



Office of the City Manager

INFORMATION CALENDAR

October 14, 2025

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 Directive(s) for Comprehensive Domestic Violence Policy to Support City Employees

INTRODUCTION

This report is an informational update on progress toward goals recommended by a City Auditor report titled “Domestic Violence Response: Berkeley Needs a Comprehensive Policy to Support City Employees” issued on October 10, 2019.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the report tracks progress toward goals articulated by the Audit’s Corrective Action Plan within the broader context of a workplace violence prevention policy developed by the Human Resources Department.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The audit set forth six recommendations, and implementation of five out of six has been completed, while the sixth has been partly implemented. Five of the recommendations were integrated into a finalized domestic violence policy, which is now Administrative Regulation 2.21 available to all City staff via Sharepoint. The implemented recommendations relate to revisions of the title of the policy (to reflect a broader scope), pertinent definitions, factors to be considered in assessing accommodations, supporting documents required for accommodations, and best practices in implementing such a policy. The policy was finalized as Administrative Regulation 2.21 effective September 2, 2025.

As to a sixth recommendation regarding staff training for compliance with the policy, Human Resources has designed a rollout and training plan that provides the A.R. 2.21 to all City staff accompanied by confirmation and a testing of knowledge, understanding, and affirmation of receipt – all via the NeoGov Learn platform. The materials are currently being implemented for Citywide staff dissemination.

---

<sup>1</sup> Domestic Violence Response: Berkeley Needs a Comprehensive Policy to Support City Employees:  
<https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-01/Domestic-Violence-Response-Report.pdf>

**BACKGROUND**

The City Auditor's Office issued its report on October 10, 2019. HR's first informational update was provided on November 3, 2022, the second on May 14, 2024, and the third in December 2024. This report is Human Resources' fourth informational update. The next update will be Fall 2026.

**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 Status Updates

Audit Title: Domestic Violence Response: Berkeley Needs a Comprehensive Policy to Support City Employees					
Issue Date: October 10, 2019					
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	Partly Implemented	<u>Implemented:</u> 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	Partly Implemented	<u>Implemented:</u> 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	Partly Implemented	<u>Implemented:</u> 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	Partly Implemented	<u>Implemented:</u> The updated policy includes information about self-certification and encourages employees to come to Human Resources for assistance.
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	Started	<u>Implemented:</u> The updated policy includes model policy elements and has been uploaded to Sharepoint for citywide employee access.

<p>Berkeley needs to prepare all staff to comply with the policy.</p>	<p>3.1</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Human Resources</p>	<p>Started</p>	<p><u>Partly Implemented:</u> The HR Training unit has developed training materials for distribution via NeoGov Learn which provides staff with the Administrative Regulation 2.21 and tests knowledge that the employee has read and understands the policy. HR plans to launch this training on NeoGov Learn.</p>
---	------------	--	------------------------	----------------	---