Workplace Safety & Cybersecurity
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Having worked steadily since the mid-80s, I am hard-pressed to recall a situation that has done more than the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to focus literally everyone’s attention on workplace safety. Agencies sent most or all office staff home for weeks. Essential personnel who could not work remotely—groups ranging from first responders and corrections personnel to health care providers, utilities workers and sanitation crews—scrambled to secure personal protective equipment and implement new protocols.

And those extensive anti-infection measures represented just half of a total, sometimes jarring reassessment of what it meant to be safe as a worker and employer. Working from home and operating largely from the field intensified the need for cybersecurity.

Public sector organizations had no choice but to continue serving their communities and constituents while developing solutions for employee safety and data security in real time. Most of the new policies and procedures continue to evolve, which makes this issue of HR News particularly timely. Contributing authors and columnists address everything from ensuring that employees feel safe to avoiding the theft and misuse of data.

Looking back and ahead to when a majority of workers report to offices, Jana Morrin lays out “5 Steps Toward a Psychologically Safe Workplace.” The CEO and co-founder of reporting platform developer Speakfully emphasizes the need to “get buy-in from the C-suite and “keep the conversation going” in order to correct a status quo in which “workers do not feel psychologically safe … bad experiences go unreported [and] issues smolder until they almost inevitably erupt into full-fledged crises.”

Next, Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough employment law attorneys Michelle W. Johnson and Jessica R. Watson discuss “When, Why and How to Update the Employee Handbook to Address COVID-19.” Without offering actual legal advice, they state that employers should rapidly write out updates to rules for attendance, taking vacation and leave, allowing visitors to the workplace, cleaning facilities, complying with the dress code and securing electronic communications and devices.

In “Putting People First: Workplace Safety, Cybersecurity and Background Screenings,” Sterling executive Alla Schay notes that as organizations ramp up hiring and welcome current employees back to their offices, “Continuous monitoring for criminal behavior and social media screening for risk and liability mitigation come up frequently … . Further, periodic rescreening, done monthly or quarterly, is an option for employers who worry about insider threats.”

And for those times when it becomes necessary to lay off or terminate people who were sent home this spring, e-discovery and digital forensics expert Brian Schrader walks readers through “6 Steps for Protecting Your Data After Letting Go of a Remote Employee.” Going beyond the obvious first step of disabling a former employee’s access to the organization’s data, he explains why it is necessary to make a forensically sound, bit-for-bit copy of the entire storage on each device the employee used for work, ensure full data remediation and thoroughly check for suspicious behavior.

Schrader’s focus on planning to deal with potential problems carries over into the latest B&G HR Report. Especially for fire departments and emergency medical services, tracking and classifying risks for on-the-job injuries and occupational illnesses has paid off. Barriers ranging from lack of funding to inconsistent collection practices continue to hamper the use of data to protect public sector workers, but real-world models of excellence have emerged.

In this month’s Labor Relations column, two cases that could clarify employers’ duties to prevent coronavirus infections and preserve jobs are highlighted. Last, the CompDoctorTM weighs in on “Determining Salary Adjustment Estimates Amid a Pandemic.” No spoilers, but decisions made now about granting raises and setting pay ranges for 2021 will dictate options for the 2022 and 2023 budgets.

As always, thanks for reading. Stay safe. Stay well. See you in August. —N

Ed Lamb

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Coming up in the August issue of HR News

Change Management
Physical wellness benefits for employees range from standup desks and yoga classes to a kitchen stocked with nutritious snacks. The aim is to promote good health among employees, and research shows that wellness benefits boost performance for employees and employers large and small.

Less common are mental wellness benefits. This is an oversight that employers should think about correcting. When workers do not feel psychologically safe and bad experiences go unreported, issues smolder until they almost inevitably erupt into full-fledged crises.

A psychologically safe workplace is one in which employees feel free to take risks, make mistakes and report negative experiences without fearing consequences to themselves or their careers. Ensuring such a work environment exists is a worthwhile goal for any employer because creativity and innovation thrive in such workplaces.

But building a psychologically safe workplace does not happen overnight. Here are five steps organizations can take to enable all employees to be and give their best.

**Get Buy-in From the C-Suite**

It is one thing to tell employees that their voice will be valued if they report workplace mistreatment. It’s another thing to convince them that what you said is true. This is why creating a psychologically safe work environment should start at the top.

Leaders and executives across the organization should be fully supportive of the effort. They should regularly reinforce the messages of safety and openness during all-hands meetings and in emails to staff. When employees see that creating a safe workspace is a priority that senior-level executives advocate, they will have greater confidence and know that it is OK to come forward with concerns no matter who is involved.

**Keep the Conversation Going**

At most organizations, workplace mistreatment is discussed when people first join and new hires are given the employee handbook that describes the harassment policy and other guidelines. Then, the subject is never, or rarely, mentioned again.

Having continuous conversations and always keeping lines of communication open are keys to creating a psychologically safe workplace. When they know their concerns will be heard, employees will feel more comfortable stepping forward to report issues. They will not spend days, weeks or even months agonizing over the decision, second-guessing themselves and wondering if they will face isolation or retribution.

**Leverage Technology**

Providing employees with the right tools to do so securely encourages them to log their negative experiences and report unfair or unjust treatment. This benefits them while also helping the organization by delivering real-time data to track and analyze the frequency and severity of mistreatment.
Critically, reporting tools make it possible to discern patterns of negative experience, which enables organization leaders and executives to identify systemic issues. Once problems become visible, the human resources team can investigate and introduce cultural changes.

Don’t Make Assumptions

Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Many organizations think they do not have a workplace mistreatment issue simply because employees are not coming forward. This attitude is not just naive, it’s dangerous. A serious pattern of misbehavior could be going unreported because workers do not feel comfortable speaking out.

Employers should institute processes and platforms that ensure workers can report mistreatment without sacrificing their privacy or risking their safety. The reporting process must also enable HR to capture specific and relevant information.

Embrace Transparency

Employees often feel intimidated by the process for filing a complaint. Organizations should make it less daunting by adopting systems that are easy to use and by being transparent about the status of a complaint. This can start with designating an HR staffer to contact an employee to let them know the issue they reported is being investigated. That initial communication should be followed up with regular updates to alleviate the employee’s anxiety, which always builds in the absence of information.

The bottom-line reason to take these five steps is that a psychologically safe workplace is a more productive workplace. When employees are mentally confident, they feel free to take risks, express new ideas, make mistakes and report problems without fear of being mocked or retaliated against. For organizations, in short, ensuring psychological safety is a key to operating more effectively and innovatively.

Jana Morrin is the CEO and co-founder of Speakfully. You can connect with her on LinkedIn. — N

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Communication and strategy are key to holistically improving the wellbeing of any public sector organization. Whether a town, a metropolitan city or a K-12 school, each organization faces unique challenges.

