



*Robert P. Astorino, Westchester County Executive  
County Board of Legislators*

Budget Presentation  
20 16

*Department of Human Resources  
Helen May, 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy Commissioner*

**CIVIL SERVICE COMPLIANCE**

The 2016 Budget Request for the Department of Human Resources endeavors to maintain adequate funding levels to ensure quality HR services while maintaining compliance with the New York State Civil Service Law. In addition to administering Civil Service Law to 32 departments, this office is responsible for administering the same annually for 122 Towns, Villages, School Districts, Special Districts, the cities of Rye and Peekskill, and the Westchester County Health Care Corporation\*.

Key indicators to ensuring that the requirements of the New York State Civil Service Law are being properly administered are the outcome of annual payroll certifications and the level of provisional appointments – competitive class employees appointed other than through competitive examination.

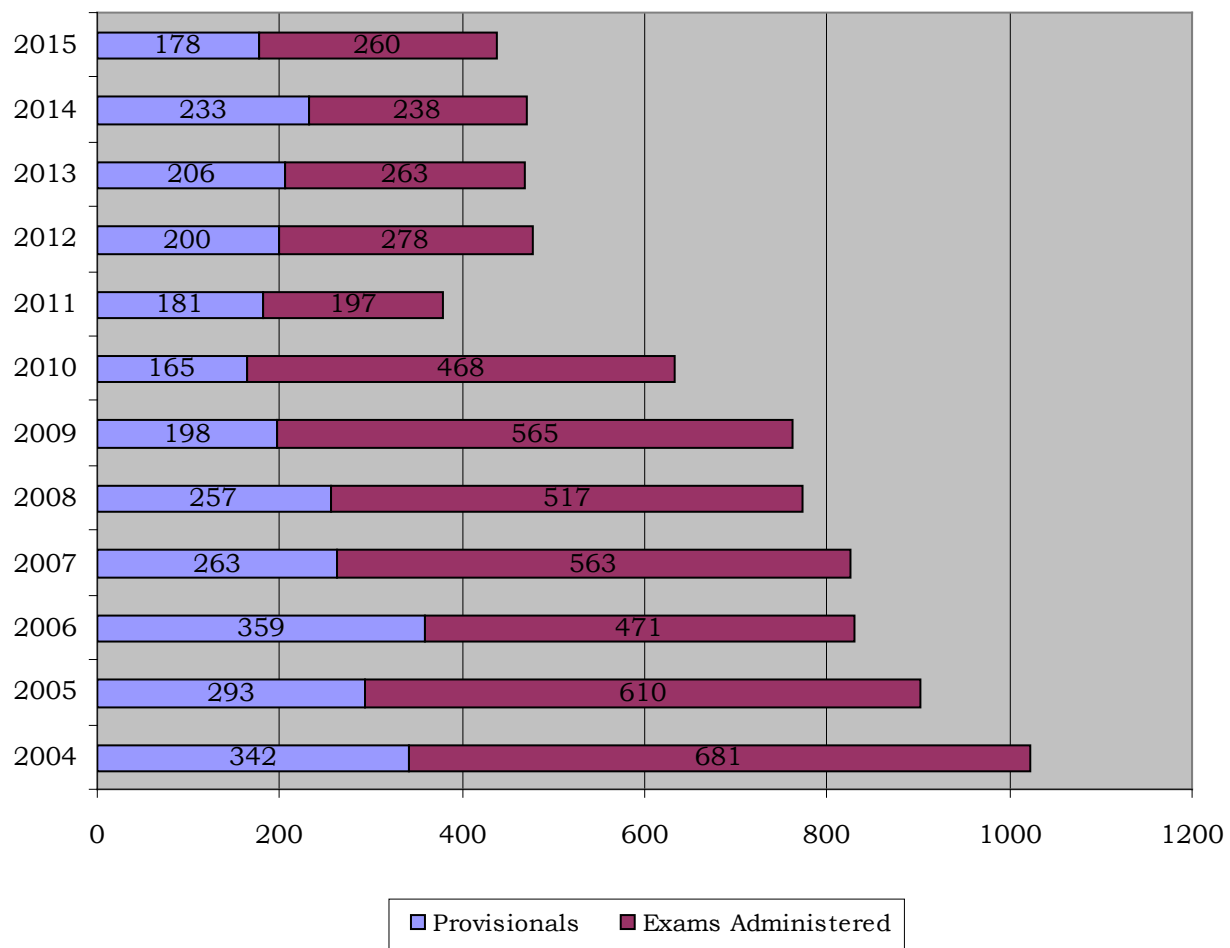
Payroll Certification is the process for each local agency by which the Department of Human Resources provides certification that the persons named in the payroll of a public agency in Westchester County are employed in their respective positions in accordance with New York State Civil Service Law. Within Westchester County, this process is connected to the payroll. Our approval of an appointment with the payroll systems implies Civil Service compliance. Westchester Community College, a department of Westchester County, is also audited annually since they have a separate payroll system. In total, this equates to 35,000 government employees in Westchester County. New York State Civil Service Law prohibits paying any salary or compensation to any person not certified by this department. Non-compliance with this law subjects disbursing officers in the agency to the penalties described therein.

