leaders we interviewed expressed awareness of these kinds of issues. One explained, "the unfortunate thing is the amount of time that it takes before the test is published and lists to be called. And you know there I see a lot of hesitancy with staff and thinking that the process really works." Another pointed out that they are aware of the optics of these kinds of situations, telling us, "we're very mindful of positions where an individual retires and there is an obvious replacement, and making sure there is a competitive process for those positions. It's hard sometimes when there is an obvious replacement when some jobs are so technical in nature that the person second in command is the obvious choice."

Several participants argued the restrictions of the civil service system make hiring and decision-making complicated, and the agency has been actively trying to diversify the composition of the civil service, claiming, "now we're getting to resolve the pipeline issue so more people can be promoted. It takes time but it is better than before."

Participants believed favoritism has been widespread

Many participants indicated being "liked" has been more important than your performance and qualifications. This belief manifested itself in several ways.

Many participants believed the agency has been – for lack of a better word – "cliquey," and not only in the sense of how people socialize. Numerous interview participants suggested the personal relationships staff form with colleagues have had an outsized impact on who is assigned more desirable projects and who gets promoted. One participant told us, "nobody

wants to put anybody in the job or the position that can actually do the job and or make it better. You know, it's more like a favor or a hookup." Several other interview participants expressed similar sentiments, including another participant who said, "one thing that we do know, and that I could tell you honestly here, is that they give people jobs as friends. But they're not giving the people the job that's qualified."

Some staff also expressed the belief leaders in the agency have decided who they "like." If you have been one of those people, you have been more likely to advance and be assigned more desirable work. If you have not been one of those people, your opportunities have been limited. It was not always clear what the participants meant by their statements, but several examples illustrate the sentiment. One participant told us, "I feel it's more based on your relationship with your supervisor as opposed to merit-based promotions. It's not a systematic approach. I would say it's more subjective of the dynamic between the subordinate [and] the supervisor." The facilitator and observers understood this to mean some supervisors may have based their opinions of personnel on factors that are not work-related and have made employment decisions based on those factors. Another participant put it more bluntly, arguing, "you can't make it up unless you're someone's favorite, or their pet project."

Another participant said they feel that "as you're moving up the ladder, it's either they like you or they don't. If they like you and they wanna push you up, they will. If they don't like you and they don't want to push you up, you're not gonna get pushed up... [I]n part of my career I experienced that... [I]t's either you're in the network or you're not." The facilitator and observers felt the implication here was that leaders have often made a decision about one's potential in the agency; they have usually stuck with that decision once it was made, regardless of the individual's subsequent performance or if other candidates for projects or promotions step up. This participant went further and said they felt there was a pattern in the agency of discouraging those individuals they no longer value, whether by transferring them to other units, assigning them new work they are unlikely to enjoy, or taking them off important and interesting projects.

Several participants spoke of how these tendencies mean there have been fewer opportunities for advancement than it appears. For example, one participant, talking about promotional opportunities, told us, "for me to go in there and waste my time and waste my effort when I know that the choice and the decision is already made... [T]hey got the scoring system or whatever [but you can] throw that scoring system out the window. It's just a formality, just so they can justify [their decision]." Some participants who voiced these concerns may not be fully aware that civil service procedures require all postings, even routine promotions, and title changes, be advertised internally. As such, positions – even when an individual has been identified as next in line based on seniority and experience – must be advertised. This can be a contributing factor to staff feeling that there is favoritism at play, when it is the civil service system that requires the agency to comply with the requirements.

Numerous participants have expressed frustration with these issues, but some were aware of the requirement to advertise and expressed the opinion, "I tell people don't waste your time. That job belongs to somebody else, because you know they have to do [the] posting, right?" The individual further stated that if they had a good relationship with persons in a specific agency with a posted vacancy they would often frankly just ask "is this a real position?" As such, the posting of a job just to "check a box/meet the requirements" undermines the intent of a public posting as an opportunity for advancement.

Personnel felt opportunities for growth and advancement have varied widely by unit

Numerous participants expressed the view that opportunities for advancement have varied widely by agency, unit, and supervisor. Even several who expressed positive personal experiences about their advancement expressed the opinion such opportunities have varied widely based on where in the agency one works and whom they report to. Some participants stated they had been denied professional development training opportunities because the trainings were not directly relevant to their current job, whereas others told us their supervisors and Human Resources points of contact were encouraging or at least flexible in agreeing to such requests. The denial of opportunities and lack of support from supervisors and HR were sometimes cited as reasons participants had left or wanted to leave their unit or division.

Employees spoke well of proactive and engaged supervisors and HR representatives who expressed interest in their individual career development and encouraged them to take relevant exams and training opportunities. One participant told us about how one person on the HR team was proactive in helping him, especially early in his tenure: “I came in with one of the specialized titles and she would [tell me], ‘make sure you take a Civil Service exam so you have a permanent title,’ so I feel grateful for that.”

Numerous participants, however, spoke of unhelpful HR representatives that acted as information gatekeepers, filtering professional and training opportunities. One employee told us their HR representative often enrolled employees into trainings without their consent. The employee expressed discontent that HR did not offer information about other training classes available that might interest them and thereby denied their ability to control their professional trajectory. Another employee told us HR representatives deny trainings requests for some while approving them for others in the same unit, and staff often do not understand the reasons for the different decisions.

Participants have had very different experiences when expressing an interest in taking exams, and this may have varied widely by unit. A civil service exam given in December 2023 is a good example: by coincidence we spoke to two participants from different units who took that exam. One told us their supervisors “recommended everybody that’s [in a lower title on the tree] to take it. ...[T]hey was offering us material to study with as well. I got a couple supervisors that they were offering you materials to study. [Supervisors] definitely pushed us to take the test. They help out a lot.” Another participant in a different work location told us, “collectively we were disappointed because we felt the agency didn’t give us enough material. We’ve gotten study materials from other people who are supervisors, who probably care and want you to progress, but the agency themselves didn’t make any initiative to send out the information.”

Many of the participants who expressed frustration with their opportunities for advancement also came across to the facilitators as reasonable and thoughtful about how one can advance in the agency and the inherent challenges in doing so. Several interview participants told us they understood opportunities for growth become more limited the higher up you climb. Several participants also expressed the view that while the agency often does help its staff with career advancement, much of the responsibility is on individuals to advance their careers.

Personnel felt opportunities for growth have varied by supervisor

In the section on the civil service system, we address the belief the agency overlooks the potential of its workforce. Several participants expressed the opinion that some managers and supervisors have been closed-minded, contributing to this phenomenon. Participants expressed the belief some supervisors' narrow thinking has prevented employees from moving into new roles. One participant told us, "opportunities are there at the agency, but what is hard is getting out of the box. The managers and leadership should be educated to think outside the box. Don't think of employees as just a resume." Another participant told us the agency has had a narrow mindset about its staff and that this "is a hinderance." This participant suggested those who make employment decisions at the agency have focused too much on who has an "appropriate title" for transfer or promotion into another, rather than understanding one's skills and experience.

Some claimed their supervisors have even discouraged their staff from seeking opportunities in other divisions in the agency. Some participants speculated some managers have done this because they are incapable of assessing their employees' skills. Others suggested supervisors have done so for selfish reasons, because they have not wanted to replace a member of their team, especially a productive one. One participant shared an experience she had with her supervisor while trying to obtain a promotion: "I had applied for [a civil service exam] ... [And my supervisor] literally started laughing and she said, 'ohh you don't qualify for this.' ... I took it anyway. I got 100 on it. It was an education and experience exam and I absolutely qualified. She tried to keep me from moving up." This experience was one of the most extreme examples offered by participants, but several other responses shared a similar theme.

Some participants who have worked in multiple units over the years were able to reflect on how different supervisors and opportunities were based on location. One participant told us, "after I left [my unit, which] I was with for the first dozen or so years of my career, I felt like I had better supervisors that were actually open to professional development opportunities and really trying to like play off of your strengths. But prior to me leaving that division, absolutely not."

Units have varied widely in providing feedback to their staff

The administration of performance evaluations varies widely throughout the agency. Some personnel received performance evaluations every year; others went years without one or only received them on an ad hoc basis. For example, one participant told us, "I've never gotten an evaluation since I've been here. I've gotten evaluations only when they wanted to change my title." Other participants shared similar experiences.

Some personnel have experienced an interactive process, one in which their input is encouraged or even required; for others, their role in the process has been little more than receiving the relevant documents. Some personnel reported receiving useful feedback that helped them understand how to improve their performance and may also have received guidance on how to advance in their career (if they wish to do so); others reported they have not received much useful feedback, whether on how to improve their performance or how to advance in their career.

Many employees told us they would like regular evaluations and believed having them would reinforce their work record and build their case for advancement. However, some staff questioned the value of yearly evaluations, particularly for those employees with no desire to move beyond their current position. Some participants expressed the view feedback on performance is more useful when it occurs in real time, as needed.

If an employee does not have a good relationship with their supervisor, the value of performance evaluations may be limited. Some participants expressed the opinion performance evaluations are sometimes used by supervisors to punish or retaliate against employees. Some of these participants also expressed the view that the evaluations have not been objective have primarily been used to justify previous employment decisions or set up justifications for future ones – such as selection or denial of promotions – whether or not those decisions were the “fair” or “right” ones.

Higher salaries would be great, but it was not the primary concern

The cost of living in New York City has gone up considerably in recent years. Partly because of that, when we asked interview participants what they “liked less” about their job, we assumed many would mention their salary (we did not directly ask interview participants about their salary but did include questions about it in the climate survey). Interview participants occasionally mentioned their salary, but not as often as we thought they would. Those who did mention it usually expressed a preference for a higher salary – or for those whose jobs allow for overtime, opportunities to work more overtime hours – but even for most of the participants who mentioned compensation, the facilitators usually interpreted their comments to indicate compensation was not their biggest concern.

The survey included two direct questions about compensation. We asked candidates to indicate on a Likert Scale their agreement with each of these statements: 1) “my salary as a New York City employee is fair relative to my skill level, experience, and responsibilities;” and 2) “my salary as a New York City employee allows me to live comfortably in the New York City metro area.” Both questions used a four item Likert scale (“strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “agree”, and “strongly agree”) and also allowed respondents to select “I don’t know”. Thirty-eight percent of personnel agree or strongly agree that their salary was fair relative to their skills and experience, but only 18 percent agree or strongly agree that their salary allows them to live comfortably in the New York City metropolitan area. Thirty-one percent of respondents believe salaries are fairly determined.