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Download our 30-minute video roundtable and written summary at GallagherHRCC.com/BuildingBetter/IPMA.
When, Why and How to Update the Employee Handbook to Address COVID-19

By Michelle W. Johnson and Jessica R. Watson

COVID-19 completely changed the way many organizations operate in just a matter of months, and the implications of the pandemic for workplaces and workers are only beginning to come into focus. As a result, most organizations have not yet fully updated their employee handbooks to reflect the new normal.

Complying with a multitude of new federal and state rules and regulations must be addressed, and the myriad new procedures the employer has adopted must be spelled out in detail. Following are some examples of the policies that should be updated in light of COVID-19.

**Attendance and Work Schedule**

Employees in some places may still be under stay-at-home orders. Even after those orders are lifted, organizations may encourage their employees to telework as a way to manage potential exposure to the novel coronavirus. In such instances, employers should carefully review and augment their teleworking policies.

Language in the employee handbook should make it clear when employees are permitted to work from home, whether they must first request permission to do so and the rules to be followed when teleworking. If non-exempt employees are working from home, strict procedures for recording time worked and regulating overtime hours should be described in detail.

**Vacation, Sick Leave and Family & Medical Leave**

Employers must revise their vacation, sick leave and family and medical leave policies to account for new requirements under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). The law, which took effect April 1, 2020, requires employers with fewer than 500 employees to provide their employees with paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. The law remains in effect until Dec. 31, 2020.

Under FFCRA, paid leave is available if an employee

- Is under quarantine or self-isolating due to COVID-19;
- Is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis;
- Is caring for someone else who is under quarantine or is self-isolating; or
- Is caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed due to COVID-19–related reasons.

Employers should also make sure their leave and emergency leave policies comply with state and local regulations regarding employee time off due to COVID-19.

Putting forth an updated framework for handling requests for accommodations is also in order. Employees who are members of populations that are identified as being more vulnerable to COVID-19 are likely covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. In particular, employees who are caring for or living with more-vulnerable individuals may seek permission to work from home or to adjust their work schedule in some other way. Employees should know the procedures for making such requests, as well to whom such requests should be directed.
Visitors

Rules for allowing visitors to enter worksites must be considered. When completely banning visitors is not feasible, an organization needs to implement policies that limit the number of visitors and set expectations for safe behavior. Examples of such policies include

- Requiring visitors and employees to stay six feet apart;
- Mandating that visitors take certain precautions while on the premises, including wearing masks, using hand sanitizer and submitting to temperature checks; and
- Enhancing cleaning procedures.

Facility Cleanliness

Most employers have already developed strategies for enhanced sanitation, including cleaning common areas and frequently touched surfaces more often and more thoroughly. When updating its employee handbook, an employer should include protocols for maintaining a clean and safe workplace.

Dress Code

If employees will be required to wear masks in common areas or when interacting with coworkers and customers, an employer should write those rules into the dress code. The same is true for employee hygiene policies. An updated handbook should include protocols for cleaning one’s workspace or office, washing one’s hands regularly and using hand sanitizer.

Electronic Communications and Electronic Devices

When more employees work remotely more often, employers should take additional steps to protect confidential information, ensure the security of electronic payments and prevent misuse of social media. Issuing and enforcing clear rules regarding when and why employees are permitted to take their employer’s electronic devices home with them, as well as when employees may use their own devices for work, are essential.

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More than ever, having a smart, well-executed employment screening program is vital to ensuring workplace safety. Doing screening correctly helps organizations create safer environments for their employees, vendors and partners, as well as the communities they serve. This remains true for large and small organizations that are hiring through the COVID-19 crisis or looking ahead to hiring post-crisis.

But how can executives and managers know if their organization’s screening program is sufficiently comprehensive and thorough? Human resources leaders who seek answers to these questions must take the following three considerations when assessing and determining the best path forward.

Build on Preemployment Checks

Pre-hire background checks are an integral first step toward providing a safe and productive working environment. Conditioning permanent employment on passing a background check protects other employees and customers while also preserving the organization’s equipment, property and hard-earned reputation.

A preemployment screening often consists of a basic criminal background check, the verification of academic qualifications and work history, and a drug test. Depending on the role being filled, the person being offered a job will need to clear additional identity, health, fitness and financial checks.

These measures are effective for strengthening the reputability of the talent pool, but they do not catch post-employment infractions. Consequently, a growing number of organizations screen employees who have been on the job for some time. Organizations are also contemplating whether to rescreen the employees they call back from COVID-19–related furloughs and layoffs.

Do Not Neglect Insider Threats, Especially When It Comes to Cybersecurity

Marc van Zadelhoff wrote in a Sept. 19, 2016, Harvard Business Review article that “the role that insiders play in the vulnerability of all sizes of corporations is massive and growing.” Almost exactly two years later, Tucker Bradley and a group of co-authors published these sobering statistics in a McKinsey report on data breaches:

- 50 percent of 7,800 publicly reported breaches between 2012 and 2017 involved insiders.
- Malicious intent accounted for 38 percent of breaches perpetrated by insiders.
- Some breaches led to hundreds of millions in losses for the affected organizations.

Clearly, nefarious actors who deliberately leverage positions of trust...
and access pose serious risks to an organization’s finances. There is a reputational price to be paid, as well.

A data breach sows doubt about an organization’s trustworthiness and capabilities among current and potential customers. An organization that fails to secure its data may also find it difficult to recruit quality candidates.

Of course, this is not to say that openness and collaboration are overall negatives for or detrimental to an organization. Rather, the broader point is that risks always need to be accurately assessed and, when possible, minimized. Thankfully, there are proactive screening strategies available to employers that help identify potentially troublesome employees.

And progress has been made. In 2011, the consulting firm then called Ernst & Young reported that the majority of data loss incidents resulted from the actions of internal users and (formerly) trusted third parties. That percentage ticked down when the McKinsey researchers performed their analysis half a decade later.

Reduce Risks Via Continuous Monitoring and Social Media Screening

The COVID-19 pandemic affected organizations in different ways. Many were forced to lay off or furlough staff. Others managed to preserve payroll but enacted hiring freezes. A small group of organizations needed to ramp up their hiring.

As my colleagues and I worked with clients who found themselves quickly hiring essential workers over recent months, we relied on our flexible technology platform and business processes to help them adjust and adapt their background screening programs. We are now in discussions with clients who have begun rehiring laid off employees and recalling employees from furloughs.

Continuous monitoring for criminal behavior and social media screening for risk and liability mitigation come up frequently in the course of these discussions. Further, periodic rescreening, done monthly or quarterly, is an option for employers who worry about insider threats.

Social media screening can be done during the preemployment period and during an employee’s tenure. An advanced social media screening program leverages machine learning guided by human oversight to assess publicly available online content in terms of how activities comport with the employer’s policies.