The New York State Department of Civil Service requires all local, municipal commissions to submit annual reports. Central to this report is the number of provisional appointments existing as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. Controlling the number of provisional appointments requires holding civil service examinations, establishing eligible lists and certifying lists when agencies need to fill positions, to maintain the integrity of the system of appointment based on merit and fitness. Making list appointments versus provisional appointments helps to maintain continuity of services and maintain a consistent level of productivity, which helps keep costs lower. When provisional appointments must be made, Human Resources works with agencies to make sure their candidates meet qualifications and are properly classified, which ensures candidates qualify to take the civil service exam. This process reduces turnover and its associated training costs. It also helps to avoid costs associated with misclassifications which lead to reclassification studies and out-of-title grievances.

The following graphically depicts the total number of examinations held annually, both open competitive and promotional, as well as the provisionals reported to the State. We have been very successful at reducing and maintaining a low number of provisional employees.

\*No payroll certification report was received from WCHCC since 2013. See page 13 for additional information.

### Provisional Appointments vs. Civil Service Exams Administered



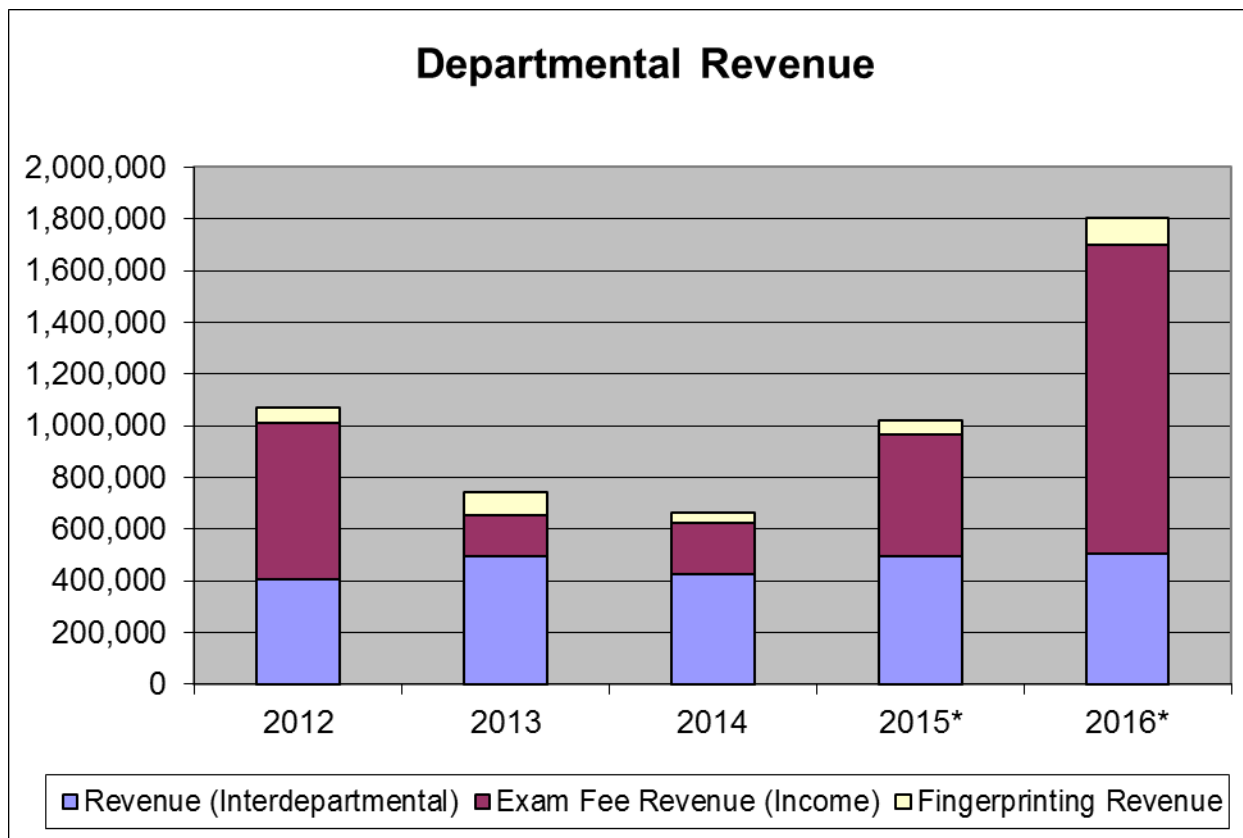