Some interview participants expressed frustration at compensation being tied to collective bargaining agreements (CBAs). Some managers expressed a desire for greater discretion in compensation, including the ability to reward performance monetarily. Multiple employees spoke of job hopping within the municipal workforce to obtain a raise. Several participants expressed the view that this practice leads to inefficiencies in employment and human resources functions at the agency and citywide.

Personnel found the bureaucracy frustrating

When asked what they liked the least about their job, numerous interview participants mentioned bureaucracy, which they usually meant to refer to the number of steps required to achieve objectives, the rules they had to follow in doing their work, and the length of time it took to complete initiatives. Participants often discussed both City government generally and the agency specifically. While we did not ask participants questions about ways to address issues related to bureaucracy, many made statements suggesting they believed things did not have to be this way. They felt objectives could be achieved more efficiently, with fewer rules and less time. At the same time, few seemed to believe such changes would happen any time soon.

Several participants indicated many things require multiple approvals and that leads to very slow approval processes, especially when a budget is impacted. Interview participants provided numerous examples of bureaucracy: equipment purchases that need approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) require justifications and approval is often delayed; hiring new personnel also is a lengthy process that usually requires approvals from multiple actors; getting approvals for training is slow.

Managers expressed frustration at the difficulty, or sometimes inability, to reward high-performing personnel. Some managers believe this results in bureaucratic inefficiencies that otherwise could be avoided. If an employee “job-hops” for a higher salary at a different City agency, the current City agency risks losing a top performer or must scramble to justify an increase to retain them. In the event the employee changed agencies, they would still be paid by the City, but the City agencies would now incur additional costs (of needing to onboard the employee at the new agency and the current agency needing to recruit for, hire, and onboard a replacement for their lost employee). In the event the employee stayed at their current agency, the City would have created bureaucratic work for both agencies, and the hiring agency would have inefficiently used the recruitment resources and processes on a candidate that was not hired. Some participants argued if there was more flexibility in determining compensation, employees might be less likely to job-hop in search of higher pay, which would be more efficient and better for City agencies.

EEO and DEI Efforts

The agency has undertaken a lot of initiatives to address EEO and DEI. Employee's opinions of these efforts were mixed, and their impact is unclear

Participants had mixed assessments about the fairness of the agency's employment practices. Twenty-six percent of personnel indicated they did not agree tasks and duties in their unit were assigned fairly. Forty-two percent disagreed with the statement that the agency provides all employees equal opportunities for advancement. Fifty-four percent disagreed with the statement "promotions at the agency are made fairly," and 62 percent disagreed with the statement "salaries for City employees are fairly determined." Personnel who are people of color generally had less confidence in the fairness of employment decisions than White employees, and female employees less confidence than male employees.

Interview participants varied in their responses to questions about the fairness and transparency of employment practices, but views expressed in the interviews were generally more favorable than the survey results. Most interview participants assessed employment practices as being fair and transparent overall, although many who characterized them in this way also expressed some doubts and pointed to inconsistencies across the agency.

The agency has undertaken numerous initiatives to address underutilization, provide equal employment opportunities, and create a diverse workforce. In this section we discuss some of those initiatives and the opinions personnel expressed on the agency's EEO and DEI efforts.

Personnel believed diversity and providing equal opportunities are important

Every individual interviewed who stated an opinion of the agency's EEO and DEI efforts expressed the view the agency should engage in those efforts in some way, although several expressed concerns about the effect of those efforts and/or were critical of specific agency policies or procedures. It is best to take these results with a grain of salt because of the possibility of social desirability bias.¹¹

Participants indicated several reasons why they felt it was important for the agency to have a diverse workforce. One expressed the opinion it was a necessary part of the agency's efforts to "mine human capital" and it was beneficial for people because it would help them believe "they have a voice." One participant emphasized the value of having personnel with different experiences and perspectives when trying to solve problems. Another participant argued

¹¹ Social desirability bias occurs when participants respond to questions in a way they believe is more socially acceptable, rather than expressing their true feelings. For this research, there is the possibility participants felt they were expected to support DEI and EEO efforts and gave responses consistent with that, whether they truly believed what they were saying. We designed the interview protocols with the goal of presenting the topics as objectively as possible and indicating there are debates and disagreements about EEO and DEI efforts.

these efforts are important because women and people of color have tended to be over-represented in jobs that do not pay well, whereas White men have disproportionately been in titles with much higher salaries. Several participants observed some units in the agency – particularly those in the field – were heavily segregated based on ethnicity, and DEI and EEO efforts were needed to try and “keep everybody in check,” which the facilitator understood to mean the efforts were needed to ensure some involved in hiring decisions did not only hire people with the same demographics as themselves.

Some participants, most of whom stated they support EEO and DEI initiatives generally, expressed concern about some potential consequences of these efforts. The most common concern was about the qualifications and competence of some individuals hired. One participant stated, “of course it’s important to have diverse personnel, but you need to have diverse qualified personnel.” Another participant told us, “I think that while we work toward diversity and inclusion that we shouldn’t lose sight of the skill set of the person that you’re looking to hire. I mean, I don’t think we want to hire someone because they fit into a category over the skills that they can bring to the position.”

The agency has been involved in several lawsuits in the relatively recent past. Several participants expressed the opinion those lawsuits and the events that resulted in them have impacted employment decisions and work environments. Some of these participants felt some of their colleagues were promoted not because of their qualifications but because the agency was attempting to pacify the claimants and move on from the lawsuits.

Some personnel believed they have been treated unfairly because of a protected status

Twenty percent of personnel believed they have been treated unfairly by their supervisor because of a protected characteristic and/or their length of employment at the agency, and 22 percent believed they have been treated unfairly by their peers because of a protected characteristic and/or their length of employment at the agency.¹² Unfair treatment based on one’s race/ethnicity was most frequent (12 percent in the question about supervisors and 11 percent in the question about peers) followed by one’s length of employment at the agency (9 percent for the question about supervisors and 8 percent for the question about peers). These were also probably the most frequently mentioned issues in the interviews, although length of employment was mentioned more frequently than race/ethnicity. Length of employment was sometimes discussed along with one’s age.

Several interview participants also discussed discrimination based on race/ethnicity, candidly telling us their opinion about why they did not receive promotions and how they responded. For example, one participant who identified as a person of color told us of applying for a promotion that ultimately went to a White individual whom the participant claimed was less qualified, and less qualified than several other applicants who were people of color. The participant sued, received a settlement, and was “moved up.”

Participants that reported unfair treatment, by either their supervisor or peers, were half as likely to agree that promotion decisions, opportunities for advancement, and salaries were fairly determined. These participants also reported considerably lower job satisfaction than

¹² See Appendices A and B for the interview and survey questions that address these issues.

their peers (job satisfaction for those who did not indicate unfair treatment was 7.6, compared to 5.1 when treated unfairly by a peer or a supervisor).

Fifteen percent of employees with five years or less tenure claimed to have experienced unfair supervisor treatment, and 30 percent of employees with over five years of tenure claimed to have experienced unfair treatment from their supervisor. After 10 years at the agency, employees are more likely than not to report having experienced unfair treatment from a supervisor.

Participants expressed confidence in how the agency handles complaints

Most interview participants who addressed the issue of how the agency handles issues of discrimination and harassment expressed confidence it has done so fairly.¹³ Participants were asked about these issues in different ways depending on their experiences.¹⁴

Several participants who indicated they had confidence in how the agency handles claims of discrimination or harassment felt this way because they believed the agency was thorough, fair, and transparent. Several expressed the belief the agency would talk to all relevant parties and make an effort to determine the complete, accurate picture of what happened. One participant compared the EEO team at the time of the project to the previous one, indicating the leader of the EEO and DEI work at the time of the project was “frankly much better” than the person who previously held the position.

Several expressed skepticism of how the agency has handled claims of discrimination and harassment. Some of those who expressed skepticism suggested they believed those responsible for handling claims have been primarily interested in protecting the leadership of the agency rather than helping rank-and-file personnel. Several others suggested those in the central offices did not have real authority over divisions in other locations, and that filing a claim would have led to retaliation from colleagues.

The agency has launched numerous initiatives to address EEO and DEI

The agency has launched numerous EEO and DEI initiatives. Some of these were very recent at the time of the project, although as one of the interview participants told us, even some of the “new” initiatives (e.g., employee resource groups (ERGs)) have existed for years in some form.

Outreach and recruitment

The agency has undertaken numerous outreach initiatives to diversify its ranks, especially for titles with underutilization of women and people of color. For some competitive titles, the

¹³ The survey did not include questions directly addressing the participant’s assessment of how the agency handles claims of discrimination and harassment.

¹⁴ Participants who were involved in claims were asked directly about their satisfaction with the process; questions for this group varied further based on whether the participant made a claim or was otherwise involved in a claim (e.g., as a respondent, a witness, or in some other capacity). Those who did not have experience with claims were asked if they would have confidence in the process if they were ever involved in one.

agency has focused its efforts on ‘diversifying the pipeline,’ as one executive staff member described it, to ensure that civil service lists are more diverse.

One example is an outreach campaign for a civil service exam. The agency successfully lobbied DCAS to extend the filing period for this exam to ensure that it could implement an advertising and social media campaign to reach as many candidates as possible. The agency advertised at bus stops and in the subway system to reach populations who have low representation in the title. An executive employee explained “we targeted the Bronx [and] the Upper West Side, which are historically Hispanic, along with Jamaica Queens, and Bedstuy. We put ads on the radio, [at] bus stops. The thought is if more minorities are on list, then the 1-in-3 rule will work better.” The agency has also done outreach to the CUNY campuses for recruitment for specific titles with underutilization.

In addition, the agency has petitioned DCAS to change title specifications, including residency requirements, to attract a wider pool of applicants. The agency has successfully petitioned DCAS to expand eligibility for some titles to those who live in other New York counties and New Jersey. Further efforts were underway to set up training programs to diversify those who take exams.

Structured Hiring

The agency has implemented a structured hiring process for some titles with underutilization of female, Asian, Black, and/or Hispanic workers. The process is intended to ensure fair and equitable hiring practices. As part of this process, the agency conducts job analyses, creates standardized interview questions, uses diverse interview panels, and develops rating scales to evaluate candidates objectively. All of this is done with the goal of reducing bias and ensuring that hiring decisions are based on job-related qualifications. Numerous staff relayed the aim is to eventually use this process for all hiring, and the agency actively encourages supervisors and managers who conduct hiring to make use of the guidelines.

Employee Resource Groups

The agency has facilitated the launch of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). These are voluntary groups formed by employees with shared characteristics or life experiences. Their purpose is to foster a sense of community and belonging among employees, provide support and resources, and promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The membership for each group is open to all employees who share the group’s interests and/or goals. The agency facilitated its groups to enhance engagement and morale in the workplace, and it is the long-term purpose that they help the agency work toward its goals of workforce diversity and inclusion.

To aid employees in creating groups, the agency has provided resources, including toolkits and trainings, that outline how to come up with mission statements and guidance on the operations of the groups. Groups are encouraged to track their progress and measure their success in achieving their goals, including membership growth, event attendance, and impact on the organization’s diversity and inclusion efforts. In addition, the group has offered Leadership Training to empower group leaders to effectively lead their groups, contribute to a more inclusive workplace, and advance the agency’s diversity and inclusion goals.

EEO Representatives

The agency has launched a volunteer program to promote equal employment opportunity principles and practices throughout the agency. EEO Representatives act as a bridge between employees and those at the agency who handle EEO and DEI issues. Representatives are to be trained in EEO laws and policies to help build rapport and establish levels of trust within agency worksites and facilities. The Representatives assist with EEO inquiries, report potential EEO violations, educate employees about the EEO processes, display EEO materials, attend trainings, and observe interview panels.

Professional development

The agency has implemented several programs to help personnel with professional development. These initiatives have involved monthly events and networking opportunities to develop leadership, communication, and presentation skills. The programs have also included rotations in other agency divisions. Personnel are aided in assessing the trajectory of their career paths and developing plans and strategies for advancement. Participants have participated in skill building workshops and panel discussions and were given the opportunity to meet members of the senior team with a focus on how to best reach their career goals. The program included social events and agency tours throughout the year to help participants network with each other and Senior Staff and expand their views and knowledge of the agency's operations.

Personnel data

The agency publishes internal reports to inform its plans to promote equity, diversity and inclusion. The report is produced annually and is used as the basis of determining which titles have underutilization. The agency has also sought to collect demographic information about its personnel not typically available, and in 2023 launched an optional agency-wide survey to collect information on employees' disability status and sexual identity.

Personnel had mixed feelings about the agency's EEO/DEI efforts

Most interview participants expressed awareness of at least some of the agency's EEO/DEI efforts. Virtually all participants expressed agreement such efforts are important, but that does not mean they agreed with the agency's specific efforts. Indeed, there were mixed assessments about whether the agency's initiatives are achieving the intended results.

Some participants lauded the agency's EEO initiatives

Many staff shared the opinion many of the initiatives have been successful. Some of these participants felt the initiatives indicated the leaders at the time were taking a very different approach from their predecessors. One participant told us, "it's gotten much better ... through the years" and several others expressed similar sentiments. Another suggested these programs force personnel to change long-established ways of doing things and the initiatives are contributing to a "more diverse" agency.

In the interviews, the ERGs and professional development programs were probably mentioned most frequently. Several participants told us the ERGs did a good job of reaching out

to members of the communities they represent, helping personnel feel a sense of belonging. Others said the social elements of the groups helped them to network and create relationships among staff from other units that they would not have had the opportunity to interact with.

Those who discussed the professional development programs generally spoke positively of them. Those we spoke to who participated in the programs felt they positively impacted their career development and provided them with opportunities they may not have otherwise had. Several participants who had not participated in them told us they hoped to in the future.

Some staff questioned their effectiveness

Despite most respondents expressing the belief that the various initiatives were a step in the right direction, many questioned whether they were actually achieving their objectives. One participant pointed out, “because people join these things for different [reasons]..., I think a lot of people are doing it for a motive for themselves.” Others acknowledged the limitation of how much change they could affect, and as one participant noted, “you know it's an employee resource group. We can't change policies. We could voice our opinion on certain things or what not ...but there's [only] so much we can actually do.”

Some staff questioned the commitment of leadership

Some participants questioned whether the agency's leadership at the time was truly committed to providing equal employment opportunities and promoting diversity, equity and inclusion. These individuals expressed the view that sometimes programs, initiatives, or policies were presented in a way that sounded like “lip service,” that they were being done “to check a box.” As one participant noted, “the agency has to want to change the culture, and they're not ready to do that. ... I recommend that the agency stop making excuses and stop telling us since 2019 that it takes time.”

The EEO Representative program may be the one for which participants were most skeptical of the agency's efforts. Several EEO Representatives participated in the interviews. Their personal experiences with the program and their assessments of its effectiveness varied considerably. One participant told us, “the previous EEO leader was not engaged. I don't know about the current one. But based on my experience as a liaison I don't think there's much difference.” Most of the Representatives interviewed were uncertain of the impact, if any, the program has had on the agency. Several expressed the view most staff were not aware who their Representative is, and that many Representatives had not been properly trained by the agency to understand their role. One participant stated, “I don't think [the program] is really doing much, not as it stands right now,” and several others expressed similar opinions.

Some staff believed these efforts have led to other forms of discrimination, particularly against older employees and those with longer tenure

Many interview participants felt the agency's efforts in the EEO/DEI field, and those promoting professional development, targeted newer employees rather than those who have been with the agency for many years. As one participant pointed out, “I see there are certain [programs] if you're a newbie.” Another told us, “some of the people who had been in the agency for a long time, were complaining that there was nothing for them.”

In addition, multiple respondents indicated they felt unvalued at the agency because they were older or because they had been with the agency for a longer time. One told us, “they need to start looking at ageism. Even though they offered the training, it is still happening here. I see some of my older colleagues; they are just not treated well. So that’s something they need to look more into more than just giving a training.” Many participants expressed similar sentiments. One told us they faced similar issues after being at the agency for well over two decades: “after a certain point it’s ageism. At a certain point you reach a plateau and they don’t want to promote you; they just want you out the door because you don’t fit the vision for what the agency ought to look like.”

Historically, research on the relationship between one’s length of tenure at a job and their job satisfaction has demonstrated mixed results. Some recent studies suggest the longer one’s tenure at an organization the lower their job satisfaction becomes, while the older one gets the higher their job satisfaction. The findings from the climate survey are consistent with this research.

It is not difficult to make strong theoretical arguments for length of tenure having either a positive or negative effect on one’s job satisfaction. Length of tenure may be associated with higher job satisfaction, indicating that those who have stayed at the organization have done so because they love the work, the benefits, the hours, their colleagues, and/or any number of other reasons. This seems especially likely in a job market where workers have a lot of options. Conversely, one can easily imagine length of tenure associated with negative views of one’s job: the longer an employee stays at an organization, the longer they have had to be disappointed by not getting a promotion or feeling they have been treated unfairly. This would seem more likely in a job market where workers have few opportunities to change jobs. In government work especially, or any organization that provides benefits to staff based on their length of service (e.g., vacation time or retirement compensation), an employee may stay at an organization primarily to obtain those benefits, even though they are otherwise dissatisfied with their job.

It is likely these initiatives have had positive impacts, but it is hard to be sure

At the time of this project and recent years before, the agency had retained staff at a better rate than the rest of the City; that includes women and people of color. More analysis is required to determine why and how, but it is reasonable to hypothesize the agency’s various EEO and DEI efforts were part of the reason. The improvements the agency has made in the underutilization of Black workers may also be directly attributable to these efforts.

However, if the agency wants to make stronger claims about the impact of its initiatives it will need to utilize other research methods, appropriately plan for the collection and analysis of data, and utilize other data not provided to the EEPC, to determine causal connections. For example, deeper analysis of applicant data for non-competitive titles, and tracking of applicants’ application lifecycles, could allow for more useful insights that may allow for stronger claims about the impact of DEI and EEO initiatives. Inquiries into the employment decisions of personnel, including those who leave and those who stay, may also allow for better insights.

An opportunity potentially ripe for analysis is the agency's recent efforts to diversify the lists for some civil service exams. The agency changed the timing of an exam specifically to implement a recruitment plan aimed at diversifying test-takers. Comparing the diversity of the list for that title to other similar titles may allow for stronger claims to be made about the impact of the agency's efforts.

Structured Hiring

One of the agency's initiatives has been to engage in structured hiring for titles that have underutilization of people of color and/or women.

Because it is a hiring initiative, the best way to measure its impact is to determine whether the titles in the initiative have seen an increase in placements (i.e., hires and promotions) after implementation of the structured hiring procedures. It would probably be a mistake to measure the impact of the initiative by whether the job group has underutilization, because separations (i.e., retirements, resignations, and firings) can impact underutilization; structured hiring is not intended to impact separations and is unlikely to have much of an impact on them. Furthermore, addressing underutilization often takes time. It would not be a fair assessment of the program to conclude it was unsuccessful because a job group continues to have underutilization, if the hiring of the underutilized groups improves.

Since the launch of the initiative through 2024, 66 titles were included at one time or another. Fifty-two titles had underutilization of one or more racial/ethnic groups and 37 titles had underutilization of women.¹⁵

We measure the impact of the initiative by comparing the rate of placements of the underutilized group in the three years prior to it using structured hiring to the rate of placements of the underutilized group(s) in the years after using structured hiring. We only include titles for which there were at least ten placements in the three years prior to it using structured hiring and at least ten placements in the years after using structured hiring. Because of the restriction on the number of placements, the analysis includes 32 titles with underutilization of one or more racial/ethnic groups, and 23 titles with underutilization of women.