As a component of continuous monitoring, social media screening helps safeguard an organization’s reputation, identify indicators of toxic behavior and flag patterns or troubling activity that could affect an organization’s operations. One caveat is that implementing in-house solutions is not usually the best approach because social media screening will occupy valuable staff time and result in inconsistent collection and evaluation of data.

Another concern when considering continuous monitoring and periodic rescreening is ensuring that all procedures comply with the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Federal Trade Commission offer an online guide to FCRA compliance for employers.

Fostering a safe work environment takes on new dimensions as organizations, employees and customers emerge from the public health crisis. No single background screening program has ever proven equally effective for all employers, and the programs will now need to be tailored even more precisely. Screening and monitoring must take the broader workplace landscape and ever-evolving regulations into account. By leveraging available screening tools to properly assess and mitigate internal risks, an organization will put itself in a better position to provide a foundation of trust and safety for all the people it employs and serves.

 Alla Schay is currently the general manager for the industrials, government and education business of Sterling. She previously served as the company’s COO and chief human resources officer. You can find Schay on LinkedIn. —N
The coronavirus pandemic introduced a reality few employers expected. Making all or most office operations remote while simultaneously reducing staff due to the sudden economic downturn brought unfamiliar challenges. In particular, greater cybersecurity risks required urgent attention as more employees worked from home and those let go potentially retained access to their former employer’s networks and data.

A full five years before COVID-19 hit, Biscom estimated that 87 percent of employees who leave a job take organization data when exiting. Whether they do so with malicious intent or simply because they believe the data belongs to them, exiting employees can cause serious damage to their former employer.

Countering this threat by developing and implementing strong policies and procedures for securing data becomes essential when so many organizations are letting so many remote workers go. Here are six steps to take.

Disable the Employee’s Access to Data

At the end of an employee’s last day, have the IT department disable the employee’s access to all organization systems such as email, shared software, collaboration apps and cloud or third-party platforms. You can use the exit interview to learn the employee’s passwords to the systems and encrypted files, as well as to determine where the individual may be storing data and whether personal devices need to be wiped of organization data.

Remember to ask about programs that are not organization-approved. Employees may find and use various third-party solutions for business tasks.

Also be sure to disable the employee’s physical access to organization property. Ask for the return of keys, parking passes and key fobs. If employees use personalized access codes, disable the one used by the departing employee.

Last, ensure all organization-owned equipment is returned or mailed back on the employee’s last day, including laptops, smartphones, hard drives and thumb drives. Ask the employee to remove all their personal data from agency devices prior to returning them and have them sign an agreement stating that any personal data left on a device belongs to the organization and can be deleted at any time. Although employees in the United States generally do not have privacy rights to personal data on work devices, obtaining the signed agreement avoids unnecessary headaches.

Determine the Exiting Employee’s Legal Hold Status

Organizations are legally required to preserve data that may be needed for litigation. Be sure to verify whether the employee’s data might be relevant to an investigative or regulatory matter before deleting it or reissuing a device.

It is wise to establish a policy that requires all devices be held and remain untouched for 90 days before wiping them. If an issue
were to arise, it would most likely occur within that timeframe. It is also wise to preserve a device beyond the 90-day window if you suspect theft. Not following these practices could open the organization to charges of spoliation of evidence and massive fines.

Preserve All the Data

If you suspect the employee’s data may be needed for future litigation, have the IT department make a forensically sound, bit-for-bit copy of the device’s entire storage. Such a copy is also known as an “image.”

The imaging process duplicates files in their entirety (including metadata), deleted files, file history, USB device use and more. This paints a clearer picture of the employee’s activity on the device and can be necessary to prove innocence or guilt in a legal matter. If your organization deals with sensitive information, you may choose to image each of a departing employee’s devices whether or not you suspect theft.

Complete Data Remediation

After a device has been imaged, you can proceed with data remediation, which is the process of securely removing and destroying data from the device itself. Keep in mind that you will also need to delete organization data on the employee’s personal devices, which you should have learned about during the exit interview.

Look for Suspicious Behavior

Using the complete copy of the data on a former employee’s device, search for unusual activity that may indicate they stole data. Some questionable actions to look for include:

- The transfer or deletion of large amounts of data through a USB drive or the cloud;
- An increase in data usage beginning a few days before the employee’s departure;
- The transfer of data during unusual hours such as nights, weekends and holidays;
- Recent installs or removals of software;
- Access of organization systems that do not pertain to the employee’s job description or which violate organization policies; and
- Personal accounts being logged into from an organization’s device.

Hire a Forensic Expert

Immediately bring in a forensic expert when suspicious activity is discovered. The professional can remotely analyze various activities, such as the former employee’s access of the organization’s network and files, email and USB use, browsing history and changes to metadata. The investigator can also try to recover deleted or compromised files and review system or log files for additional suspicious activity. It is important to work with a licensed professional who can maintain the integrity of the data so that it will be admissible in court if legal action is taken.

While internal data theft is a serious concern, one analysis revealed that nearly three-quarters of the employees who take their organization’s data do so while thinking the data is rightfully theirs. Often, the best practice is to directly confront an individual who has retained data after leaving your organization. Asking for the data to be returned can suffice to get it back without any further issues.

Still, there will be some people who intend to cause harm to the organization. This is why it is wise to follow the steps outlined above and to be prepared for litigation if the situation demands.

Brian Schrader, Esq., is president & CEO of e-discovery and digital forensics firm BIA. Since 2002, Schrader has applied his information management experience and legal knowledge to aiding corporations and law firms around the world. He can be reached at bschrader@biaprotect.com. —\(\_\_\_\_\_\)

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Results from our most-recent yearly survey affirmed that IPMA-HR’s commitment to ensuring members have a satisfying experience is producing positive outcomes. From 2019 to 2020, the percentage of members reporting overall satisfaction with their membership increased by 2 points. Even more encouragingly, we also saw a 3-point increase in the percentage of current members who were likely or very likely to renew their IPMA-HR membership.

The best news of all may be that the percentage of members saying they are likely or very likely to recommend IPMA-HR to a colleague during 2020 rose 5 points from 2019 and 9 points from 2018. Consult the accompanying infographic for specific numbers.

One member’s response to an open-ended question pointed toward why so many survey respondents reported being satisfied overall, likely to return and likely to recommend us. The individual stated that IPMA-HR “offers an extremely valuable and worthwhile service to the public sector human resources profession.”

Consistent with prior years, the top reasons members joined and renewed their memberships were gaining access to educational and professional development opportunities; finding and sharing HR resources, policies and best practices; and networking.

We further learned that IPMA-HR members feel very satisfied with their interactions with our individual departments. At least 97 percent of respondents who reported being familiar with a department also reported that the department met or exceeded their expectations.

While members’ satisfaction with the availability, quality and value of Association products all increased 3-5 percent from 2019 to 2020, each rating was below 90 percent. This is encouraging, though, since the findings show where we can improve.

Last, we saw upticks in members’ satisfaction with customer service, staff availability, staff expertise and staff’s willingness to help. Growth in these areas has been especially strong since 2018, when each rating was 7-9 percent points lower.

Members received invitations to complete the 2020 satisfaction survey via email at the end of February. By the time the survey closed in early March, 433 members replied, yielding a response rate of approximately 7 percent. —N

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**Member Satisfaction Remains Job #1 for IPMA-HR**

**IPMA-HR MEMBER SATISFACTION REPORT 2020**

- **Overall Satisfaction**
  - IPMA-HR members are satisfied or very satisfied with their membership: 89%

- **Renew**
  - Members are likely or very likely to renew their IPMA-HR membership: 91%

- **Recommend**
  - Members likely or very likely to recommend IPMA-HR to a colleague: 89%

**DEPARTMENTS**

- **HR Resources**
  - 99% of IPMA-HR members familiar with HR Resources felt it met or exceeded their expectations.

- **Government Affairs**
  - 99% of IPMA-HR members familiar with Government Affairs felt it met or exceeded their expectations.

**PRODUCT**

- **IPMA-HR members satisfied or very satisfied with**
  - Availability: 88%
  - Quality: 88%
  - Value: 89%

**PRODUCT**

- **IPMA-HR members satisfied or very satisfied with**
  - Availability: 89%
  - Expertise: 92%
  - Willingness to help: 92%

**Top Reasons Our Members Join IPMA-HR**

- Educational/Professional Development: 86%
- Access to HR Policies, Best Practices, and Research: 57%
- Networking Opportunities: 47%
Meet Your Candidate for 2021 IPMA-HR President-Elect

Voting opens August 1. This year’s candidate, Jennifer Fairweather, IPMA-SCP, serves as human resources director for Jefferson County, Colo.

Following are excerpts from Fairweather’s personal narrative. You can read the full document on the Association’s website at on.ipma-hr.org/368. Balloting closes on August 14.

I have been an active volunteer and member of IPMA-HR for over 20 years. I have held volunteer leadership roles at all levels of the Association … . In addition, I have public sector leadership experience in a variety of roles, including a large county government organization, a civil service agency, a small court organization and a very large decentralized city system. My experiences give me a diverse perspective as a public sector HR professional and as a volunteer within IPMA-HR. This gives me a wide range of different perspectives that reflects some of the diversity of the members within our organization.

In addition, as an affiliate professor with Regis University, I keep in tune with the pulse and perspective of business and human resources trends across the globe. I also have my IPMA-SCP Certification and certifications from HRCI and SHRM. …

I have also been recognized by my Western Region peers with the Muriel M. Morse Achievement Award. This highest honor from the region is presented to a member of the organization who exemplifies the positive attributes that made Morse memorable as a model and mentor. …

Human resources is going through quite a transformation as we continue to do more with less and incorporate more technology and artificial intelligence into our processes. We continue to need a strong focus on recruitment and retention even as we maintain our care for the people in our organizations. I believe IPMA-HR is in a great position to provide the support we need through these transitions.

When you think about the need for human resources professionals to fully transition into strategic change agents, IPMA-HR can provide the tools members need to develop key skills. In partnership with other professional associations, IPMA-HR can be the change agent that is needed to build the business case with executive leaders of various public sector membership organizations.

Through more strategic alignment with other associations and educational institutions, we can tackle this from an advocacy perspective and as a development project.

Within the realm of formal leadership, I have almost 30 years of leadership experience managing small teams of three and very large divisions … . I have also served on several nonprofit boards, often as chair. But, more importantly, leadership is how you show up when not in a formal capacity. No matter the role, I always seek to interact in a manner with people that authentically creates an interaction where others feel heard, valued and respected. I seek to build relationships and teams in a way that fosters collaboration while also using strategic skills to put ideas into action. I am an open and honest communicator who seeks to ensure everyone has the information they need to make informed decisions and feel part of the process. I lead in a manner that respects the diversity of others, and I am a highly ethical individual who understands the importance of integrity, transparency and standards in nonprofit leadership.

Currently, we are in the middle of managing a major change with the COVID-19 pandemic. As we move forward as a professional association, we all must consider what the new normal will look like. Will people become hesitant to travel? Will people be wary of large gatherings? We have unique access to experts in these areas, and IPMA-HR can be a leader in adapting to the new normal all of us will face, especially regarding how professional associations alter their strategies in the face of this crisis and its aftermath.

We are also seeing many people across the world engage in active protests against racism while advocating for equitable practices and policies. As human resources leaders in our organizations, we have an obligation to lead efforts to build inclusivity and minimize bias while engaging in the difficult work of facilitating conversations to foster systemic change. As a professional organization, we can offer tools to bolster our skills in these areas while also creating safe spaces where we can engage in meaningful dialogue to support each other in this work.

Some may see everything going on in the world right now as an insurmountable challenge. I see this as an opportunity for us to shine the light on public sector human resources excellence. — NF
Police, firefighters, paramedics, nurses, corrections officers, social workers and many others employed by cities, counties and state governments are concerned about safety. So, too, are the people they serve.

Obvious ways to create safer work environments include providing appropriate equipment and issuing clear-cut guidelines. Often-overlooked tools to protect public servants from physical and emotional trauma are gathering, analyzing and disseminating data.

Fire Services Lead the Way

Fire departments have done more than other public agencies to use data to improve employees’ health and safety. The practice has evolved over many years, and “the fire service has a lot to teach other industries,” said Jennifer Taylor, Ph.D., MPH, who directs the Center for Firefighter Injury Research and Safety Trends (FIRST) at Drexel University’s Dornsife School of Public Health.

For example, when David Bernzweig joined the Columbus, Ohio, Division of Fire 25 years ago, he was given a journal in which to manually record exposures to industrial chemicals and other potential carcinogens at fires. Now, he and other Columbus firefighters record on-the-job exposures with a mobile phone app called NFORS that was developed by International Public Safety Data Institute.

Bernzweig’s paper journal remained largely empty. “It’s hard to keep up with that kind of thing,” he recalled. “I didn’t do it, and I don’t know anybody who did.”

Times have changed. Now a battalion chief and the division’s health and safety officer, Bernzweig sees across-the-board compliance with requests to record health risks at each incident response. Identifying individuals who may have been exposed is also easier than ever.

NFORS, short for National Fire Operations Reporting System, can be downloaded by any firefighter in the United States or Canada. It is currently being used by more than 12,000 firefighters at some 2,000 fire departments. A version for police may soon be available. Recently, NFORS facilitated the collection and sharing of information on COVID-19 exposures and the need for personal protective equipment (PPE).

Prior to the pandemic, Columbus firefighters culled data from NFORS to convince the city council to approve attaching hoses to the tailpipes of idling fire trucks to prevent engine exhaust from making living spaces at firehouses more dangerous. A cost of $40,000 to $50,000 per firehouse had led councilmembers to reject the idea for years. “But the conversation changed because of the data, because of the awareness of exposure,” said Bernzweig.

