



**Human Resources**  
ADMINISTRATION

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**To:** Councilmember Santiago-Romero

**From:** Denise Starr, Human Resources Department Director

*Denise Starr*

**Date:** March 28, 2025

**Re:** Responses to 2025-2026 Human Resources Budget Analysis

Please find below responses to your questions sent on March 24, 2025, regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Budget for the Human Resources Department.

- 1. What data are you using to determine which wellness initiatives and benefits are most desired by employees? Do you use data to determine this?**

Employee Wellbeing Services utilizes data from monthly, quarterly, and annual utilization reports provided by Health Management Systems of America, as well as the results of the Employee Engagement Survey and the Wellbeing employee resource group survey, to determine which wellness initiatives are most desired by employees. The HMSA reports show the multiple topics for which employees have utilized the services. The Engagement Survey results and comments, which focus on culture and wellness, help determine which wellness initiatives departments should implement.

- 2. What kinds of initiatives or programs are available to employees facing mental health or work-life balance concerns?**

Employees have access to Health Management Systems of America's services, which include free counseling services, access to complimentary legal and financial services, life coaching services, and online resources featuring thousands of articles, webinars, and assessment tools to support employees facing work-life balance concerns. Specifically, Employee Wellbeing Services helped develop the Focus on Healthy Eating workshops, Understanding Your Mental Health training sessions, Mental Health Awareness Days, Know Your Numbers events, and Becoming Self-Care Aware training. The Benefits Department's Wellness Promotion initiatives and programs offer a wide range of topics that focus on wellbeing, including the Heart Beats walking club and lunch-and-learns with City of Detroit vendors to promote health and wellness.

- 3. Is the Human Resources Department adhering to federal messaging about shifting away from "DEI" when assessing potential candidates for City positions? If so or if not, what is your reasoning behind those steps?**

The Human Resources Department remains committed to fair and consistent hiring practices that are grounded in merit and compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws. When evaluating candidates for City positions, we apply a standardized



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process that emphasizes qualifications, experience, and the ability to perform the essential functions of the role.

We continue to uphold the City's long-standing commitment to equal opportunity by ensuring that employment decisions are made without bias and that all individuals are treated with fairness and respect. This approach helps us attract and retain top talent and reinforces our position as a competitive and inclusive employer of choice.

**4. Do city benefits include gender affirming care and family planning opportunities through in vitro fertilization (IVF)?**

Our healthcare plans cover gender affirming care and we do cover family planning discovery, as well as health conditions that impact fertility.