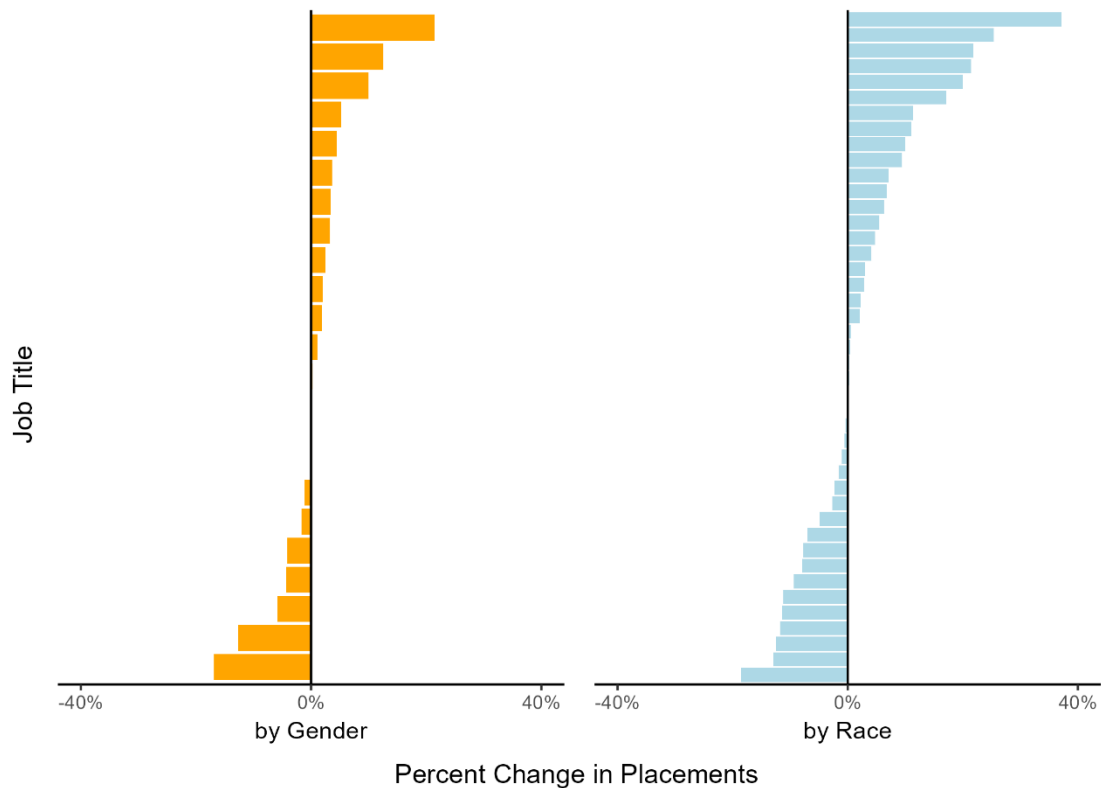
Seventeen of the 32 titles (53%) with underutilization of one or more racial/ethnic groups (and at least ten placements each in the pre- and post-initiative period) saw an increase in the rate of hire of those groups after it used structured hiring. Fourteen of the 23 titles (61%) with underutilization of women saw an increase in the rate of hiring of women after it used structured hiring. In other words, 47 percent of the titles with underutilization of one or more racial/ethnic groups and 39 percent of titles with underutilization of women saw a decline in the placements of the underutilized groups after the title became part of the Structured Hiring initiative. Counting every placement for these titles, the rate of placement for underutilized groups was virtually identical in the pre- and post-year periods (16% for each).

While hiring improved for both racial/ethnic groups and women, the improvement through 2024 was relatively small. When assessing the effectiveness of an initiative, researchers usually want to see a greater improvement than what has been demonstrated so far, especially for titles with underutilization of one or more racial/ethnic groups. The differences in

¹⁵ Some of these titles had underutilization of both a racial/ethnic group and women, which is why the sum of the two is greater than 66.

outcomes for titles pre- and post-structured hiring (through 2024) do not meet the standard metrics for statistical significance that would lead one to conclude the initiative has had an impact; the differences in outcomes are little better than a coin flip. The improvements for women were greater but given the small sample size it would have been premature to argue the initiative had a substantial impact on addressing underutilization through the hiring and promotion processes. That does not mean it should not continue, or that the agency should not move towards instituting structured hiring in more titles; but it does call into question its impact on hiring a more diverse population. There may have been improvements in the years following this analysis.

Figure 5 – Structured Hiring - Changes in Placement Rates through 2024



Conclusion and Recommendations

This report examines a City agency's efforts to provide equal employment opportunities to all, and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. These analyses were conducted from 2023-2024, before the election of Mayor Mamdani. As with other City agencies and employers across the country, some titles and job groups at this agency were disproportionately made up of White personnel and men, even accounting for the labor market availability of people of color and women.

Overall, underutilization at the agency was about average compared to other City agencies. Underutilization at the agency was substantial for women and Black workers. In ten years prior to these analyses, there had been slight improvement in the expected rate of employment of women and their actual presence in the agency. There had been a considerable drop in the number of titles that underutilize Black workers. The agency's retention rate was better than the City's, including retention of women and people of color.¹⁶ The disparities in the workforce were likely driven by hiring, particularly for competitive titles. The agency has undertaken numerous initiatives to improve equal employment opportunity, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and job satisfaction. Staff generally supported these efforts but questioned their impact and the commitment of leadership.

Within that context, we discuss some key findings and offer recommendations to address them.

Performance evaluations were inconsistent in their frequency, nature, and usefulness to personnel.

The administration of performance evaluations varied widely throughout the agency, and some personnel wanted more from their evaluations. Some personnel received performance evaluations every year; others went many years without one. Some personnel experienced an interactive process; for others, their role was little more than receiving the relevant documents. Some received useful feedback that helped them understand how to improve and advance; others did not receive such feedback.

Most staff wanted consistent, engaged, and useful feedback, but there was not universal agreement that performance evaluations of that nature were possible or would even be useful. The process requires the employee and their supervisor trust each other, and the supervisor to be committed to leading a process that is fair and useful to the employee.

Recommendation: develop and enforce best practices for performance evaluations.

The agency should develop and enforce best practices for providing performance evaluations to staff. The best practices should address elements of the evaluation process such as: the minimum frequency for providing evaluations, the nature of how the evaluation is developed, the nature of how the evaluation is presented to the employee, examples of items to include,

¹⁶ At the time this report was written, the EEPC was unable to do a detailed analysis of retention. Retention is impacted by many things, including the age of the workforce. Thus, while we can say the agency retains employees at a rate higher than the City, we cannot control for things like the age of the agency's workforce compared to other agencies. Thus, we can hypothesize the agency's initiatives have a positive impact on retention, but more data on personnel will be necessary to make stronger claims.

options for assessment scales, how to incorporate the employee's views on their assessment, and a guide for developing ideas for professional development and growth.

The development of best practices does not mean the process should be the exact same for every employee or unit, although we do recommend requiring an annual evaluation for all employees who want one. Different units and divisions will likely vary in what they find most productive. Newer employees may need more frequent evaluations, whereas those with longer tenure may need them less frequently. Length of tenure may also impact the items on the evaluation. Those personnel who express a desire to be promoted will usually desire more guidance on professional development opportunities compared to those who do not have a desire to be promoted. One size does not fit all in an agency as large and diverse as this agency, but even considering the size and diversity of the agency, there should be established best practices and minimum standards.

Many personnel felt professional development opportunities were too limited.

Many personnel found professional development opportunities limited. There were several reasons for this. Some believed managers, supervisors, and other leaders at the agency had a narrow mindset about the potential for most personnel and were unable or unwilling to think of them beyond the role they are currently in. Others believed leaders did not want to lose valuable personnel and therefore resisted allowing them to engage in activities that would have provided them opportunities to change roles in the future. In practice, many personnel at the agency were unable to access training and professional development opportunities if their supervisor did not approve them doing so.

Recommendation: develop a policy for how personnel seek training and professional development opportunities.

The agency should articulate policies for professional development. This should include guidance on how personnel and their supervisors can develop professional development goals and plans, to whom requests for training and other opportunities are made, and the factors to be considered by those who decide the outcome of specific requests. Such policies should allow for personnel to have the option to – for lack of a better word – “appeal” a denial, and encourage dialogue when there is disagreement between personnel and decision-makers. Managers who develop professional development plans with their staff, and those assigned to review specific requests, should be trained in how to consider broadening opportunities for personnel, and not restricting them to only those options that are directly relevant to their current title.

We do not mean to suggest every request should be approved or that personnel should have the right to request any training they want at any time they want to do it. Codifying procedures for developing professional development plans and approving requests would help those personnel who want to take charge of their professional development and ensure they are not at the mercy of any one person.

Throughout our interviews, it was apparent staff felt there were often inconsistencies between the agency's stated goals and the actions of some managers and supervisors. Managers and supervisors may benefit from more guidance and direction on how to approach

issues such as hiring, compensation, promotions, professional development, performance evaluations, etc. Individual discretion is important and there will always be some, but greater efforts to ensure more alignment between the decisions of individual managers and the goals of agency leadership would likely address some of the concerns of personnel.

Recommendation: conduct “open houses”: events where agencies and divisions make leaders and HR personnel available to answer questions from personnel about openings, relevant Civil Service exams, and job requirements.

An agency as diverse and large as this one has a lot to offer personnel. A regular event (annually, bi-annually) that provides staff the opportunity to explore other options within the agency may help encourage retention and provide an incentive for staff to take the initiative to further their professional development.

There was a pervasive perception of favoritism. Some agency initiatives likely perpetuated that perception.

A high percentage of interview participants expressed the belief favoritism was rampant. Often, these participants suggested the personal relationships staff form with colleagues have had an outsized impact on who has been assigned more desirable projects and who gets promoted. Several participants stated they believed one of the primary purposes of the civil service system – to prioritize merit rather than personal connections when making employment decisions – was easily manipulated and often took a backseat to the personal preferences of those making employment decisions.

It would be easy to assume these criticisms came largely from those who had not been promoted at the pace they preferred, or who were generally dissatisfied with their job. If that were the case, some may dismiss these beliefs as “sour grapes.” However, for many participants it is unlikely that was the impetus for them. The perception of favoritism was expressed by such a high percentage of participants, including so many who expressed high job satisfaction and so many who had been promoted at this agency, that it is unlikely the criticisms were primarily driven by personal dissatisfaction with their job.

The perception of favoritism went beyond specific employment decisions made by supervisors and managers. Several participants also expressed the belief it was an institutional problem. This was expressed as the belief that agency leaders have decided which personnel they “like,” and those individuals have received more opportunities. Again, the implication in these interviews was that leaders have made assessments of personnel that are not based entirely, or even primarily, on the merit of those eligible for a promotion or assignment to an important project. One used the phrase “in the network” to describe how some staff have had better relationships with leaders and thus have moved up the ladder more easily; another used the phrase “pet project” (meaning leaders have chosen staff and made it their responsibility to move them up the ladder).

Recommendation: develop practices to make employment decisions fairer and more transparent.

The agency has undertaken efforts to ensure employment decisions are fair and transparent (e.g., the Structured Hiring initiative). There are other practices the agency can consider to

further those goals. One option is to ensure greater diversity in hiring decisions, including unit and chain of command diversity. In other words, those making a hiring or promotion decision would come from different units or divisions, and a panel could not include only a supervisor/manager and those who report to them. This may help address potential issues of favoritism.

The agency should also consider requiring interview panels to provide written feedback to candidates interviewed, particularly internal candidates, specifying why they did not receive a job offer or promotion, and also why the person who got the job succeeded in doing so. This requirement could serve as a check on hiring panels to ensure they focus on merit and would also increase the likelihood those candidates not offered a desired position understand why.