In a similar way, building a comprehensive record of exposures to toxic materials has led to fewer rejections of applications for workers’ compensation and disability benefits due to occupational illnesses such as cancer. Lack of data was often cited as the reason to deny a claim. Additionally, the data is studied by individual fire departments and federal agencies to identify ways to reduce health risks.

Protecting the Protectors

Collecting data on physical and verbal assaults on emergency medical personnel has also become a priority in some jurisdictions. With more than 60 percent of calls to all U.S. fire departments being health-related, EMTs and paramedics often find themselves in threatening situations.

This is one of the reasons FIRST launched its Stress and Violence in Fire-Based EMS Responders (SAVER) system in 2017. SAVER tools help departments track traumatic incidents and their effects on first responders’ mental health.

“We will be measuring mental health impact on a monthly basis,” said Taylor. “What is the impact of extra work? Of stress? Of separation from family? We’re creating space within fire and rescue departments to value data and use it for decision making.”
Barriers to Data Use

The use of data to promote safety is growing across state and local governments. In particular, GPS devices are being used to pinpoint the times and locations of accidents, as well as to indicate where accidents may have been averted.

But barriers exist, especially for public sector human resources departments. A 2018 IPMA-HR benchmarking survey revealed that insufficient funding stood as the most common obstacle to implementing data analytics. Other factors that hamper the successful adoption of data analytics include lack of training and insufficient staff knowledge, lack of access to analytics software and lack of support from leaders.

In addition, local audits often point up weaknesses in data collection and analysis. For example, a 2018 audit of the Department of Utilities for the City of Sacramento, Calif., found that GPS devices in city vehicles indicated employees were exceeding speed limits and potentially creating hazards for themselves and residents.

However, that same audit revealed that 37 percent of the vehicles in the department’s fleet were not being tracked. So, while the city seemed to have actionable safety data, the information was too incomplete to allow managers to develop general rules that might prevent collisions. A report on the audit states, “In our opinion, it is important for management to have complete data in order to make better management decisions.”

The Sacramento utilities department audit report also cites flaws in the data produced by detectors designed to monitor air quality in enclosed areas. Separate software systems for devices from different suppliers sometimes produced measurements that did not match. Additionally, the report notes, as many as 50 detectors had not uploaded data for more than a year. Missing information meant the department had less ability to identify trends in air quality and the levels of gases “that could potentially create hazardous work environments.”

Audits often highlight problems managers know exist but have not fully addressed. That was the case in Durham, N.C., where auditors in 2017 called attention to the city’s safety program being decentralized and relying too little on shared practices and cross-departmental learning. The auditors also noted that in the absence of a citywide standard, employee safety training varied from department to department and insufficient efforts were being made to track and monitor training.

Since then, Durham has worked to ensure each department produces the same types of reports on accidents and injury claims. This allows managers to identify trends, common causes and areas where more training may be needed.

Standardizing data collection and sharing information have been particularly useful for addressing similar risks across multiple departments. For example, public works, water management, landscape services, general services and the parks department all sometimes require employees to haul equipment. When an analysis of the city’s newly standardized data revealed a spate of crashes happening as drivers backed up trailers and haulers, department heads began looking for solutions.

Data Improves Firefighting in Dallas

Using data to build a strong safety culture takes time. At Dallas Fire-Rescue (DFR), multiple elements were put in place over the past eight years.

In 2012, Lauren Johnson, who was then a captain in the department, published a thesis she wrote while completing the Executive Fire Officer Program offered by the National Fire Academy. After noting the absence of a data-oriented culture at DFR, Johnson detailed the benefits other departments had realized by tracking injuries and near-misses.

Department leaders agreed with her conclusion that failing to collect “on-duty injury or near-miss data for analysis and reporting” left them unable to “identify corrective actions to reduce firefighter injury and death.” They also admitted that budget concerns prevented improvements in data collection and analysis. Years passed without action being taken.

When Johnson was appointed deputy chief over safety about three years ago, she was assigned a small data team and given authorization to hire a new data analyst. While data collection remains a work in progress, the efforts of Johnson and her team are already helping the department make decisions about purchasing equipment and locating firehouses to enhance resident and employee safety by increasing the speed with which fire trucks and ambulances get to where they are needed.

DFR has also increased its ability to track the frequency and causes of injuries at fires. “We did research and chose new firefighting gloves, hoods and clothes that offer better protection,” Johnson said. “The department also used data on material and garment performance to support these decisions because the cost of new gear is significant.”

Most recently, according to Johnson, “We’ve been using data quite a bit to describe our city’s experience with COVID.”

Department staff collect data that leaders use to calculate and project the rate at which PPE is being used. “So, we know when we will run out and we can place orders,” Johnson said.

Katherine Barrett and Richard Greene have analyzed and written about state and local management and policy for nearly 30 years. You can find more of their reporting and commentary online at www.greenebarrett.com and follow them @greenebarrett. Their email address is greenebarrett@gmail.com. —N
Determining Salary Adjustment Estimates Amid a Pandemic

Question: We are preparing our salary adjustment estimates for this budget year, and we are unsure of how to include the market data we have collected from purchased surveys and our peer organizations. How should we forecast the impact of COVID-19 on the salary movements?

CompDoctor™: After authorities around the country issued stay-at-home orders, our thoughts immediately flashed back to 2008 and how the Great Recession triggered by the subprime mortgage crisis impacted salary budgets. We learned significant lessons during that time, and the phrase “new normal” was used all over the country. Some adaptations were more successful than others.

Now, during the new new normal of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must learn from the past while keeping in mind that each situation is unique. We must develop the best possible solutions based on what we know in order to maximize overall organizational well-being.

From past experience and a series of WorldatWork Salary Budget Survey reports, we know that

- In 2008–2009, salary structure increases dropped from 2.5 percent to 1.5 percent.
- Approximately half of 2009 survey participants considered freezing pay structures.
- Ninety percent of organizations that froze pay in the year immediately after the 2008 financial crisis were considering normal salary administration practices in 2010.
- Salary budgets grew more slowly in the public sector than in the private sector into 2010, with approximately half of public sector organizations reporting zero-percent salary structure increases.
- It was not until 2013 that the actual increase in salary budgets returned to the pre-2008 average of 3 percent.

In this current situation, we know that

- Public sector organizations are dealing with the need to adjust budgets in response to shifting priorities.
- Public sector organizations are challenged to deal with diminishing revenues from property and sales taxes.
- Civil unrest following the killing of George Floyd has exponentially increased the need for public sector organizations to consider redirecting spending.

Realistically, we really do not know much about the effects of the current situation because it remains fluid and unpredictable. We may even be tempted to ask why interpreting market trend information is relevant at this time.