**DEPARTMENTAL REVENUES**

Although the Department of Human Resources, as a service agency, is not generally viewed as a source of revenue, over the years we have attempted to mitigate the cost of services provided. As with other Counties in the State, we charge application fees to apply for civil service examinations and criminal record check fees for prospective full-time annual employees. In order to continue to control expenses, the 2016 budget proposal includes an increase in the Background Check fee which has not been increased in almost ten years. In addition, the budget proposal includes a fee for hourly new hires which has been absorbed by the County since 2005. This fee will offset approximately one-half of the current expense. The 2015 exam revenue projection is due to the exam fee increase and the Firefighter exam held which yielded more than 3,000 applicants. The projected exam fee revenue for 2016 is due to the Police Officer and Correction Officer exams planned for in 2016 and the increase in the exam fee approved by the Board in 2015. On average, we yield approximately 5,000 applicants per uniformed service exam.

	2012	2013	2014	2015*	2016
Revenue (Interdepartmental)	403,222	492,797	426,477	492,172	501,826
Exam Fee Revenue (Income)	605,026	158,331	196,000	474,378	1,200,000
Fingerprinting Revenue	59,600	91,052	40,000	51,400	100,000**
Total Revenue	1,067,848	742,180	662,477	1,017,950	1,801,826

\*projected for 2015

\*\*increase fee from \$100 to \$120 annual employees, \$50 for hourly/seasonal employees