Recommendation: be mindful in the implementation of professional development initiatives that can help create a perception some staff move up the ladder unfairly.

In the recent past the agency has operated several professional development initiatives. These programs have provided valuable opportunities for staff, and we recommend the agency continue to run them in the future. These programs have also made efforts to provide opportunities to staff, including women and people of color, who may not have otherwise had the ability to interact with agency leadership. Such programs have great potential to better ensure all are provided with equal employment opportunities.

Several personnel we interviewed who had participated in these programs emphasized the networking opportunities that came from them. Certainly, such opportunities can be beneficial to the staff enrolled in such programs, but this can perpetuate the perceptions of unfairness discussed above, including the statement from one of our participants who indicated personnel who are “in the network” have an easier time moving up the ladder.

The agency must be mindful of how these programs are perceived, especially in the context of future employment decisions. If personnel who have not participated in these programs (whether because they are not interested or because they have applied but not been accepted) develop the belief they are losing opportunities to staff who have participated in them, and they believe that participation is a substantial factor in employment decisions, it will undermine the programs’ credibility. And, while participation in such programs provides useful experience and skill development, such participation probably should not have an outsized impact on future hiring decisions. There is an obvious potential to favor such personnel as a way to justify, after the fact, their selection into such programs. The agency should take efforts to address that potential and let personnel know it is aware of that possibility.

The longer one’s tenure, the more dissatisfied they were with their job.

Some interview participants with longer tenure expressed the belief they were taken for granted, denied opportunities to work on interesting projects, and not provided the training they need to adjust to technological changes in the workplace. They believed newer staff were often given preferential treatment and valued more. Some interview participants with longer tenure expressed the opinion the skills and experience they brought, including their institutional knowledge, were not valued as much as they should have been.

Recommendation: encourage the creation of an Employee Resource Group based on length of service at the agency.

The agency should encourage staff to establish an Employee Resource Group based on one's length of tenure at the agency. The exact cutoff can be determined, but ten years may be a good option. Such a group may help staff with longer tenure develop a better sense of community at the agency, allow them to help each other with professional development and networking opportunities, and provide all the benefits these groups are meant to provide.

In some internal documents provided to the EEPCC, there has been some discussion of addressing these issues by establishing an "inter-generational" group. We do not express an opinion of such an action, but we believe such a group should not be established instead of one meant for personnel with longer tenure. If a group is open to all (or virtually all) personnel, it may not be consistent with the purposes of ERGs. It seems unlikely the agency would encourage the disbandment of the various groups created for different racial and ethnic groups in favor of a "multi-racial" group. Establishing such a group may be a good idea, but not at the expense of the others that have already formed and of which members who participated in the interviews spoke so highly. We believe the same logic applies to a group based on length of tenure.

Although the agency established a Structured Hiring initiative to improve diversity in hiring, there was not yet strong evidence it has had a substantial impact.

The Agency has established a Structured Hiring initiative to establish hiring practices for job titles with underutilization of people of color and/or women. At the time of our analyses, there was not much evidence to suggest the initiative has had an effect on the hiring of underutilized groups. For almost half the titles in the initiative, hiring of underutilized groups did not improve in the years after the initiative was established.

This does not necessarily mean the agency should not continue requiring structured hiring for some titles and encouraging it for others. There are benefits to structured hiring that may mean it is the best approach moving forward. However, if the only, or primary, reason for doing it is to address underutilization, it was unclear if it had yet had the intended impact.

Recommendation: consider a broader conception of diversity when creating interview panels

The Structured Hiring initiative emphasizes demographic diversity for interview panels. Such diversity is important but may not be sufficient in some instances. As discussed above, perceptions of favoritism may be better addressed through diversity in units and ensuring panels are not only made of managers/supervisors and their direct reports.

The agency's rate of retention was better than the City's.

The agency's rate of retention was better than the City's around the time of this project, including for women and people of color. At the time this report was written we did not have data available to us to do more sophisticated analyses. For example, we were unable to compare the age and length of tenure of agency employees to other City agencies. It is not impossible that the agency has younger staff and/or staff who have not been employed with the City as long as other agencies, and that is the reason for better retention rates, rather than greater job satisfaction.

In the near future we will be able to do more nuanced analyses of the agency's personnel and compare them to other agencies. This will allow us to say with more confidence whether the agency's retention rates are the function of the age and length of tenure of its workforce.

The agency can also examine what may be contributing to its better than average retention rates.

Recommendation: engage in small scale surveys of agency staff and develop better incentives to encourage a high rate of participation.

When surveys are offered to City staff, it is usually the mindset to make them available to everyone. There are good reasons for that, including a desire to give everyone the option to have their views heard. There are also downsides to this. Response rates are sometimes very low. The climate survey for this project is a perfect example of that.

Response rates are usually higher when there are greater incentives to participate. For example, the Fire Department conducted a survey of its personnel in 2019. Staff were provided one hour of overtime to participate. The response rate for this survey was just under half, much higher than the climate survey done for this report. The substantially different incentives were certainly part of the reason for that disparity. It is unlikely the agency could afford to offer such a generous incentive to all personnel.

The agency may consider surveys of subsets of the population. Most would likely be of personnel chosen completely at random. For example, a few hundred personnel could be chosen, using something random like their employee identification number, and those personnel could be offered a more substantial incentive to participate (e.g., a gift card in a higher denomination, an hour of overtime, etc.). This would likely improve participation rates and ensure a more diverse group of voices are heard. For other surveys, subsets could be chosen based on the nature of the survey. An obvious example is one described above, focusing on personnel with longer tenure at the agency.

To examine why the agency's retention rates have been good in recent years, a survey could ask personnel more detailed questions about job satisfaction. Such a survey would include questions about the nature of one's work, compensation, work-life balance, and other relevant topics. If the agency wanted to determine the relationship between EEO/DEI initiatives and retention, the survey could include items related to the agency's various initiatives.

We recommend the agency consider partial rollouts of initiatives to assess their effectiveness through randomized controlled trials.

The gold standard in assessing program effectiveness is a randomized controlled trial. If agencies want to determine the impact of their employment practices, they should make efforts to conduct these kinds of analyses when possible.

How an RCT would have worked in the Structured Hiring Initiative illustrates how they could be utilized in the future for other initiatives. Once the agency determined a title would become part of this effort, and if there were multiple hiring groups hiring for that title, the agency could have randomly selected some of those groups to go through the necessary trainings and hire using the procedures established for Structured Hiring; the remaining groups would have continued hiring as they were doing at that time. The agency would then conduct analyses of those hired by the different groups and compare them.

A similar approach can be used for other initiatives. For example, the agency could take two or more titles with similar requirements and that typically attract similar individuals to take the exam, and engage in different outreach and marketing campaigns for them. The diversity of the applicant pools could then be compared. Such efforts require advanced planning, deliberate study design, and consistent, diligent collection of data. Such research projects could be valuable to the agency, allowing it to determine whether initiatives are working and, if not, encourage rethinking of efforts to address underutilization.

Appendix A – Interview Protocols

Interview Protocol – Executives/Managers

Introduction

Good [morning/afternoon/evening]. My name is [name] and I am [title] at the New York City Equal Employment Practices Commission. Have you ever worked with us or heard of us? [brief interaction based on their response.] We were established in 1989 to serve as an independent agency to audit, review, and monitor the equal employment practices of virtually all City agencies.

We also have a Research Agency [which is where I work (if applicable)]. In 2019 the City Council enacted Local Law 13, which requires our agency to publish reports annually on the diversity of the City's workforce and what is sometimes referred to as "underutilization," which means disparities for people of color and women in their rates of employment. The law also requires us to make recommendations to the City on how to address persistent underutilization, and that is why we are here talking with you today.

We have been speaking with several of your colleagues in the EEO & DEI space, and given your role and responsibilities we thought you would be an important person to talk to. We want to learn about how your agency develops EEO policies, enforces them, what trends you have seen in EEO issues over the past several years, and specifically what your agency does to provide EEO to those who work for and seek to work for your agency. We are interested in your experience and what you think works, what does not, and what else can be done. This work will inform several reports we write, as required by Local Law 13. We hope the findings will inform your own work and future programs and policies.

I will be facilitating the interview and we have [1, 2] notetakers (share names). Your participation is completely confidential. Only those on the project team will know you participated. If we were to quote or paraphrase in a report something you say, we would not include your name or title, and would describe you in a way that it would be unlikely anyone could identify you.

Leadership at the agency has also requested the Agency's participation be confidential. The EEPC will not indicate to anyone outside our agency that the agency participated in this project.

[We will reach out to them via email about being recorded prior to the interview. One of the following two parts will be stated, depending on their response: 1) You have not agreed to be recorded, so we will not record this conversation. 2) You have agreed to be recorded. Thank you for agreeing to that; it is only for notetaking purposes and makes our job much easier. The recording will not be shared with anyone outside of the project team.]

This will take up to one hour. You are not obligated to answer any questions you do not want to, and you're free to end the conversation at any time. Before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

Let's start by discussing your role at the agency and your background.

1. What is your current position at the agency?
 - a. Office title?
 - b. Civil Service title?
 - c. How did you get into this role? (Was it a political appointment, a posted position, promotion, did it require a civil service exam, etc.)
 - d. Please describe your primary duties and responsibilities.
 - e. How long have you been in this role?

2. Have you held any other positions at the agency? If so, please describe (titles, length of time in the role, etc.).
3. Have you worked at any other city agencies? If so, please describe (agencies, titles, length of time in the roles, etc.).
4. Have you held positions outside New York City government? If so, please describe (other government agencies (NYS, federal, etc.), nonprofit/for-profit companies, titles, roles, length of time, etc.).

It's important for our work to understand the structure of the agency and your position in it. We will ask you some questions about the Agency and your role specifically.

5. What division/agency/unit do you work in?
 - a. Approximately how many personnel are in this div/dept/unit?
6. To whom do you report?
7. Do you have any direct reports?
 - a. If yes, how many?
 - b. What are their roles? (Titles, responsibilities, etc.).
8. What other divisions/agencys/units do you primarily engage with in your work?
9. Has there been any organizational changes in the past five years you feel are worth discussing (e.g., restructuring of different units)?
 - a. If yes, please elaborate.
 - b. What were the major impacts of these changes?
10. Are there any organizational changes in the works you feel are worth discussing (e.g., restructuring of different units)?
 - a. If yes, please elaborate.
 - b. What are the reasons for these proposed changes?
11. What do you feel are the major issues currently facing the agency?