You, however, have a clear duty as a public servant to provide the best stewardship of public funds. Compensation and benefits expenditures constitute a significant percentage of public sector operating budgets. Making the right decisions in this area will enable your organization to concentrate salary money in strategic and targeted areas.

The Salary Budget for Each Organization Is Unique

As you assess the market data you have collected and formulate a recommendation for the salary budget, keep in mind that your funding streams, local industries, workforce composition, collective bargaining agreements and constituents will inform the outcome. Also take care to write your plan in a way that produces immediate results.

We have learned from experience that organizations that made small adjustments such as freezing pay or salary structures, implementing temporary salary reductions or reducing work hours were able to return to normal salary administration faster than were organizations that failed to respond quickly. We have also seen that such strategies may offer possibilities for certain job families or titles.

Making the right decisions in this area will enable your organization to concentrate salary money in strategic and targeted areas.

You are most likely planning for the January 2021 or July 2021 salary budget. Recognize that the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the protests during May and June will vary in terms of when and how severely they impact different sectors and industries. Without question, declines in local property and sales taxes will impact public organizations, but those may be mitigated by relief and support at the national level. When recommending the salary budget, work closely with your key stakeholders to understand and forecast the financial capability of your organization in view of competing priorities.
Study the Market and Develop Your Plan

Just because there may not currently be any salary structure adjustment or pay increases projected for your organization, it is still important to study the market. A key to compensation planning is gaining a clear understanding of the long-term trends in talent management. For example, when we worked with a municipality that had experienced significant growth to update its list of comparable organizations, we saw the importance of what this meant for comparing salaries.

Along the same lines, you should research beyond what peer organizations are doing to gain a sense of what is happening across the broader market for talent. Private employers in your area may have taken a greater or lesser hit from COVID-19. That reality could change the competitive environment.

Some of the organizations with which you compared yourself in the past may have shifted their focus or reduced their scope. This makes the timing of salary surveys critical. Organizations may have chosen not to participate, or they might provide different responses now than earlier.

Examine the fine print of survey reports to identify participants and confirm the comparability of jobs to gain a better understanding of the market data. The number and types of organizations responding shape the results, and results are likely to change quite a bit next year.

The staffing and workforce decisions that organizations make this year regarding hiring rates, promotions, layoffs and furloughs will determine market salary rates over the second half of 2020. But those numbers will not be available from salary surveys until sometime next year. Additionally, any changes made now will drive market trends for years to come. You need to understand the compensation data from this year and accept them as valid and defensible in order to plan for 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Consider Multiple Approaches

In these uncertain times, it is important to consider multiple approaches to assess the market and to go beyond the same peer group or surveys you used in the past to establish metrics and draw comparisons. Sticking your head in the sand and doing nothing is not an option we recommend. Inaction will only make it more difficult to reach compensation decisions once the current crisis recedes.

In conclusion, remember that while data is important, it tells only part of the story. Organizational leadership needs to know the context surrounding the analysis in order to make fully informed compensation decisions.

The Comp Doctor™ is written by Ronnie Charles, the managing director for public & higher education sectors at Gallagher. For more public sector content like this, visit www.GallagherHRCC.com. If you have a question you would like to see answered by the CompDoctor™, please email ronnie_charles@ajg.com or call (651) 234-0848.
Employee’s Failure to Return to Work Dooms Disability Claim

An employee with breast cancer who did not return to work after taking a leave of absence cannot proceed with her disability claim because she failed to show that she could have worked during the time in question. The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas issued this decision in Lane v. Ball (No. 17-cv-00806) on May 6, 2020.

Mack H. Ball, the judge for Chicot County, Ark., hired Mary Lisa Lane in 2011. Ball’s position is equivalent to county executive or mayor.

Lane is an African American woman. Her most recent position with the county was solid waste coordinator, which required her to work Monday through Friday from 8 am to 4:30 pm. Lane’s main job duties included setting up solid waste accounts in a computer database, billing, dealing with customer complaints and using a geographic information system to confirm addresses. Carrying out this last task required Lane to meet with customers and look at maps together. Lane also served as a floodplain administrator for the county.

In 2016, Lane was diagnosed with breast cancer. On August 22 of that year, her doctor provided documentation stating she would have surgery to remove a cancerous spot on her breast and would not be released to work until August 30. Due to complications, her leave was extended to September 19.

In October, Lane requested Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave retroactive to August 22. Ball granted the request, and Lane was allowed to use all of her available FMLA leave.

Lane was also notified that she would have to provide a fitness to work note from her doctor before returning. Lane’s FMLA leave ran out on Dec. 8, 2016, and she returned to work on December 13. After working through December 26, she never returned to the office.

On Jan. 11, 2017, Lane’s doctor wrote a note to Ball’s office stating that Lane’s second phase of chemotherapy would begin on January 24 and that she would undergo treatments every other week for eight weeks. The doctor explained that Lane would need a flexible work schedule to deal with potential adverse effects from chemotherapy. The note did not explain why Lane was absent from work from Dec. 27, 2016, to Jan. 24, 2017.

On February 8, Lane informed Ball that her treatment plan had been extended, and she requested additional FMLA leave. Ball replied on February 13, informing Lane that her second period of FMLA leave would be effective retroactively from Jan. 1, 2017. Ball also asked Lane to submit FMLA paperwork completed by her medical team by March 1 and to submit periodic reports indicating her status on returning to work. He justified the demand for periodic reports by stating he needed to plan for appropriate staffing.

Lane did not complete or provide FMLA paperwork by March 1. On April 5, Ball sent Lane a notice of termination. He then received FMLA paperwork from Lane’s doctor on April 13.

The late report stated that Lane completed her treatment on March 16 and could return to work. No explanation for why Lane did not return to work on March 16 was provided.

Lane subsequently sued Ball and the county, alleging race discrimination and disability discrimination. The court subsequently granted the defendants’ motion for summary judgment, holding that it was undisputed that Lane did not return to work after her FMLA leave was exhausted and did not obtain approval for additional unpaid leave.

The court further explained that regular and reliable attendance was a necessary element of Lane’s job because she needed to meet with customers in person. When she could not be in the office, she could not perform the essential functions of her job. Lane admitted this in depositions. Since her disability rendered her unable to work and to perform essential functions, the court reasoned, it was not discriminatory for the county to terminate her employment. As a result, Lane could not proceed with her claims.

62-Year-Old Claims Company Targeted Him When Starting Layoffs Due to COVID-19

Kanyuk v. Shearman & Sterling LLP (No. 20-cv-03567) is an age discrimination lawsuit filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. The plaintiff alleges that the defendant company falsely accused him of unethical behavior in order to lay him off as it reduced payroll during the COVID-19 pandemic. The case was filed on May 7, 2020.

Mark Kanyuk, 62, worked for Sherman & Sterling for 25 years. As global manager of facilities and audiovisual infrastructure, Kanyuk was one of approximately 80 employees and consultants in his department, and he was the second oldest among those working in the department.