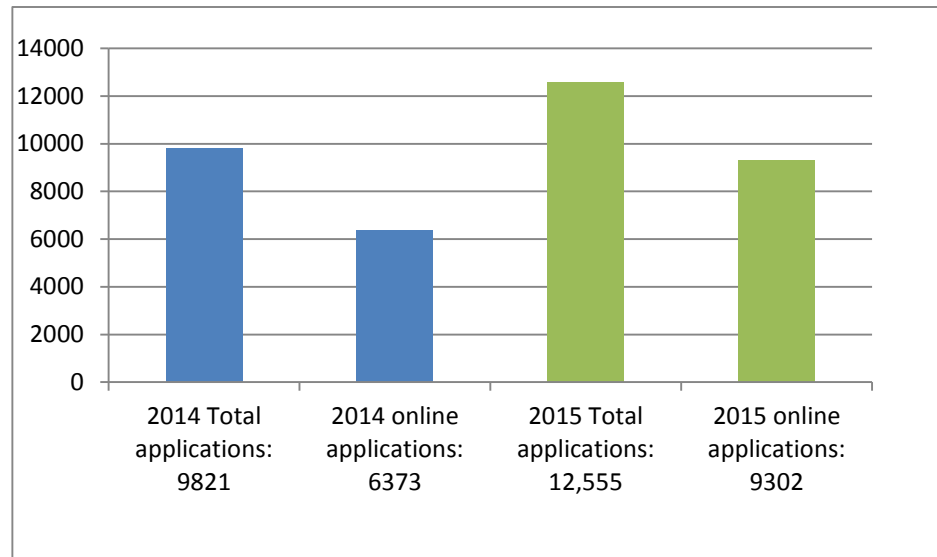
\*projected

**EXAM STATISTICS**

Statistics from 11/01/2014 – 10/31/2015:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Total number of applicants	12,555
<input type="checkbox"/>	Total on-line exam applicants:	5889
<input type="checkbox"/>	Total number of on-line exam applications*	9302
<input type="checkbox"/>	Total number of paid applications:	9791
<input type="checkbox"/>	Total dollar amount received for exam fees:	\$446,100
<input type="checkbox"/>	Total number of exams with fee waivers:	2764
<input type="checkbox"/>	Total equivalent dollar amount of fee waivers:	\$110,560

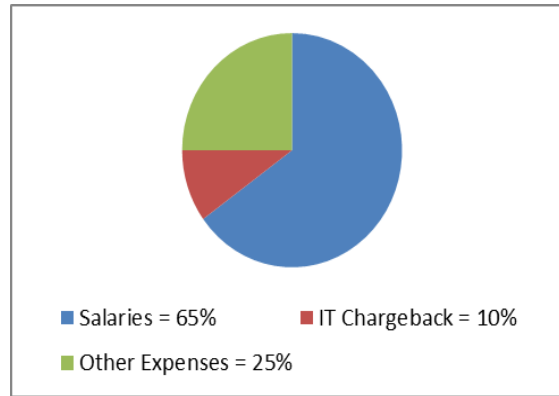
Total Applications



\*Some applicants applied for more than one exam.

**DEPARTMENTAL EXPENSES**

As indicated in the pie chart below, **65%** of the expenses for our department come from salaries and **10%** from IT chargebacks. This translates to **75%** of our budget being fixed expenses.



The other 25% of our budget breaks down as follows:

Examination Procedures:

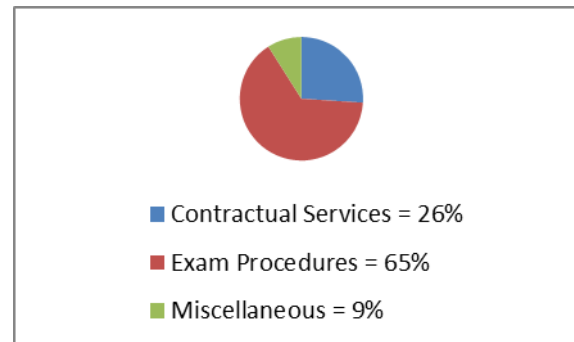
- Mandated Civil Service testing, including monitor fees, school rental, NYS Exam fees, etc.

Contractual Services:

- Contract with third party providers for fingerprinting/background checks as well as mandated drug and alcohol testing and medical services.

Miscellaneous:

- Equipment services and rentals.
- Printing and office supplies.
- Postage, etc.