We'd like to ask some questions about the AGENCY's EEO policies and procedures.

12. Do you have any role in developing the Agency's EEO policies and procedures?
 - a. If yes, please elaborate.
 - b. If no, do you have knowledge of how the Agency approaches EEO issues?
13. How does the Agency approach the development of EEO policies and procedures?
 - a. Which staff members, divisions/agencys/units etc. work on these issues?
 - b. What is the process typically like (e.g., how frequently do the relevant actors meet, how are decisions made, etc.)?
 - i. How does the Agency determine what are the major EEO issues it faces?
 - ii. Do you feel the process is collaborative? Do the Agency's different units work well together?

- iii. What could the Agency do to improve the process?
 - c. What role do other City agencies play (e.g., DCAS)?
 - d. Do state or federal agencies play a role?
14. What do you currently see as the major issue(s) the agency faces regarding EEO?

Let's explore equal opportunity in employment practices.

15. What are some of the things the agency does to provide equal employment opportunity in employment actions?
- a. Recruitment?
 - i. Advertising postings in targeted media outlets. How are outlets chosen? Is their effectiveness measured?
 - ii. Career and job fairs. Is their effectiveness measured?
 - iii. Other? If yes, is the effectiveness of these other efforts measured?
 - b. Hiring?
 - i. Training staff who conduct interviews. Please describe the Agency's Structured Hiring Initiative.
 - ii. Use of structured interviewing.
 - iii. How are interview panels established?
 - c. Promotions?
 - i. Notifying staff of promotion opportunities.
 - ii. Notifying staff of upcoming Civil Service exams.
 - iii. Professional development opportunities (trainings, classes, career counselor, etc.).
 - iv. Does the Agency conduct projections for retirement, and if so, is there a plan to prepare staff to move into those positions?
 - d. Transfers?
 - e. Separations?
 - i. Performance evaluations.
 - ii. Exit surveys. If yes, is there data on responses?
16. What are the challenges the Agency faces in these efforts? How does the agency respond to those challenges?
- a. Civil Service system.
 - b. Attracting applicants.
 - c. Classifying jobs/determining titles.
 - d. Following guidelines/requirements imposed by the City.
 - e. Following guidelines/requirements imposed by the State.

17. Do you have knowledge of claims of racial/ethnic/sex discrimination in personnel decisions against the agency within the past two years?
- a. Hiring?
 - b. Promotions?
 - c. Separations?
 - d. In competitive and/or non-competitive titles?
18. How does the agency respond to claims of racial/ethnic/sex discrimination in employment actions?
- a. Hiring?
 - b. Promotions?
 - c. Separations?
 - d. In competitive and/or non-competitive titles?
19. Have there been any trends in racial/ethnic/sex discrimination complaints in the past several years?
- a. [If prompting is needed]: are there any types of complaints that have become more prevalent; has the frequency of complaints changed overall, etc.
 - b. Please explain: what are the trends, how do they differ from previous years, what do you feel has contributed to these trends, etc.
 - c. How does the agency respond to these types of issues? What are the processes, which agencies are involved, how are they resolved, what are the procedures for determining disciplinary action, etc.
20. Have there been claims of a hostile work environment? If yes, please elaborate.

Let's explore other EEO issues further.

21. Have there been any trends in reasonable accommodation requests in the past several years?
- a. [If prompting is needed]: are there any types of requests that have become more prevalent; has the frequency of requests changed overall, etc.
 - b. Please explain: what are the trends, how do they differ from previous years, what do you feel has contributed to these trends, etc.
 - c. How does the agency respond to these types of issues? What are the processes, which agencies are involved, how are they resolved, how long does the process typically take, etc.
22. Have there been any trends in sexual harassment issues in the past several years?
- a. [If prompting is needed]: are there any types of issues that have become more prevalent; has the frequency of issues raised changed overall, etc.
 - b. Please explain: what are the trends, how do they differ from previous years, what do you feel has contributed to these trends, etc.

- c. How does the agency respond to these types of issues? What are the processes, which agencies are involved, how are they resolved, how long does the process typically take, etc.

23. Do you feel any of the issues you have discussed have had an impact on the AGENCY's ability to hire and retain women and/or people of color? If so, please elaborate.

For our final few questions we'd like to discuss your thoughts on the impact of the AGENCY's EEO and DEI efforts.

24. What is your sense of how the AGENCY's personnel view the Agency's EEO and D & I efforts?

- a. Are you familiar with the results of the last climate survey? If yes, what stood out to you?
- b. Do you believe personnel feel the agency is a good place to work?
- c. Do you believe personnel feel personnel decisions are made fairly?

25. In your opinion, does the Agency reflect the demographics of New York City? Please elaborate.

- a. Is the agency diverse at various levels (e.g., administrative, managerial, line staff, etc.)?
- b. In your opinion, is it important the agency have diverse personnel? If yes, why? If no, why not?

26. How has the City's Administration helped/hindered such efforts?

- a. Does the Mayor's Office provide guidance, resources, models/best practices?
- b. If so, how do these things inform your EEO efforts?
- c. If not, would such support be useful?

27. How does the agency monitor and evaluate its efforts?

- a. How is the data monitored?
- b. Does the agency engage in any evaluation of its efforts?

28. Of the existing efforts, what could be done more effectively?

29. What could the agency do that it is not currently doing?

- a. Are there plans for new EEO/DEI initiatives? If yes, please elaborate.

30. Is there anything important for me to know about the AGENCY's EEO policies, employment practices, etc. that we have not discussed?

Interview Protocol – General Personnel

Introduction

Good [morning/afternoon/evening]. My name is [name] and I am [title] at the New York City Equal Employment Practices Commission. Have you ever worked with us or heard of us? [brief interaction based on their response.] We were established in 1989 to serve as an independent agency to audit, review, and monitor the equal employment practices of virtually all City agencies.

We also have a Research Agency [which is where I work (if applicable)]. In 2019 the City Council enacted Local Law 13, which requires our agency to publish reports annually on the diversity of the City's workforce. The law also requires us to make recommendations to the City on how to address persistent underutilization, and that is why we are here talking with you today.

We want to learn about your opinions of what it's like to work at the agency. We'll discuss your views on opportunities for growth and professional development, diversity and equity, and the culture at the agency and in your unit. This work will inform several reports we write, as required by Local Law 13. We hope the findings will inform your own work and future programs and policies.

I will be facilitating the interview and we have [1, 2] notetakers (share names). Your participation is completely confidential. Only those on the project team will know you participated. If we were to quote or paraphrase in a report something you say, we would not include your name or title, and would describe you in a way that it would be unlikely anyone could identify you.

Leadership at the agency has also requested the Agency's participation be confidential. The EEPCC will not indicate to anyone outside our agency that the agency participated in this project.

[We will reach out to them via email about being recorded prior to the interview. One of the following two parts will be stated, depending on their response]: 1) You have not agreed to be recorded, so we will not record this conversation. 2) You have agreed to be recorded. Thank you for agreeing to that; it is only for notetaking purposes and makes our job much easier. The recording will not be shared with anyone outside of the project team.

This will take up to one hour. You are not obligated to answer any questions you do not want to, and you're free to end the conversation at any time. Before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

Let's start by discussing your role at the agency and your background.

1. What is your current position at the agency?
 - a. Office title?
 - b. Civil Service title?
 - c. Please describe your primary duties and responsibilities.
 - d. How long have you been in this role?
2. Have you held any other positions at the agency? If so, please describe (titles, length of time in the role, etc.).

[Use your judgment for questions 3 and 4: if they've been at the agency for a long time, these may not be necessary. If they are young and their length of time at agency is likely to have been all or most of their professional career, maybe you can skip, or keep this part brief.]

3. Have you worked at any other city agencies? If so, please describe (agencies, titles, length of time in the roles, etc.).

4. Have you held positions outside New York City government? If so, please describe (other government agencies (NYS, federal, etc.), nonprofit/for-profit companies, titles, roles, length of time, etc.).

We'd like to ask you some questions about your work and career goals.

5. How would you rate your job satisfaction?
[If they're not sure, say something like "on a scale of 1 to 10" or "are you very happy, somewhat happy, not very happy", etc. The purpose is to get them talking; it is not a formal survey, so it is not necessary to be precise or consistent with the prompt.]
 - a. What do you like about your job?
 - b. What do you dislike (like less) about your job?
 - c. [Prompts for each of the above items can include the following:
 - i. The nature of your work: duties and responsibilities, working conditions, hours, belief in the importance/value of your work, etc.
 - ii. Your compensation: pay, benefits, pension, etc.
 - iii. Opportunities for growth.
 - iv. The culture at the agency.]
 - d. Do you see yourself remaining at the agency in the foreseeable future (3-5 years)?
6. Please describe your relationship with your supervisor.
 - a. Do they provide useful guidance to do you work?
 - b. Do they help with professional development?
 - c. Do they provide you autonomy? [Another way to say this is, are they hands off, more of a micromanager, etc.]
7. Please describe your relationship with your direct reports, if you have any.
 - a. How do you approach supervising and managing your team?
8. Do you have aspirations beyond your current position?
 - a. Do you aspire to be promoted? If so, what types of positions are you interested in?
9. Does your agency have a Career Counselor? Do you know who this person is or how to contact them?
 - a. Have you ever contacted the AGENCY's Career Counselor? If yes, please elaborate.
 - b. Were you satisfied with the counseling provided by the Career Counselor?
10. Have you participated in any training or training programs to enhance or advance your career?
 - a. If yes, please elaborate.
 - b. If no, has the agency offered any trainings relevant to you?
11. Have you been encouraged (by a supervisor or other staff) to take any civil service exams either for your current job or for further advancement?

- a. If yes, please elaborate.
- 12. Does the agency provide resources and opportunities for staff to move to new positions within the Agency?
 - a. If yes, please elaborate.
 - b. Have you utilized any of these resources?
- 13. Do you receive notifications of opportunities for advancement in other City agencies?
- 14. Have you ever received a performance evaluation?
 - a. If yes, when was the last one?
 - b. Please (briefly) describe the process.
 - i. Did it include recommendation(s) for improvement?
 - ii. Did it include recommendations for career advancement?
 - iii. Was the process interactive?
 - c. How could the performance review process be improved?

Agency leadership has emphasized providing equal employment opportunities to groups considered “underrepresented” in the workforce (specifically people of color, and women). Some of these efforts are designed to comply with City, State, and Federal law, others are driven by the Agency’s leadership independent of any requirements. We’d like to ask you your thoughts on these goals and initiatives.