In his suit, Kanyuk states that the vast majority of employees in his department are 30-50 years old. He also states that he never received a negative performance review and earned his most recent promotion in June 2019. In that position, he managed information technology in 24 of the company’s offices around the world.

According to Kanyuk, the company informed employees that it needed to conduct layoffs due to a decline in business during the COVID-19 pandemic. He alleges that the company chose to start by laying off its oldest and most-committed employees, which is a group that included him.

In order to cover up its true intent, Kanyuk alleges, the company informed...
him that he had been accused of unethical behavior and taking kickbacks from vendors. He was terminated the same day he was told this.

Kanyuk further claims that the company did not inform him what unethical conduct he had allegedly engaged in or who reported it. Nor did the company give him an opportunity to defend himself against the accusations. Upon terminating him, the company offered Kanyuk only two weeks of severance after 25 years of work.

Kanyuk claims that the company discriminated against him in violation of the federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the New York State Human Rights Law and the New York City Human Rights Law. In support of his age discrimination claims, Kanyuk alleges that his former direct supervisor, who is about two decades his junior, referred to him as an “old man” and that his coworkers joked about his age. Additionally, Kanyuk states that younger employees were spared from being laid off by being given the options to voluntarily take leave or reduce their hours.

The company denied the allegations, calling them all without merit. A spokesperson for Sherman & Sterling told reporters that as of May 7, the company had not made any layoffs due to COVID-19 or any other reason. Instead, the spokesperson said, “Kanyuk was terminated for cause due to substantial evidence of inappropriate conduct in the performance of his job.”

A former operations manager who had been demoted to maintenance worker, is being allowed to pursue allegations that the reason she was demoted was because she is a woman. The department argues that falsifying timecards was the sole reason for the demotion.

Melinda Pearson had worked for the City of Augusta, Ga., for nearly 33 years before being terminated after not returning from leave she took after a work-related back injury was exacerbated. The flare-up of symptoms from ruptured spinal disks occurred while she was working as a maintenance worker after being demoted from her longtime position as an operations manager.

The issue that led to her demotion arose from the use of comp time. When Pearson first began working for the city, she was allowed to bank hours she worked in excess of 40 hours during a pay week and then use those banked hours as paid time off at a later date. The city used comp time to keep overtime costs low.

Until December 2011, the city had only a general policy of restricting comp time to non-exempt employees. Technically, Pearson lost her eligibility to bank and take comp time when she became a salaried manager in 1996. Despite this, department executives and human resources personnel continued allowing exempt employees to use comp time off the books for 15 more years.

Under the informal system, exempt employees submitted timecards showing that they had worked a full day even when they were actually taking comp time. As a result, neither HR nor the payroll department had records of exempt employees accruing and using comp time.

Throughout her tenure as an operations manager, Pearson complained that she was required to do manual labor even though that was not in her job description and was not expected of other male managers. In 2004, she suffered a dislocated shoulder and ruptured several disks in her back while unloading a truck and was out of work for six months.

Pearson also complained that male managers received extra pay for taking on additional work while she did not and that all of the male managers were assigned offices while she largely had to work out of her truck. Additionally, she was required to wear a uniform while male managers could wear what they wanted to work.

In 2008, Pearson contracted methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), which necessitated 29 surgeries between 2008 and 2011. After each surgery, she took a week or more off from work.

When a MRSA flare occurred in July 2011, Pearson took FMLA leave and stayed out of work until December. During this period, she called an administrative assistant who handled timecards for the Recreation & Parks Department and asked to use some of her comp time to extend the paid portion of her leave. She was told she could not use comp time until she returned.

It was also in December 2011 that the city issued a new employee handbook in which it explicitly stated that exempt employees could not accrue or use comp time. This immediately became a problem for Pearson who returned to work to find herself placed under a new manager named Dennis Stroud.

Pearson and Stroud’s interactions became so tense that, following what she described as “one particularly horrible conversation” in late December 2011, Pearson told Stroud she was going to file a formal complaint against him. She also requested time off to cool down.

Pearson had already used all available forms of paid leave, however, and had no more FMLA leave. She asked to use comp time to cover four days, and the HR director approved this. The timecard which Pearson later submitted that showed full days of work for the period she was actually out on comp time and cooling off led to her demotion.
An investigation conducted by the city’s HR Department concluded that Pearson’s use of comp time was improper. The demotion to maintenance worker took effect on May 2, 2012, and it came with a 50 percent reduction in pay.

Being forced to do manual labor reinjured Pearson’s back, which forced her onto medical leave yet again. This time, she remained out of work for more than eight months until February 2013.

Since Pearson had not been medically cleared to return to work and had exhausted all her available leave, the city chose that month to terminate her employment. Pearson sued, alleging claims under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, FMLA and the Due Process and Equal Protection clauses of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The district court dismissed Pearson’s claims, and she appealed. The Eleventh Circuit held that Pearson could proceed on her Title VII sex discrimination claims because she presented enough information showing that comparable male colleagues used comp time without being punished. The appellate court also held that Pearson provided evidence that there was an unofficial department policy of allowing exempt employees to use comp time and that at least one male comparator similarly “falsified” their timecards but was not penalized.

Benjamin v. JBS was brought by the son of a Pennsylvania beef processing plant employee who died after contracting COVID-19. The lawsuit alleges that JBS as a corporation and the management of its Souderton, Pa., plant individually acted negligently and recklessly when they failed to take necessary safety precautions to protect workers from infection by the novel coronavirus. Compensation is being sought for Benjamin’s death, physical and emotional suffering while dying, and lost wages and future earnings.

The decedent, Enoch Benjamin, died of respiratory failure caused by COVID-19 on April 3, 2020. His last day at the Souderton plant was March 27, when he went home early after developing “cough-like symptoms.” According to the lawsuit, JBS and plant management ignored worker safety guidelines CDC and OSHA issued during March 2020. The filing quotes the referenced documents on providing masks and other pieces of personal protective equipment (PPE), as well as encouraging sick employees to stay home.

The lawsuit specifically alleges that despite such guidance, JBS did not obtain masks or PPE for workers until April 2 and did not mandate use of the protective gear until April 14. In addition, the lawsuit asserts, Souderton employees continued reporting for work despite being sick because they feared losing their jobs. It is further alleged that JBS “placed profits over safety” as workers stood only a few feet apart while on the production line and were forced to stand within inches of each other to be heard over the noise of the machines.

After the plant where Benjamin worked saw its first positive COVID-19 case, according to the lawsuit, management allowed only those team members who had been in direct contact with the affected individual to take off time from work. JBS also did not require workers who were experiencing symptoms that could have indicated a coronavirus infection to report their illness to their supervisor. Nor were ill employees required to quarantine at home.