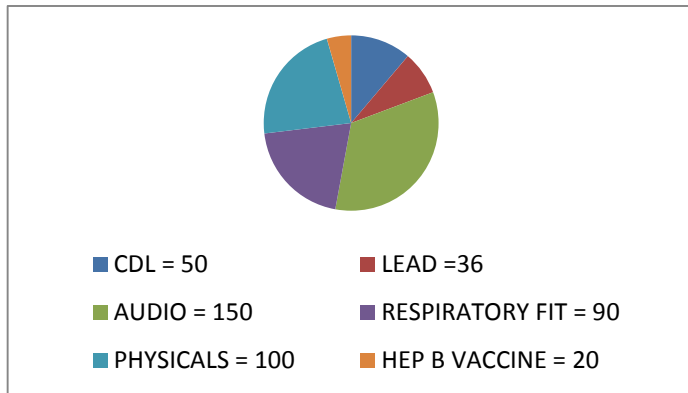


**Most costs are fixed and attributed to mandatory functions.**

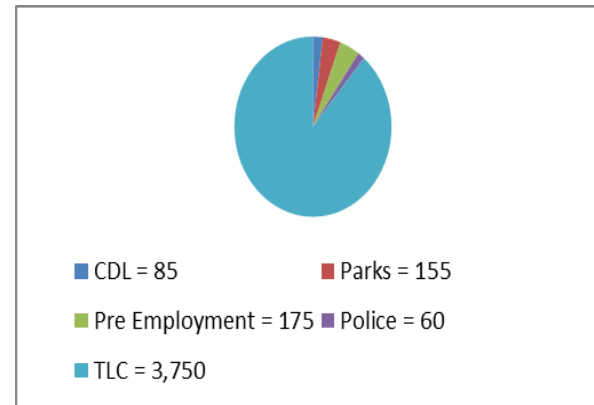
**SAFETY & SECURITY SERVICES**

This function is in its tenth year of operation as the county’s efforts are centrally coordinated by Human Resources and its third-party administrator. The program’s safety focus is on coordinating medical services to ensure the safety and wellbeing of employees, including OSHA-required hearing and respiratory fit tests for Public Safety, Public Works, Environmental Facilities, Emergency Services, Parks and Recreation, and Labs and Research; lead testing for Public Safety and Correction personnel who use the County firing range; pre-employment testing for safety-sensitive positions; and random drug testing for Police Officers, Playland ride operators, Lifeguards, DA Investigators and employees with Commercial Drivers Licenses. Reasonable Suspicion testing is also conducted, as warranted and HR has convened a workgroup to review and evaluate the County’s drug free procedures. In addition, independent medical exams for county departments and local jurisdictions are coordinated by this office in accordance with Section 72 & 73 of Civil Service Law. For our security services, criminal record checks of prospective employees for the past twelve months totaled more than 2700 checks.

