



# A.S. Human Resources (HR) Report to Council

June 23, 2026

# MEET YOUR WHATCOM COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES TEAM



**Melissa Keeley**  
Human Resources Director  
ext. 5305



**Bea Acland**  
Human Resources Manager  
ext. 5308



**Heidi Christie**  
Senior Human Resources  
Representative  
ext. 5311

- Sheriff (Patrol and Corrections)



**Shara Struiksma**  
Human Resources  
Representative  
ext. 5307

- Assessor
- Executive
- EMS
- Planning & Development
- Treasurer
- WSU



**Karen Hemmett**  
Human Resources  
Representative  
ext. 5309

- Health
- Council



**Ryan Chace**  
Human Resources  
Representative  
ext. 5313

- Auditor
- Parks
- Prosecuting Attorney
- Public Defender
- Finance
- Facilities



**Robin Greer**  
Human Resources  
Representative  
ext. 5306

- Public Works
- Medical Examiner



**Roxanna Dulay**  
Human Resources  
Representative  
ext. 5312

- County Clerk
- District Court & Probation
- Superior Court/ Juvenile
- Information Technology

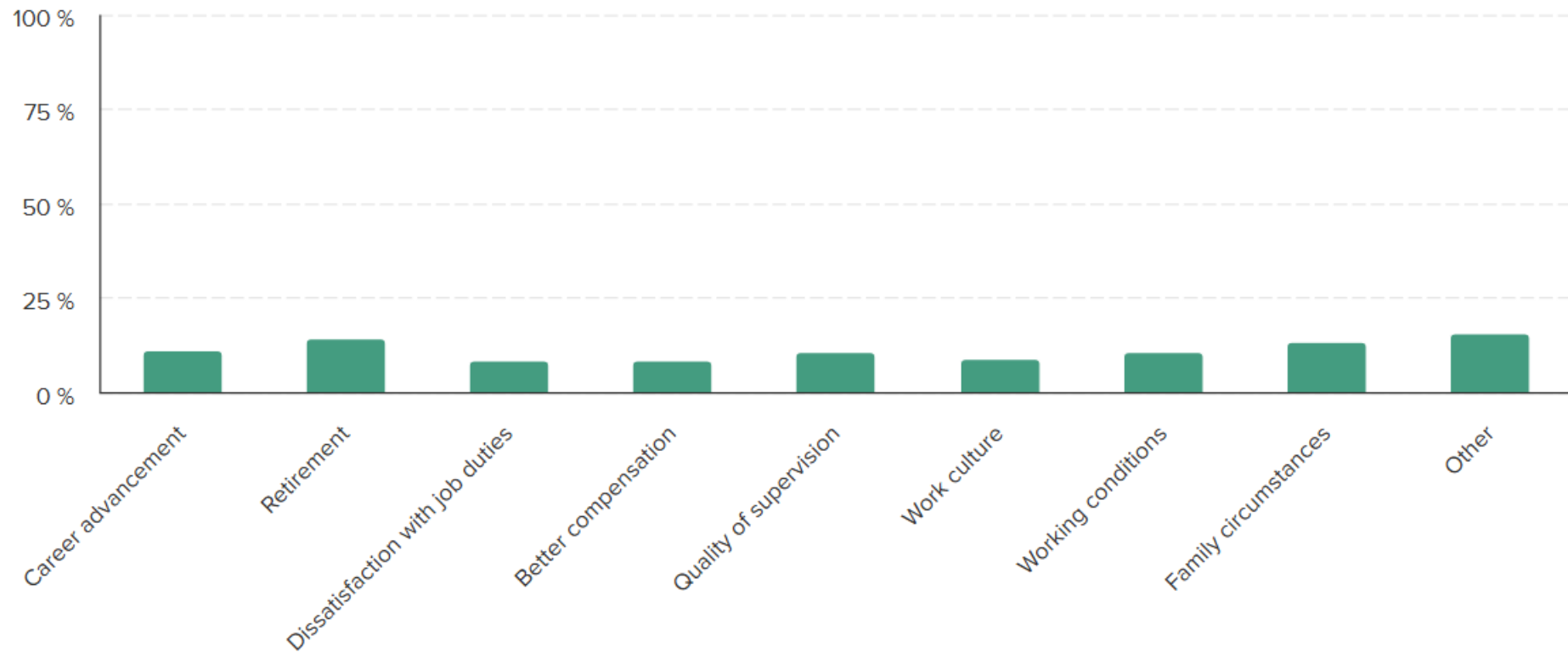
# Workload Factors

| YEAR | Full-Time FTES | Separations | Hires | Workers' Compensation Claims |
|------|----------------|-------------|-------|------------------------------|
| 2026 | 1095.7         | 35          | 62    | 19                           |
| 2025 | 1094.7         | 93          | 101   | 55                           |
| 2024 | 1079.0         | 102         | 146   | 57                           |
| 2023 | 1056.0         | 80          | 143   | 49                           |
| 2022 | 969.9          | 96          | 142   | 79                           |
| 2021 | 918.3          | 107         | 128   | 52                           |
| 2020 | 891.3          | 73          | 59    | 41                           |
| 2019 | 873.5          | 74          | 89    | 52                           |
| 2018 | 861.2          | 67          | 105   | 54                           |
| 2017 | 852.0          | 68          | 59    | 64                           |
| 2016 | 838.7          | 47          | 69    | 59                           |
| 2015 | 830.2          | 71          | 81    | 48                           |
| 2014 | 811.8          | 58          | 61    | 76                           |
| 2013 | 811.3          | 60          | 96    | 60                           |
| 2012 | 821.5          | 50          | 62    | 63                           |

# Exit Survey Data

2. What prompted you to leave County employment? Select all that apply. \*

ANSWERED: 70 SKIPPED: 0



# Collective Bargaining

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## INTEREST ARBITRATION ELIGIBLE

| Union                      | Contract Term               |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Deputy Sheriff's Guild     | 2026-2028                   |
| Teamsters Corrections      | Arbitration<br>October 2026 |
| FOP Sheriff Management     | 2025-2027                   |
| FOP Corrections Management | Mediation                   |

## NOT INTEREST ARBITRATION

| Union            | Contract Term                       |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Teamsters Master | 2026-2028                           |
| WSNA (nurses)    | 2026-2028                           |
| IBU/MMP (Ferry)  | 2026-2028<br>Council Agenda<br>6/23 |
| AFSCME PD        | 2026-2027                           |
| PROTEC17         | 2026-2028                           |

# Complaint Policies & Procedures

| September 23, 2025

## HR Actions to Address Consultant Recommendations

### Investigations & HR Operations

- ✓ Standardize investigative methodology
- ✓ Enhance communication with complainants
- ✓ Timeliness & communication standards
- ✓ Case management – excel spreadsheet
- ✓ Maintain staffing/cross-training

### Policies & Procedures

- ✓ Update personnel policies with clearly defined prohibited behaviors
- ✓ Integrate policies into broader training initiatives and handbook updates
- ✓ Make policies widely accessible
- ✓ Regular reminders about policies/procedures

### Workforce Training & Development

- ✓ Implement NEOGOV Learn (learning management system) including department specific training
- ✓ Track training and completion rates
- ✓ New hire training on harassment/discrimination
- ✓ New hire supervisor training with expanded content on conflict management, complaint handling, and leadership
- ✓ Expanded required training for all staff and management
- ✓ Collect feedback on training quality and needs

# Update on Pending Items

| Matrix Recommendation   | Priority | HR Action   | Date Completed                                 |
|---|----------|---|--|
| Provide additional training to HR staff on utilizing trauma-informed approaches | Medium   | <p>Reviewing training materials on implementing trauma-informed investigation and will continue to expand our awareness on this approach.</p> <p><u>HR staff have received education on what it means to bring a more trauma informed approach to our investigation process. We have also met with other County staff with more expertise in trauma informed care to learn from them. As a result, we are taking a more personal approach to the entire investigation process including:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>• Showing appreciation for a complainant's courage for bringing a concern forward and helping them feel heard;</u></li> <li><u>• Being transparent with them about what they can expect throughout the investigation and when they can expect to hear from us next;</u></li> <li><u>• Following up with every investigation closure in person or at least over the phone to discuss complaint outcomes and next steps;</u></li> <li><u>• Communicating especially sensitively regarding those complaints that aren't substantiated for any illegal activity or policy violations but that are valid concerns nevertheless; and</u></li> <li><u>• Providing all resources and support available.</u></li> </ul> <p><u>We will continue to explore more ways to enhance our knowledge and improve our practices.</u></p> | <p>Goal:<br/>12/31/25<br/><u>Completed</u></p> |