In stating why the lawsuit was filed, the estate writes that “Benjamin’s death was the predictable and preventable result of JBS Defendants’ failures to consider the safety of their workers.” The estate also alleges that JBS “knew, or in the exercise of a reasonable degree of care, should have known that if OSHA and CDC guidance were not followed, workers would become infected with and could succumb to COVID-19.”

The estate is suing JBS for negligence for, among other things, ignoring the risk of COVID-19 infections at the plant and federal guidance, failing to provide workers with PPE, ignoring infected employees and those who were showing symptoms, failing to close the Souderton plant when workers were suffering from COVID-19, failing to properly sanitize or disinfect the plant, and failing to perform temperature checks on workers.

Additional stated grounds for the lawsuit are fraudulent and intentional misrepresentation due to the company and management’s knowledge that employees were infected and making statements to workers that there was no or low risk of infection to workers during their shifts.

Estate of Union Steward Files Wrongful Death Suit Against Meat Processor After the Man Died From COVID-19 Allegedly Contracted at Work

Filed in the Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas on May 7, 2020,
# IPMA-HR Welcomes Its New Members

The Association looks forward to serving and connecting these individuals who joined during May 2020.

## New Individual Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>City/Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tricia Cobey</td>
<td>Manteca, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly Curry</td>
<td>Mountain Home, Idaho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Duckworth</td>
<td>Salt Lake City, Utah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trish Holliday, IPMA-CE</td>
<td>Nashville, Tenn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray Hudgins</td>
<td>Henrico, Va.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JoAnn Kilpatrick</td>
<td>Nashville, Tenn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renee Kobza</td>
<td>Naples, Fla.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candice McIntyre</td>
<td>Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betsy Cunningham</td>
<td>University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashleigh Anderson Camba</td>
<td>IPMA-CP, Human Resources Technician, City of Santa Ana, Santa Ana, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Dumouchel</td>
<td>Eureka, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmela Espiritu</td>
<td>City of Los Angeles Fire, La Crescenta, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francisco Cartagena</td>
<td>IPMA-CP, Human Resources Technician, City of Gaithersburg, Gaithersburg, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason Cummings</td>
<td>IPMA-CP, Human Resources Associate, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, Charleston, W.Va.</td>
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## Certification Corner

**Congratulations to these newly certified individuals!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>City/Position</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shahen Akelyan</td>
<td>IPMA-SCP, Assistant Deputy Superintendent of Buildings II, City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, Glendale, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JoAnn Kilpatrick</td>
<td>IPMA-CP, Interim Department Services Director, City of Eureka, Eureka, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renee Kobza</td>
<td>IPMA-SCP, Department Chief Accountant III, City of Los Angeles Fire Department, Los Angeles, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Jones</td>
<td>IPMA-CP, Human Resources Generalist, City of Murfreesboro, Manchester, Tenn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahram Kharaghani</td>
<td>IPMA-SCP, Acting Assistant General Manager, City of Los Angeles Sanitation and Environment, Los Angeles, Calif.</td>
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| Betsy Cunningham      | IPMA-SCP, HR Consultant, Municipal technical Advisory Service Library, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tenn. |
| Alex Jones            | IPMA-CP, Human Resources Generalist, City of Murfreesboro, Manchester, Tenn.   |
| Shahram Kharaghani    | IPMA-SCP, Acting Assistant General Manager, City of Los Angeles Sanitation and Environment, Los Angeles, Calif. |
| Michal Loving         | IPMA-SCP, HR Business Partner, Port of Long Beach, Long Beach, Calif.         |
| Kathleen Markham      | IPMA-SCP, Sr. HR Analyst, Pinal County, Florence, Ariz.                        |
| April Martinez        | IPMA-SCP, Human Resources Analyst, Emergence Health Network, El Paso, Texas   |
| Arturo Martinez       | IPMA-SCP, Risk Manager, City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, Calif.              |

| Agnetta Palacios      | IPMA-CP, Benefits Specialist, Fairfax County Department of Human Resources, Fairfax, Va. |
| Isaura Suarez         | IPMA-CP, Return to Work Coordinator, County of Orange, Santa Ana, Calif.         |
| Stephanie Thomas      | IPMA-SCP, HR Practitioner, Mayor’s Office, City of Baltimore, Catonsville, Md.   |

**The Association looks forward to serving and connecting these newly certified individuals.**
Check [www.ipma-hr.org/events](http://www.ipma-hr.org/events) for updates on conferences and meetings. Online courses will commence as scheduled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Dates</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>July 7-Sept. 29</td>
<td>HR Foundations: A Road Map for Managers Online Course</td>
<td><a href="http://on.ipma-hr.org/x37">on.ipma-hr.org/x37</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 20-Nov. 30</td>
<td>Public Sector HR Essentials – Session 3 Online Course</td>
<td><a href="http://on.ipma-hr.org/cur">on.ipma-hr.org/cur</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 4-Oct. 11</td>
<td>Developing Competencies for HR Success – Session 3 Online Course</td>
<td><a href="http://on.ipma-hr.org/04o">on.ipma-hr.org/04o</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 18-22, 2021</td>
<td>IPMA-HR Annual Conference Indianapolis, Ind.</td>
<td><a href="http://on.ipma-hr.org/b7s">on.ipma-hr.org/b7s</a></td>
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**Webinars Waiting for You**

Original IPMA-HR webinars and virtual roundtables slowed a little during May and June, but a large library of critical information for responding to the coronavirus crisis now lives on our website, just waiting for you to click and view. As a new normal settles into place, learn valuable lessons and gain insights from:

- June 24, 2020 IPMA-HR Virtual Roundtable: Public Sector HR Organizations Handling Coronavirus in the Workplace
- 7 Ways to Maximize Employee Potential Through Coaching and Feedback (Sponsored by NEOGOV)
- Virtual Roundtable: Public Safety Hiring During a Pandemic
- Building World-Class Employee Engagement
- May 5, 2020 IPMA-HR Virtual Roundtable: Plans to Reopen
- April 16, 2020 IPMA-HR Virtual Roundtable: Handling Coronavirus in the Workplace
- The Brain Science of Shared Adversity and Resilience: Exploring the New Opportunity for Connection and Leadership
- How to Thrive and Flourish When Working in Isolation (From Home)
- April 2, 2020 IPMA-HR Virtual Roundtable: Handling Coronavirus in the Workplace
- In Harm’s Way: Suicide Prevention in Law Enforcement

Each session is archived at [learning.ipma-hr.org/webinars](http://learning.ipma-hr.org/webinars). Your membership is all you need to access the webinars for free.

Remember, too, that completing webinars earns you points toward recertifying as an IPMA-CP or IPMA-SCP. —
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IPMA-HR’s Wastewater Operator-in-Training and Wastewater Treatment First-line Supervisor tests are key to finding those with the abilities and qualities to safeguard the public’s health and the health of our water supplies.
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