# of Medical Exams



# of Drug Screening Tests



	<b>2015</b>	<b>vs.</b>	<b>2016</b>		<b>Savings/Increase</b>
	<b>Adopted Budget</b>		<b>Proposed Budget</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>to Tax Levy</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>					
1010 Annual Regular	\$3,400,845		\$3,447,974	\$47,129	<b>Increase</b>
1200 Hourly	\$26,000		\$ -	\$(26,000)	<b>Savings</b>
1400 Overtime	\$27,000		\$10,000	\$(17,000)	<b>Savings</b>
2400 Additional Equipment	\$22,400		\$ -	\$(22,400)	<b>Savings</b>
3070 Books and Periodicals	\$13,200		\$7,100	\$(6,100)	<b>Savings</b>
3600 Printing and Office Supplies	\$23,000		\$25,000	\$2,000	<b>Increase</b>
3700 Postage Costs	\$3,000		\$3,000	\$-	<b>Flat</b>
4070 Equipment Service and Rental	\$20,000		\$20,000	\$-	<b>Flat</b>
4100 Membership Fees	\$1,500		\$1,000	\$(500)	<b>Savings</b>
4110 Travel and Meals	\$1,000		\$1,000	\$-	<b>Flat</b>
4160 Telephone Expenses	\$1,000		\$500	\$(500)	<b>Savings</b>
4250 Public & Legal Notices	\$900		\$500	\$(400)	<b>Savings</b>
4360 Educational Training	\$9,000		\$6,000	\$(3,000)	<b>Savings</b>
4380 Contractual Services	\$325,000		\$350,000	\$25,000	<b>Increase</b>
4420 Technical Services	\$1,000		\$2,000	\$1,000	<b>Increase</b>
4909 Examination Procedures	\$644,030		\$876,190	\$232,160	<b>Increase</b>
5205 Information Support Service	\$652,832		\$544,012	\$(108,820)	<b>Savings</b>
5180 Services by Public Works	\$330		\$337	\$7	<b>Increase</b>
5325 Services by Dept of Law	\$53,250		\$45,738	\$(7,512)	<b>Savings</b>
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$5,225,287</b>		<b>\$5,340,351</b>	<b>\$115,064</b>	<b>Increase</b>
<b>Revenues:</b>					
9519 Services by Personnel	\$391,536		\$501,826	\$(110,290)	<b>Savings</b>
9122 Application Fees	\$700,000		\$1,200,000	\$(500,000)	<b>Savings</b>
9141 Background Check-Fingerprinting	\$50,000		\$100,000	\$(50,000)	<b>Savings</b>
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$1,141,536</b>		<b>\$1,801,826</b>	<b>\$(660,290)</b>	<b>Savings</b>
<b>Tax Levy Savings:</b>	<b>\$4,083,751</b>		<b>\$3,538,525</b>	<b>\$545,226</b>	<b>Net Savings</b>

**HUMAN RESOURCES WEBSITE**

The Department of Human Resources website is a popular County site, receiving more than **400,000** visits this year. Since 1998, we have posted examination announcements and internal job postings for interested candidates as well as have comprehensive information regarding civil service, job specifications and a variety of other human resources data. In an effort to provide service to our local jurisdictions in a more efficient and cost-effective manner, we have electronic versions of forms, manuals, civil service rules, etc. now available in a secure area on the website. Access to this secure area is only granted to individuals who are authorized by the appointing authority.

**EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION**

The Department of Human Resources is proud of its comprehensive, robust examination system. In conjunction with the Department of Information Technology, an on-line application review system was developed which enhanced the already successful on-line civil service exam application, which was launched in 2012. This system allows professional staff to review minimum qualifications for on-line exam applications without the need to print them. This system has been further enhanced to generate a number of letters to candidates applying for civil service examinations using information already entered in the exam database. This enables the application reviewer to generate various letters without having to type each letter individually. Integrating this system with other databases and systems makes the review process more efficient and provides better tracking of documentation, also reducing the need for storage of paper documents.

For select job titles, this system has the capability of providing an automated review of applicant qualifications when the minimum qualifications for a title are only educational in nature. For example, the qualification to participate in the Police Officer exam is possession of a High School Diploma. Since the system can determine which applicants have a High School Diploma based on the response, these applications can be reviewed by the system. Applications for Correction Officer will go through the same automated review process. Since these three exams yield anywhere from 7,000 to 12,000 applications, this allows us to make more effective and productive use of staff time.

We will continue to propose additional enhancements, as we strive to increase the level of productivity with fewer resources. We are currently working with the IT Department to automate the exam administration process by enabling the system to handle candidate room assignments. The goal is to provide admission notices, grades, disqualifications notices, etc. electronically, further reducing expenses and increasing accuracy and efficiencies within the unit.

**TALENT MANAGEMENT: STRATEGIC TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

The Westchester County Employee Strategic Training and Development Program coordinates staff development programs county-wide designed to:

- orient new employees in our organization’s mission, benefits and policies
- improve job skills including communication, customer service & supervisory skills
- develop career growth by providing resources to front-line staff, supervisors and management
- improve succession planning by assisting departments to strategize to meet future personnel needs.