# Update on Pending Items

| Matrix Recommendation   | Priority | HR Action  | Date Completed  |
|---|----------|--|---|
| Develop quarterly and annual reports on performance metrics related to the complaints process   | Low      | Anticipate reporting on performance metrics to the Executive and the Risk Management Working Group<br><u>Metrics report is planned for the upcoming Risk Management Work Group meeting on June 25, 2026</u>  | In progress<br><u>June 25, 2026</u>                             |
| Each elected office formally adopting and applying county-wide harassment and discrimination policies to ensure consistency across all departments, employees, and officials. | High     | The Executive's Office will work with HR and the PAs office or outside counsel to develop a process to document agreements to adopt (or to note a decision to not adopt by any separated elected office)<br><u>Worked with Civil PA to draft MOU. MOU adopted by Council on June 9, 2026. Drafting modified MOUs to take to the other elected officials.</u> | Under review<br><u>In progress with other elected officials</u> |
| Provide regular reminders to employees and elected officials about the policy, reporting procedures, and available resources.   | High     | This is possible through NEOGOV Learn and is incorporated into our annual workplan.<br><u>County wide required training on revised policies was provided through a NEOGOV custom course in October 2025. 917 employees completed the training. Refresher training will be provided in October 2026.</u>  | In progress<br><u>Completed for 2025</u>                        |

# Update on Pending Items

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| Matrix Recommendation   | Priority | HR Action   | Date Completed                 |
|---|----------|---|--------------------------------|
| Consider alternative formats for training (i.e., in-person events) that occur on a set basis. | Medium   | Under review as funding allows. Working with departments to track in-person department sponsored training.<br><u>All staff and leadership communication and conflict resolution trainings are scheduled for July 22<sup>nd</sup> as in-person events with Allen and Unger Consulting.</u> | Under review<br><u>7/22/26</u> |

# Investing in Leadership

New Leaders - Required Training + [2 MORE](#)

## Welcome to Leadership at Whatcom County!


Leaders play a critical role in creating a positive workplace, supporting employee success, and helping departments achieve organizational goals. Human Resources (HR) is committed to supporting both new and experienced supervisors through ongoing development opportunities, resources, and collaborative learning.


Leadership responsibilities can be complex and ever-changing, and no supervisor is expected to navigate those challenges alone. Through training, guidance, and shared best practices, HR aims to provide practical tools and support that helps leaders build confidence, strengthen leadership skills, and effectively support their teams.


[View Less](#)


[Enroll](#)


### Course Details

 0H 10M

 REQUIRED SCORE: N/A

 COURSE CODE: HR.LEADERS.2026

 SELF ENROLL: ON

 NO APPROVAL REQUIRED

### Attachments

*no attachments*

# New Leaders – Required Training

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <p><b>Required</b> R Top Pick</p> <p>Supervision - 5 MORE</p> <p><b>Best Practices for Effective Referenc ...</b></p> <p>🕒 0H 15M</p> <p>🌐 CUSTOM ONLINE</p> <p><b>Enroll</b></p> | <p><b>Required</b> R Top Pick</p> <p>Compliance &amp; Legal - 7 MORE</p> <p><b>Extending Job Offers</b></p> <p>🕒 0H 15M</p> <p>🌐 CUSTOM ONLINE</p> <p><b>Enroll</b></p>   | <p><b>Required</b></p> <p>Leadership and M... - 3 MORE</p> <p><b>Managing Unionized Employees</b></p> <p>🕒 0H 30M</p> <p>🌐 PRE-BUILT ONLINE</p> <p><b>Enroll</b></p> | <p><b>Required</b> GOV OHC</p> <p>NEOGOV Training - 4 MORE</p> <p><b>NEOGOV Online Hiring Center (OH ...</b></p> <p>🕒 0H 05M</p> <p>🌐 CUSTOM ONLINE</p> <p><b>Enroll</b></p> |
| <p><b>Required</b> OGOV</p> <p>NEOGOV Training - 3 MORE</p> <p><b>NEOGOV Unified Dashboard Overvi ...</b></p> <p>🕒 0H 10M</p> <p>🌐 CUSTOM ONLINE</p> <p><b>Enroll</b></p>         | <p><b>Required</b> Washington Counties Risk Pool<br/><small>Created by Counties for Counties</small></p> <p>WA Counties Risk ... - 10 MORE</p> <p><b>WA Counties Risk Pool - External Tra ...</b></p> <p>🕒 0H 03M</p> <p>🌐 CUSTOM ONLINE</p> <p><b>Enroll</b></p> | <p><b>Required</b></p> <p>New Leaders - Re... - 2 MORE</p> <p><b>Welcome to Leadership at Wh ...</b></p> <p>🕒 0H 10M</p> <p>🌐 CUSTOM ONLINE</p> <p><b>Enroll</b></p> | <p><b>Required</b></p> <p>New Leaders - Re... - 5 MORE</p> <p><b>Whatcom County Leadership Devel ...</b></p> <p>🕒 0H 10M</p> <p>🌐 CUSTOM ONLINE</p> <p><b>Enroll</b></p>     |
| <p><b>Required</b></p> <p>Health &amp; Safety - 3 MORE</p> <p><b>Workers' Compensation - T ...</b></p>  |   |  |  |

