



Office of the City Manager

INFORMATION CALENDAR

September 29, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Paul Buddenhagen, City Manager

Submitted by: Janelle Rodrigues, Director of Human Resources

Subject: UPDATE: HR Response: Audit Recommendations for Comprehensive Domestic Violence Policy to Support City Employees

INTRODUCTION

This report is an informational update on the implementation of recommendations from the City Auditor report titled “Domestic Violence Response: Berkeley Needs a Comprehensive Policy to Support City Employees,” issued on October 10, 2019. The audit recommended revisions to the City’s domestic violence policy and implementation of best practices to support employees experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. This is Human Resources’ fifth status report regarding this audit and all recommendations are now implemented.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The audit included six recommendations. All six recommendations are now implemented. Five recommendations were implemented through Administrative Regulation 2.21, Domestic Abuse, which became effective September 2, 2025 and is available to City employees through the City’s intranet. Those revisions broadened the scope and title of the policy; updated pertinent definitions; clarified factors considered when evaluating workplace accommodations; addressed documentation supporting leave and accommodation requests; and incorporated best practices for an inclusive, trauma-informed response.

Human Resources has also completed training materials supporting A.R. 2.21 and the City’s response to domestic violence affecting employees, satisfying the remaining recommendation. The self-directed NEOGOV Learn course provides employees an opportunity to review A.R. 2.21 and complete a knowledge check. The course materials remain available as a training resource. Departments may assign the course based on the needs of their work, and Human Resources will use the materials for targeted training. The City Auditor has reviewed the implementation evidence and marked Recommendation 3.1 implemented.

Attachment 1 provides the final status of the audit recommendations and corrective actions as recorded in Missionmark.

BACKGROUND

The City Auditor's Office issued the audit report on October 10, 2019. Human Resources provided its first informational update on November 3, 2022, its second on May 14, 2024, its third in December 2024, and its fourth in 2025. This report is Human Resources' fifth and final informational update for the audit.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

CONTACT PERSON

Janelle Rodrigues, Director of Human Resources, (510) 981-6807.

Attachments:

1. Audit Findings, Recommendations, and Final Status Updates (Missionmark)

Audit Title: Domestic Violence Response: Berkeley Needs a Comprehensive Policy to Support City Employees

Issue Date: October 10, 2019

Table: Audit Recommendation Statuses

Finding	Recommendation	Department	Previous Status Update	Current Status Update
Policy does not completely reflect state requirements.	1.1 Define and include sexual assault, stalking, and witnesses' rights.	Human Resources	Implemented	Implemented. The new domestic violence response policy includes definitions for sexual assault, stalking, and witness rights.
Policy does not completely reflect state requirements.	1.2 State that when assessing safety accommodations, Human Resources takes into consideration danger to the employee and undue burden to the employer.	Human Resources	Implemented	Implemented. The updated policy takes into consideration danger to the employee and undue burden to the employer.
Policy does not completely reflect state requirements.	1.3 Revise the policy title to reflect the comprehensive scope of the policy.	Human Resources	Implemented	Implemented. The updated policy is now titled "Leave Policy for Absence Related to Acts of Violence".
Policy does not completely reflect state requirements.	1.4 Clarify that requirements for employees to document their use of leave or request for accommodations are at the discretion of Human Resources and may include self-certification when appropriate. We also recommend that Human Resources clarify that employees are encouraged to come to Human Resources for assistance even if they do not initially have the documentation that may be requested.	Human Resources	Implemented	Implemented. The updated policy includes information about self-certification and encourages employees to come to Human Resources for assistance.

Finding	Recommendation	Department	Previous Status Update	Current Status Update
Policy does not address key workplace Domestic violence issues.	2.1 Incorporate the model policy and all best practice elements described in this finding, and communicate this guidance to city staff.	Human Resources	Implemented	Implemented. The updated policy includes model policy elements and has been uploaded to Sharepoint for citywide employee access.
Berkeley needs to prepare all staff to comply with the policy.	3.1 Implement best practices, including: - Training supervisors and Human Resources staff about their role in responding to employees experiencing domestic violence and providing information for employees about the domestic violence response policy; - Conducting periodic outreach to employees to inform them about the policy, encourage them to come forward, and provide general information about domestic violence; - Facilitating collaboration among city staff who have a role in implementing the policy, and convening a domestic violence response team to advise on policies, ongoing outreach and education, and Human Resources' implementation of recommendations from this audit; and - Adopting a trauma-informed and inclusive approach.	Human Resources	Partly Implemented	Implemented. The HR Training unit developed training materials for distribution which provide staff with the Administration Regulation 2.21 and tests knowledge that the employee has read and understands the policy. This training is now available on NeoGov Learn.