To further this goal, we:

- Maintain an on-line training calendar, with DoIT
- Deliver a Best Practices for Performance Evaluation
- Conduct New Employee Orientation
- Administer Workplace Violence training for employees and department contacts
- Provide Progressive Discipline Training Seminars with the Law Department
- Provide tailored training to County department contacts and local municipal agency contacts
- Coordinate annual recognition event for employees
- Administer a county-wide Tuition Reimbursement program & tuition waiver program with WCC

This year, we launched our new talent management system, Neogov, and developed training materials for supervisors and for department system administrators. We met with various department representatives to review/update job competencies and commenced training in the system including how to set goals and develop employees’ potential.

We also held trainings for personnel contacts and executive management focused on coaching and developing employees in the context of succession planning. In addition to providing training to other departments and jurisdictions, we work to develop HR staff skills to better serve our customers -- the public, HR contacts in county departments and local jurisdictions and one another.

Thus, HR has continued to build a training library on topics including:

- Customer Service
- Communication Skills
- Effective Evaluation
- Telephone Skills
- Workplace Investigations
- Reasonable Suspicion Recognition
- Motivating/Managing Employees
- Fair Labor Standards Practices
- Recruiting with Social Media

**RECRUITMENT**

HR supports departments in their recruitment needs by conducting searches, researching appropriate venues, conducting salary surveys, placing ads and connecting via e-mail and phone with professionals. In 2015, we conducted a comprehensive outreach for the Firefighter exam to raise awareness and reach diverse populations to apply for the examination. We tripled the number of applicants from the last time the exam was held. In order to make the County government’s hiring activities more proactive and strategic, recruitment efforts will be developed for the digital age. To ensure that quality candidates apply for the County’s civil service exams and respond to job postings – especially those positions challenging to fill -- recruitment efforts will be moved into social media arenas where candidates are increasingly looking for work. In this way, we help ensure that we have the people with the right skills and competencies to meet our business objectives.

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

Human Resources continued to lead the County’s efforts to fulfill New York State mandates for a Workplace Violence Prevention program. A committee of key stakeholders (Law, Risk Management, Public Safety, Public Works, and Mental Health), is convened, to review Workplace Violence incident reports submitted by employees, and to update and interpret program policies and procedures. HR continued to hold required trainings for new hires as well as manage the annual on-line training for current employees. Supervisory training on the subject was also created, and delivered during Talent Management system sessions, and during departmental training as needed.

**REDUCTION-IN-FORCE**

Human Resources continues to provide support and coordinate outplacement services for employees impacted by a Reduction-in-Force. Departmental personnel contacts are trained in “bump and retreat” basics, exit interview protocol and handling difficult separation-related conversations with employees. Also, in a joint effort with the One Stop Employment Center, Job Search Readiness Workshops are organized for potentially affected employees. Further, Rapid Response sessions are held in coordination with the Department of Labor; these sessions cover unemployment insurance issues in-depth and register participants for job search services with the New York State Department of Labor.

**WESTCHESTER HEALTH CARE CORPORATION (WESTCHESTER MEDICAL CENTER)**

Although the Westchester Medical Center is no longer a department of Westchester County government, this department has had a legal responsibility to oversee its Civil Service administration since 1998. However, since June 2013, the Medical Center stopped responding to our inquiries and ceased submitting paperwork for review and processing. It was brought to our attention that they were moving forward with establishing their own Civil Service Commission, contrary to the New York State Civil Service Commission's opinion that they do not have the legal authority to do so. This determination was challenged in court and the court held that the medical center is subject to this department's jurisdiction; however, we understand the medical center is appealing the court's decision. The State Attorney General's Office declined to render an opinion on whether we could take legal action against the medical center for violating Civil Service Law because the matter is in litigation.

Although the medical center continues to exclude this office despite these rulings, the Exam Unit continues to administer exams as follows:

- Exam functions exclusive to WMC: 17 exams administered; and 4 certifications of civil service eligible lists for appointments to competitive class positions.

Final