- 15. How familiar are you with the AGENCY’s equal employment opportunity policies?
 - a. Do you remember the last time the Agency provided information about them?
- 16. Are you aware of any initiatives the agency has taken in the areas of equal employment opportunity or diversity and inclusion? If so, please elaborate. [Ask about details for the ones they identify. If they do not identify any, mention several of the following:]
 - a. Employee Resource Groups. Do you belong to any? If so, please elaborate.
 - b. Mentorship program.
 - c. Liaisons.
 - d. [List of other initiatives as indicated in the interviews to date.]
- 17. Do you feel these are efforts the agency should be engaged in at all? Please elaborate.
- 18. Do you feel it is important for the agency to have diverse personnel? Please elaborate.
- 19. Do you believe the agency provides equal employment opportunities for staff and those who wish to work for the agency? Please elaborate.
 - a. If not, what groups do you feel are not provided equal opportunities in employment? Please elaborate.
- 20. What are your thoughts on how the agency should approach equal employment opportunity, and diversity and inclusion?

Next we'd like to discuss if you have any experience at the agency in the following types of issues. Some of these questions may be of a sensitive nature. You do not have to answer them, and if you do, please do not share any sensitive information.

21. Have you been involved in a filed grievance related to discrimination at the agency? If yes, it is not necessary to discuss the details of that grievance if you do not want to. Can you please discuss the process for addressing and resolving that grievance?
 - a. In what way were you a part of the incident at issue?
 - b. Were you satisfied with the process? Please elaborate.
 - c. Were you satisfied with the outcome? Please elaborate.
22. If you had an issue related to discrimination, would you feel comfortable filing a claim and do you know how to file a claim? Please elaborate.
 - a. Do you feel such a claim would be handled fairly? Please elaborate.
23. Have you been involved in a filed grievance related to sexual harassment at the agency? If yes, it is not necessary to discuss the details of that grievance if you do not want to. Can you please discuss the process for addressing and resolving that grievance?
 - a. In what way were you a part of the incident at issue?
 - b. Were you satisfied with the process? Please elaborate.
 - c. Were you satisfied with the outcome? Please elaborate.
24. If you had an issue related to sexual harassment, would you feel comfortable filing a claim and do you know how to file a claim? Please elaborate.
 - b. Do you feel such a claim would be handled fairly? Please elaborate.
25. Have you ever submitted a reasonable accommodation request? If yes, it is not necessary to discuss the details of that request if you do not want to. Can you please discuss the process for addressing and resolving that request?
 - a. Were you satisfied with the process? Please elaborate.
 - b. Were you satisfied with the outcome? Please elaborate.
26. If you needed to make a reasonable accommodation request, would you feel comfortable doing so? Please elaborate.
 - a. Do you feel such a request would be handled fairly? Please elaborate.
27. Is there anything we have not discussed you would like to bring to our attention?

Lastly, I will ask you some demographic questions. As with all others, these are voluntary. We will only report what you say (i.e., we will not classify you as a particular sex or race based on appearance).

28. What is your gender?
29. How do you identify as to race/ethnicity? [Let them self-identify, but you can also say something like 'the typical categories are Black/African American, Hispanic, Asian, White, etc.]
30. In what age range do you fall? For example, 20-29, 30-39, etc.

Interview Protocol – General Personnel (ERG leaders and EEO Liaisons)

Introduction

Good [morning/afternoon/evening]. My name is [name] and I am [title] at the New York City Equal Employment Practices Commission. Have you ever worked with us or heard of us? [brief interaction based on their response.] We were established in 1989 to serve as an independent agency to audit, review, and monitor the equal employment practices of virtually all City agencies.

We also have a Research Agency [which is where I work (if applicable)]. In 2019 the City Council enacted Local Law 13, which requires our agency to publish reports annually on the diversity of the City's workforce. The law also requires us to make recommendations to the City on how to address persistent underutilization, and that is why we are here talking with you today.

We want to learn about your opinions of what it's like to work at the agency. We'll discuss your views on opportunities for growth and professional development, diversity and equity, and the culture at the agency and in your unit. This work will inform several reports we write, as required by Local Law 13. We hope the findings will inform your own work and future programs and policies.

I will be facilitating the interview and we have [1, 2] notetakers (share names). Your participation is completely confidential. Only those on the project team will know you participated. If we were to quote or paraphrase in a report something you say, we would not include your name or title, and would describe you in a way that it would be unlikely anyone could identify you.

Leadership at the agency has also requested the Agency's participation be confidential. The EEPCC will not indicate to anyone outside our agency that the agency participated in this project.

[We will reach out to them via email about being recorded prior to the interview. One of the following two parts will be stated, depending on their response]: 1) You have not agreed to be recorded, so we will not record this conversation. 2) You have agreed to be recorded. Thank you for agreeing to that; it is only for notetaking purposes and makes our job much easier. The recording will not be shared with anyone outside of the project team.

This will take up to one hour. You are not obligated to answer any questions you do not want to, and you're free to end the conversation at any time. Before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

Let's start by discussing your role at the agency and your background.

1. What is your current position at the agency?
 - a. Office title?
 - b. Civil Service title?
 - c. Please describe your primary duties and responsibilities.
 - d. How long have you been in this role?
2. Have you held any other positions at the agency? If so, please describe (titles, length of time in the role, etc.).

[Use your judgment for questions 3 and 4: if they've been at the agency for a long time, these may not be necessary. If they are young and their length of time at agency is likely to have been all or most of their professional career, maybe you can skip, or keep this part brief.]

3. Have you worked at any other city agencies? If so, please describe (agencies, titles, length of time in the roles, etc.).

4. Have you held positions outside New York City government? If so, please describe (other government agencies (NYS, federal, etc.), nonprofit/for-profit companies, titles, roles, length of time, etc.).

[If they are a Liaison, ask questions 5-12. If they are not, skip to question 13.]

5. You are a liaison, right? How long have you been in this role?
6. What do liaisons do?
 - a. What is their purpose?
 - b. What are the goals of this initiative?
7. Describe the process of becoming a liaison.
8. Was there a training process when you took on this role? If so, please describe it.
9. How many colleagues come to you with issues in a month?
10. Please describe the process of addressing [example of an issue.]
 - a. On average, how much of your time at work is spent addressing matters as a Liaison?
11. Do you think this initiative has been effective? Why or why not?
12. How could the agency change the nature of this role to make it more effective?

We'd like to ask you some questions about your work and career goals.

13. How would you rate your job satisfaction?
[If they're not sure, say something like "on a scale of 1 to 10" or "are you very happy, somewhat happy, not very happy", etc. The purpose is to get them talking; it is not a formal survey, so it is not necessary to be precise or consistent with the prompt.]
 - a. What do you like about your job?
 - b. What do you dislike (like less) about your job?
 - c. [Prompts for each of the above items can include the following:
 - i. The nature of your work: duties and responsibilities, working conditions, hours, belief in the importance/value of your work, etc.
 - ii. Your compensation: pay, benefits, pension, etc.
 - iii. Opportunities for growth.
 - iv. The culture at the agency.]
 - d. Do you see yourself remaining at the agency in the foreseeable future (3-5 years)?
14. Please describe your relationship with your supervisor.
 - a. Do they provide useful guidance to do your work?
 - b. Do they help with professional development?
 - c. Do they provide you autonomy? [Another way to say this is, are they hands off, more of a micromanager, etc.]

15. Please describe your relationship with your direct reports, if you have any.
 - a. How do you approach supervising and managing your team?
16. Do you have aspirations beyond your current position?
 - a. Do you aspire to be promoted? If so, what types of positions are you interested in?
17. Does your agency have a Career Counselor? Do you know who this person is or how to contact them?
 - a. Have you ever contacted the AGENCY's Career Counselor? If yes, please elaborate.
 - b. Were you satisfied with the counseling provided by the Career Counselor?
18. Have you participated in any training or training programs to enhance or advance your career?
 - a. If yes, please elaborate.
 - b. If no, has the agency offered any trainings relevant to you?
19. Have you been encouraged (by a supervisor or other staff) to take any civil service exams either for your current job or for further advancement?
 - a. If yes, please elaborate.
20. Does the agency provide resources and opportunities for staff to move to new positions within the Agency?
 - a. If yes, please elaborate.
 - b. Have you utilized any of these resources?
21. Do you receive notifications of opportunities for advancement in other City agencies?
22. Have you ever received a performance evaluation?
 - a. If yes, when was the last one?
 - b. Please (briefly) describe the process.
 - i. Did it include recommendation(s) for improvement?
 - ii. Did it include recommendations for career advancement?
 - iii. Was the process interactive?
 - c. How could the performance review process be improved?

Agency leadership has emphasized providing equal employment opportunities to groups considered "underrepresented" in the workforce (specifically people of color, and women). Some of these efforts are designed to comply with City, State, and Federal law, others are driven by the Agency's leadership independent of any requirements. We'd like to ask you your thoughts on these goals and initiatives.

[If the individual is involved in an ERG, ask questions 23-29. If not, skip to 30.]

23. What is your role in [ERG]?
 - a. How did you come to be active in [ERG]?
 - b. How long have you been involved with [ERG]?
24. What is the ERG's purpose?

- a. Do you think this purpose is being achieved?
- 25. How do your colleagues and supervisor feel about your role and participation in the ERG?
- 26. What are the major activities and initiatives [ERG] engages in?
 - a. How often does it meet?
 - b. How often does it hold events?
 - c. Approximately how many individuals are involved in [ERG]? [Ask about personnel who have signed up and those who are active.]
- 27. Do you think [ERG] has had any impact on the agency? If so, what?
- 28. Do you think there is anything the leadership of [ERG] could do differently to be more effective?
- 29. Is there anything the agency could do to better support [ERG]?
- 30. How familiar are you with the AGENCY's equal employment opportunity policies?
 - b. Do you remember the last time the Agency provided information about them?
- 31. Do you feel these are efforts the agency should be engaged in at all? Please elaborate.
- 32. Do you feel it is important for the agency to have diverse personnel? Please elaborate.
- 33. Do you believe the agency provides equal employment opportunities for staff and those who wish to work for the agency? Please elaborate.
 - b. If not, what groups do you feel are not provided equal opportunities in employment? Please elaborate.
- 34. What are your thoughts on how the agency should approach equal employment opportunity, and diversity and inclusion?

Next we'd like to discuss if you have any experience at the agency in the following types of issues. Some of these questions may be of a sensitive nature. You do not have to answer them, and if you do, please do not share any sensitive information.

- 35. Have you been involved in a filed grievance related to discrimination at the agency? If yes, it is not necessary to discuss the details of that grievance if you do not want to. Can you please discuss the process for addressing and resolving that grievance?
 - d. In what way were you a part of the incident at issue?
 - e. Were you satisfied with the process? Please elaborate.
 - f. Were you satisfied with the outcome? Please elaborate.
- 36. If you had an issue related to discrimination, would you feel comfortable filing a claim and do you know how to file a claim? Please elaborate.
 - c. Do you feel such a claim would be handled fairly? Please elaborate.
- 37. Have you been involved in a filed grievance related to sexual harassment at the agency? If yes, it is not necessary to discuss the details of that grievance if you do not want to. Can you please discuss the process for addressing and resolving that grievance?

- d. In what way were you a part of the incident at issue?
 - e. Were you satisfied with the process? Please elaborate.
 - f. Were you satisfied with the outcome? Please elaborate.
38. If you had an issue related to sexual harassment, would you feel comfortable filing a claim and do you know how to file a claim? Please elaborate.
- d. Do you feel such a claim would be handled fairly? Please elaborate.
39. Have you ever submitted a reasonable accommodation request? If yes, it is not necessary to discuss the details of that request if you do not want to. Can you please discuss the process for addressing and resolving that request?
- c. Were you satisfied with the process? Please elaborate.
 - d. Were you satisfied with the outcome? Please elaborate.
40. If you needed to make a reasonable accommodation request, would you feel comfortable doing so? Please elaborate.
- b. Do you feel such a request would be handled fairly? Please elaborate.
41. Is there anything we have not discussed you would like to bring to our attention?

Lastly, I will ask you some demographic questions. As with all others, these are voluntary. We will only report what you say (i.e., we will not classify you as a particular sex or race based on appearance).

- 42. What is your gender?
- 43. How do you identify as to race/ethnicity? [Let them self-identify, but you can also say something like 'the typical categories are Black/African American, Hispanic, Asian, White, etc.]
- 44. In what age range do you fall? For example, 20-29, 30-39, etc.

Appendix B – Climate Survey

Note: the Climate Survey was administered on Survey Monkey.

Thank you for participating in this survey. It is administered by the New York City Equal Employment Practices Commission (EEPC), in collaboration with the Agency.

This survey is voluntary. You are not required to take it.

This survey is confidential. At the end of the survey, you will have the option to enter into a raffle for a gift card. To be eligible for a prize, you must provide a phone number or email address. You can provide personal contact information or your work contact information. You are not required to provide this if you do not want to. Only the staff at the EEPC will have access to the contact information you provide. No one at the agency will.

The survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. We encourage you to answer all questions.

Proceeding with the survey confirms your consent for the EEPC to use the information you provide. Please be advised that the data collected may also be subject to the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) and any applicable exemptions.

If you have any questions about the survey, please reach out to Russell Ferri, Director of Research at the EEPC, at rferri@eepc.nyc.gov or (212) 615-8952.

Job satisfaction

1. Please indicate your overall job satisfaction, 1 being low and 10 being high.
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5
 - f. 6
 - g. 7
 - h. 8
 - i. 9
 - j. 10
2. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: my work is interesting.
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
3. My work has a positive impact on the community.
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
4. My supervisor gives me sufficient freedom to do my job.

- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
- 5. My supervisor generally supports my efforts for professional development and career advancement.
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
- 6. My supervisor provides guidance and assistance for my job when I need it.
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
- 7. My salary as a New York City employee is fair relative to my skill level, experience, and responsibilities.
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
- 8. My salary as a New York City employee allows me to live comfortably in the New York City metro area.
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know

Equal employment opportunities

- 9. Tasks and duties in my division/unit are assigned fairly.
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
- 10. The agency provides all employees equal opportunities for advancement.
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
- 11. Promotions at the agency are made fairly.
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree

- d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
12. Salaries for City employees are fairly determined.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
13. Those in supervisory and management positions reflect the diversity of New York City.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know
14. Do you feel you have been treated unfairly by your supervisor because of any of the following?
Please Check all that apply.
- a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Sexual orientation
 - d. Race/ethnicity
 - e. Length of employment at the agency
 - f. Disability status
 - g. Other: _____
 - h. None of the above
15. Do you feel you have been treated unfairly by your peers because of any of the following? Please check all that apply.
- a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Sexual orientation
 - d. Race/ethnicity
 - e. Length of employment at the agency
 - f. Disability status
 - g. Other: _____
 - h. None of the above

Performance evaluations

16. Have you ever received a performance evaluation while at the agency?
[Skip logic: if respondent selects "No" skip to question 20]
- a. No
 - b. Yes
17. How frequently have you been given a performance evaluation at the agency, on average?
- a. Every year
 - b. Every other year
 - c. More than two years apart
18. When was your last performance evaluation at the agency?
- a. 0-2 years ago
 - b. Over two years ago

19. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: my most recent performance evaluation helped me understand the quality of my performance and what I needed to do to improve.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know

Professional development and career advancement

20. Have you ever attempted to get a promotion OR a non-contractual pay increase while at the agency?
- a. No
 - b. Yes
 - c. Not applicable due to Civil Service title
21. How many times have you been promoted OR received a non-contractual pay increase while at the agency?
- a. 0
 - b. 1
 - c. 2
 - d. 3 or more
 - e. Not applicable due to Civil Service title
22. Do you aspire to be promoted in the future?
- a. No
 - b. Yes
 - c. I don't know
 - d. Not applicable due to Civil Service title
23. Within the past two years, are you aware of the agency offering voluntary professional development training opportunities you were eligible to participate in?
- a. No
 - b. Yes
24. Within the past two years, have you participated in any voluntary professional development training opportunities while at the agency?
- a. No
 - b. Yes
25. What is your assessment of the training opportunities the agency has offered?
- a. I have not participated in any voluntary trainings
 - b. Not useful at all
 - c. Somewhat useful
 - d. Useful
 - e. Very useful
26. How often has anyone at the agency shared with you information about vacant positions within the agency?
- a. Rarely or never
 - b. Occasionally
 - c. Often
 - d. Always
 - e. I don't know

27. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: the agency encourages personnel to take Civil Service exams.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly agree
 - e. I don't know

Agency initiatives

28. Are you a member of any of the following Employee Resource Groups? Please select all that apply.
- a. [List of group names]
 - b. None of the above
29. Are you aware that the agency's personnel data are available for viewing on the agency's SharePoint page?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
30. Have you ever sought or received assistance from your unit's EEO Representative?
[Skip logic: if "no," skip to 32.]
- a. Yes
 - b. No
31. Please rate your satisfaction with your experiences with your unit's EEO Representative, 1 being low and 10 being high.
- a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5
 - f. 6
 - g. 7
 - h. 8
 - i. 9
 - j. 10

Demographics and job information

32. In what unit/division do you work?
- a. [List of units.]
33. Do you work primarily in the field or in an office?
- a. In the field
 - b. In an office
 - c. About the same in both
34. How many years have you worked at the agency? Please enter a numeric (for example, 5).
35. What is your annual salary? If you are paid daily or hourly, please respond based on what you made in 2023.
- a. Less than \$50,000
 - b. \$50,000-\$74,999
 - c. \$75,000-\$99,999
 - d. \$100,000-\$149,999

- e. \$150,000-\$199,999
 - f. \$200,000 or more
36. Which union are you a member of?
- a. I am not a member of a union.
 - b. [List of unions.]
37. What is your age? Please enter a numeric (for example, 50).
- a. [Text box]
38. What is your racial/ethnic background? Please select all that apply.
- a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. Black/African-American
 - d. Hispanic/Latino
 - e. Middle Eastern/North African
 - f. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - g. White
 - h. Other (please specify)
39. Which racial/ethnic background do you primarily identify with?
- a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. Black/African-American
 - d. Hispanic/Latino
 - e. Middle Eastern/North African
 - f. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - g. White
 - h. I identify equally with more than one racial/ethnic group.
 - i. Other (please specify)
40. How do you describe your gender identity?
- a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. Nonbinary
 - d. Other (please specify)
41. Which of the following do you consider yourself to be?
- a. Bisexual
 - b. Lesbian/gay
 - c. Heterosexual/straight
 - d. I prefer not to say
 - e. Other (please specify)
42. Those who take the survey can be eligible to receive one of several gift cards. To be eligible, you must enter your email address. You can enter a personal email address or your work email address. If you prefer, you can enter your phone number. You are not required to provide this information, but if you do not, you will not be entered into the raffle. If you provide contact info, only the New York City Equal Employment Practices Commission will have that information. No one at the agency will be provided with information that can connect your identity to your answers. [Text box]

Appendix C – Survey Weighting Methodology

The results of the climate survey were adjusted by post-stratification survey weights to help correct for differences between the employees that took the survey and the agency's workforce. The climate survey results presented in this report were adjusted by gender and salary. Men were weighted more heavily than compared to the unweighted survey results alone. We considered but did not include race in the survey weights as the race of respondents was comparable to the agency workforce. The survey respondents tended to have higher salaries than the workforce, so those with lower salaries were weighted more heavily.

The survey weights were derived using the “raking” or iterative proportional fitting (IPF) technique. Raking is a statistical technique used to adjust survey weights so that the weighted survey data aligns with known marginal distributions in the target population. Marginal distributions of population parameters (e.g., gender alone and race alone) are more prevalently available than joint distributions (e.g., the intersectional distribution of gender and race together). The raking procedure iteratively adjusts the survey weights so that the weighted survey totals align with the population proportions.

Had more employees completed the survey, the estimates in our analyses would be more precise. We were also limited to weighting based on the variables we had or could obtain regarding the target population (the agency's workforce). Race and gender data was available via the City's workforce profile reports from its CEEDS system. Salary data was obtained by the payroll data on NYC Open Data. Length of tenure is one example of a variable we would have also liked to use for weighting, but we do not have data on the length of tenure of the entire workforce.

Limitations of the survey weights also include an inability to correct non-response biases. Sample weights were not necessary because every employee was invited to take the survey. Non-response bias – a measure of the likelihood of different groups to (not) take the survey – was inestimable. For example, it is reasonable to assume that field employees were less likely to take the climate survey as field employees do not have frequent and consistent computer access at work. We do not have a measure for how much less likely field employees were to take the survey relative to office or hybrid workers. We also do not know the proportion of the workforce that works primarily in the field.

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