# Investing in Leadership

New Leaders - Required Training + [5 MORE](#)


## Whatcom County Leadership Development Academies Overview

Our Leadership Academies are designed to support employees at different stages of their leadership journey. These academies are offered to:


- Promote consistent leadership practices across departments
- Support internal talent development and succession planning
- Provide transparent access to development opportunities
- Build a common understanding of expectations for leadership roles


[Enroll](#)


### Course Details


 0H 10M

 REQUIRED SCORE: N/A

 COURSE CODE:  
HR.LEADERDEV.2026

 GATED

 SELF ENROLL: ON

 NO APPROVAL REQUIRED

### Attachments

# Academy Overviews

## Leading Self Academy

Designed for **new (0-2 years) and emerging supervisors**, this academy builds the foundational skills required to successfully transition from individual contributor to leader in a public service environment. Participants gain clarity on their authority, accountability, and role within a unionized environment while developing practical skills in communication, performance management, documentation, hiring, and employment law fundamentals. Emphasis is placed on emotional intelligence, consistent decision-making, and upholding County values and public trust. The program equips supervisors to avoid common first-time pitfalls and confidently manage people, processes, and risk.

## Leading People Academy

This academy strengthens the capability of **experienced (2-5 years) supervisors and managers** to lead through influence, not just authority. Participants deepen their skills in coaching, progressive discipline, conflict resolution, equity in decision-making, and change management. The curriculum emphasizes accountability, early intervention in performance issues, employee engagement, and succession planning. Leaders learn to foster engaged teams, manage complex personnel matters, and support organizational consistency and fairness across departments.

# Academy Curriculum Tracker



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES HUMAN RESOURCES

## LEADING SELF DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY COURSE COMPLETION TRACKER

This leadership academy is designed for new supervisors (0-2 years). It is made up primarily of on demand courses completed through NEOGOV Learn, along with a few other formats of delivery. This course tracker includes all requirements and allows you to check off each item as you complete it. The academy is meant to be flexible and address individual needs through independent selection of courses. However, participants are encouraged to complete all courses to set a solid foundation for effective supervision.

Using the NEOGOV Course Catalog, search using the category: “Leading Self” for a complete list of courses.

| Course   | Duration | Delivery Method   | ✓ Completed/Date |
|--|----------|-------------------|------------------|
| Accountability for Supervisors                             | 20 Mins  | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Avoid Making the 8 Ultimate Delegation Mistakes            | 6 Mins   | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Avoiding Harassment  | 5 Mins   | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Best Practices for Effective Reference Checks              | 15 Mins  | HR NEOGOV         |                  |
| Brain Bites – Leading Effective Meetings                   | 24 Mins  | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Building a Kind and Connected Workplace                    | 15 Mins  | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Coaching Crash Course                                      | 30 min.  | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Coaching Overview  | 13 Mins  | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Courageous Conversations                                   | 20 Mins  | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Diversity in the Workplace: Diversity for All              | 20 Mins  | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Don't Try to be a Great Leader... Just be an Effective One | 5 Mins   | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Effective Writing for Business                             | 20 Mins  | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |
| Extending Job Offers                                       | 15 Mins  | HR NEOGOV         |                  |
| Giving Feedback  | 30 Mins  | NEOGOVS On Demand |                  |

**Questions?**