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March 17, 2026

To: Governance Reform Task Force

From: Lisa M. Garrett
Director of Personnel

COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM STRUCTURE OVERVIEW

Measure G mandates governance reforms that will significantly restructure Los Angeles County (County) government operations and lead to changes in County personnel, agency structures, and workforce operations. As Director of Personnel, I am pleased to formally offer the Department of Human Resources' (DHR) support of the Governance Reform Task Force's (GRTF) goals, particularly in the areas of recruitment and workforce planning.

The purpose of this communication is to provide the GRTF with a brief overview of potential touchpoints between existing personnel authorities, practices, and the Measure G governance reforms. It also serves to provide an introductory overview of the County's Civil Service System. The update is not intended to be an exhaustive overview of existing County personnel rules and practices, nor all impacts of Measure G on the County workforce and personnel policies. Instead, it highlights the key intersections between Measure G and the County's existing personnel authorities, procedures, and policy structure, and to identify those areas where DHR may have resources or otherwise be able to support the GRTF's work.

INTERSECTION OF MEASURE G REFORMS AND CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

Key Measure G governance reforms include the development of new County agencies, including an ethics oversight office and commission, a nonpartisan office of legislative analysis, and the expansion of the Board of Supervisors (Board). The implementation of these reforms may require reorganization of County departments, service delivery adjustments, and new employment opportunities. In addition, the GRTF's role in recommending revisions to the County Charter and establishing an elected Chief

Executive Officer (CEO) with broad executive and administrative powers, may have downstream impacts on the County's Civil Service System and the rights afforded to employees within the classified service.

ELECTED COUNTY EXECUTIVE IMPACT TO THE CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

When the CEO assumes office in 2028, they will assume authority to appoint and terminate County Department Heads, with the approval of the Board. In addition, while the Board will retain its legislative power to adopt and amend the County's Civil Service Rules, the new CEO will have direct administrative oversight of the County's civil service system. As approved by Measure G, once elected, the CEO will gain two important powers that may impact how the civil service system functions within the County workforce. First, they will have the authority to veto a Board legislative action related to the Civil Service Rules. Secondly, the CEO will now have oversight over how the Civil Service Rules are administered and interpreted. Currently, the Director of Personnel has administrative oversight of the County's Civil Service Rules and reports to the Board.

The CEO will gain a key role over the County's Civil Service System, which will impact countywide personnel matters. To ensure continuity for the workforce and service delivery countywide, the development of the CEO would benefit from an understanding of the complexities and nuances of the County's personnel matters.

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW COUNTY AGENCIES AND THE CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

The GRTF's goal of establishing new County offices will require recruitment for a combination of classified and unclassified service positions. The classified and unclassified workforce can be distinguished by recruitment procedures, management, and legal rights to their respective positions. Unclassified employees serve solely at the pleasure of their respective appointing authorities and may be removed at any time at that authority's discretion. Examples of unclassified positions include elected officials, legislative and commission staff, County Department Heads, and other high-level positions within County agencies.

Classified service positions, on the other hand, are governed by a civil service system, which guarantees merit-based employment, ensuring fairness in hiring and promotion, with permanent status granting "property rights" against unwarranted dismissal. The County's Civil Service Rules (CSRs) are incorporated into the Los Angeles County Code and have the force and effect of law. The CSRs are complemented by a network of countywide and departmental personnel policies that manage workforce operations and ensure merit-based and efficient performance of official County duties. County personnel policies include DHR's Policy, Procedures and Guidelines (PPGs), Board Policies, and Departmental Personnel Policies. Covered policy areas range from management of employment files to the County's student worker program.

In the classified service, candidates are selected through a competitive examination process designed to recruit, select, and advance employees based on demonstrated qualifications and performance. Competitive exams are used to assess a candidate's skills and knowledge, and selections are made based on the candidate's placement on eligible lists. Employees are then evaluated and retained based on the quality of their work performance and adherence to County standards. Any warranted discipline must follow the standards prescribed in the CSRs and provide employees with appropriate due process and appeals rights.

Furthermore, the integrity of the County's civil service system is maintained through centralized oversight of personnel actions. In addition to oversight by the Director of Personnel, the Civil Service Commission serves as an independent oversight body by which applicants and employees can appeal adverse exam results, disciplinary matters (such as discharges, suspensions, and demotions), and claims of discrimination based on race, sex, national origin, political affiliation, disability, or other non-merit factors. The Commission is comprised of five members who are appointed by the Board. One of their missions is to ensure due process is granted to employees. If the Director of Personnel or Commission finds the appeal is warranted and a violation of the civil service rules has occurred, corrective action will be required for the adverse action. The independent nature of the oversight system protects both employees and the integrity of the civil service system.

The rights of classified employees to their County positions and the requirements of merit-based selection for such positions will be critical as the GRTF undertakes the necessary recruitments and reorganizations to establish the new County agencies. DHR is available to lend our robust recruitment resources and advise on civil service requirements as the GRTF moves forward in this effort.

ADDITIONAL IMPACTS ON PERSONNEL POLICIES

County personnel rules are codified in various places, including the County Charter. Measure G requires regular review and potential modification of the County Charter, which could impact existing personnel authorities. Should any of the Measure G reforms or County Charter review processes require amendments to existing personnel rules, DHR can help identify impacted rules and provide guidance to navigate the personnel policy development processes.

For example, the various County authorities related to ethics monitoring and reporting that will likely be impacted by forthcoming Measure G reforms. Existing rules address conflicts of interest, outside employment disclosures, post-employment restrictions, nepotism, and reporting known or suspected fraud, waste, or abuse. The GRTF's recommendations pertaining to the role and responsibilities of the new office of ethics and ethics commission may result in revisions to these existing standards and the

expectations of the County workforce. My department is available to help identify and explain relevant personnel authorities and how they align with specific Measure G ethics reform policy goals.

CONCLUSION

DHR stands ready to provide the GRTF with support and guidance on the potential impact of Measure G on Countywide personnel policies and practices, and wholeheartedly welcomes collaboration on future recruitment and personnel actions aligned with the GRTF's goals.

Should you have any questions or would like to receive additional information, please contact me or Abbe Land, Human Resources Manager, at (323) 533-0663 or Aland@hr.lacounty.gov.

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DMM:LR:krs

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel