

**CITY OF NEW ORLEANS**  
**GREAT PLACE TO WORK INITIATIVE**  
***Words from Employees Calling for Improvements***

This document provides representative samples of the hundreds of comments and recommendations we received from employees as part of our 2012 Human Resources and Civil Service System Survey. The City values the employee feedback and incorporated it in determining the final proposal. It is the employees who experience the Civil Service System and the Human Resources practices of the City first hand. The comments from employees here are their own and should not be interpreted to represent the collective view of the City.

**GENERAL COMMENTS ON CIVIL SERVICE FROM EMPLOYEES**

**“Document HR and hiring rules and make them accessible to all rather than that knowledge being held only by gatekeepers HR & CS. Put more hiring control in the hands of depts. who know their professions better than the centralized civil service dept does. It seems that civil service is too byzantine to be tweaked -- it should be scrapped and built from the ground up, maintaining its primary purpose of protecting employees from politics. HR policies should be modernized to attract and retain a modern, professional, and diverse workforce.”**

**“1. A \*highly\* qualified applicant was rejected by Civil Service as "does not meet minimum qualifications."**

**2. A rock star employee is being paid dramatically below market value & cannot be promoted or given a raise - despite stellar education, education, and performance. Civil Service's processes are Byzantine - or better - Kafka-esque. They are the quintessential bureaucracy which has inexplicable processes which are hidden from view. They make the process of hiring competent people so arduous that qualified candidates give up and go away - and managers get so discouraged about trying to hire competent qualified people that they give up on about idea of ever being able to improve their departments. The current Civil Service Rules are crushing progress with their processes. The City will never improve without radical change.”**

**“My personal interactions with civil service employees have been positive. As with most things in this city, it is the system and processes that are broken, not the people.”**

**“STREAMLINE. Applicants to City jobs should not have to wait for months to get responses. City departments should not have to wait years to get specific registers open, working with insufficient staff in the meantime. If nothing else, there should be a regularly scheduled register / application process that could be advertised. Potential employees and current employees hoping for promotion could then at least have something resembling a timeline, other than the current shoulder shrug available now. CONSISTENCY: Requests / questions to HR cannot**

**be answered quickly or correctly, because often, they themselves get different answers from different people / departments. CLARIFICATION: A question to HR about registers and ranking and test periods was answered with a quote directly from Civil Service, which was interpreted three different ways by three different people. Look over the existing material with fresh eyes and make sure it is plainly and clearly written. BETTER TRAINING FOR BETTER JOB PERFORMANCE: A current employee called Civil Service multiple times for one question about an upcoming test for promotion. Nobody was able to answer a basic question, and repeated requests for someone to return his call with an answer went ignored. After two weeks, he just happened to get someone different who was able to answer his question immediately. If City Hall employees have such a hard time with a system that they work for, I can't imagine how frustrating it is for the public to try and get an answer."**

"[I recommend] as much flexibility as possible in hiring, firing, and pay."

"The system is antiquated, outdated, and almost impossibly unworkable. Simple paperwork takes weeks and months to be processed. One cannot access even basic information through any electronic means (where is the employee intranet? access to pay history?) I know of at least one employee that was forced to take unpaid leave for their wedding because of the antiquated rules."

"Trying to take retirement and return to work part-time in the same position (health reasons), I got confusing and conflicting information from Civil Service and my supervisors. I came back at an entrance pay rate and reduced CS rank."

"As far as I know about the Civil Service System and the Human Resource Department in the City of New Orleans, the system should be revamped."

"Process is cumbersome and long."

"The Civil Service Department and senior leadership are stoic at best and have pre-conceived notions and make decisions and recommendations on hire, etc., based on those biases"

"I never get the same answer from different employees. No one knows anything more than what they are responsible for. People are making decisions without knowing what they are doing. People cannot get on a register because the people who put you on a register do not even know what qualifies you to get on a register. Civil Service is so out dated. They need to update policies and pay rates to keep up with the times. I don't even know where the HR department is. I could never get any answers on my questions about the benefits. It took me 5 months to get hired from the time I first put in my application with Civil Service."

"The entire entity needs an absolute, top-to-bottom, soup-to-nuts overhaul -- it is abominable. Employees need to be able to self-service for pay and benefits, and access paystubs and history online. Employees should be encouraged to contribute to 457 plans through a modest match (even in these tough fiscal times, the state of Louisiana

manages to make partial match contributions). Salary ranges for some jobs are almost insultingly low (sub-poverty level pay from a 21st century American city, really?!), and entrance requirements are often arbitrarily designed and unfriendly to younger professionals. There seems to be almost zero room for performance to be rewarded, either through pay, through advancement opportunities, or through simple recognition. Communication with employees is almost non-existent, and I wouldn't know where to begin to get even the most basic information regarding my employment with the city. I regularly work hours beyond what I'm permitted to record, and receive no compensation for the additional time, either in pay or in the ability to earn flexible leave. The initial freeze on ability to use pay is absurd. Even within the challenging domain of public service, the experience of working for the City of New Orleans is uniquely unfulfilling, unrewarding, and an overall awful experience. It is disgraceful and unacceptable and a discredit to our great City.”

“1.) Provide informational class/es and training to new hires classified and unclassified. Jefferson Parish has an excellent new hire process and holds a one day course for all new hires to educate them on everything from insurance to sexual harassment claims. They have strong HR department and Civil Service system that supports employees and are advocates for the employees. 2.) Require that departments have policies and procedures to provide to new hires on their first day and training to explain it all. Most new hires are "thrown to the wolves" and must fend for themselves because the department lacks any written or followed procedure. 3.) Require that all departments have written and accessible Employee Rules in place and provide their departmental rules to employee. Ex.) dress code. 4.) Allow the hiring managers to have more discretion for classified employees instead of having a stringent matrix that determines how candidates are ranked. 5.) the interview process is way too long and cumbersome. Even if a candidate has interviewed for a position, if he has applied for more than one position he must come in and interview for each one (if qualified) even if the interviewers are the same people with the same questions to ask him. 6.) We have a fiduciary responsibility to the citizens and businesses of Orleans Parish to maximize their tax dollars and eliminate wasteful government spending. Therefore, a.) Positions that are not necessary should be eliminated. b.) Employees who under-achieve, who are negligent, who are fraudulent, and who are under-achievers, and just plain bad employees should be eliminated through a serious and regular review process that is adhered to. c.) Potential employees should not be shuffled around in the hiring process because the great candidates will move on to other opportunities. Rules that require Civil Service to adhere to slow and arduous procedures such as mailing notices to potential candidates after taking WEEKS to rank them are antiquated and should be rewritten. d.) Productive and happy city employees are the key to a successful city. They provide better service to citizens. They think on their feet and problem solve instead of being part of the problem. e.) Accountability- Every employee should be a contributing employee who has a strong track record evidenced by actual work product and achievements. Shuffling papers or surfing the internet are not contributing to the system. Employees should be able to factually state why they are essential to the City of New Orleans and how they improve the lives of our residents and visitors.”

## **I. BETTER HIRING**

**“Department heads should have more say-so when it comes to hiring. If a position is created, it should serve a purpose and be filled in a timely manner.”**

**“The hiring procedures are way too slow to effectively refill positions that are absolutely required. You can wait for weeks/months to find out if the position is yours. Meanwhile, the job is not being performed and the Customer and other employees lose out on efficient work.”**

“It seems the hiring process takes months. This severely lessens the chance of making good hires.”

“At times, by the time approval to hire is granted, the best applicant has accepted a position elsewhere.”

“The hiring process is slow and unwieldy. After Katrina, no one could get promoted for up to 2 years, but we were hiring from a register made before Katrina--half the people were gone. We've gradually added back pre-Katrina staff, but haven't rewarded newer staff.”

“Hiring packets being lost or misplaced with personal information and social security numbers on them. Personally my hiring packet was submitted 3 times before it made it thru the proper channels. (Where are the other 2 packets with my personal information on it?)”

“It took forever to get on the register.”

**...regarding the age and quality of lists:**

**“The register system is antiquated and inefficient. We have had numerous openings that we can't address until an already exhausted register expires.”**

“Hiring delayed due to having to go through old names on the register.”

**... regarding falsely objective rankings on the written examinations or rating of education and experience, and the need to eliminate the “Rule of Three”:**

**“Civil Service Department ratings of candidates that translate into the three bands on the civil service register are too simplistic. I understand the need to try to quantify the evaluation, but that quantification results in a register where people of hugely differing skill sets, levels of experience, and quality of education are all rated equally. This results in the hiring manager being cornered into hiring someone he or she knows is not right for the position, simply because the register says that person is "qualified" and the hiring manager can only reject two candidates. The best candidates often can't or won't accept a position because the pay is not competitive, especially if that candidate was banded in band 1 with the minimum education requirements but has an outstanding work history and demonstrable technical skills gained through experience. These candidates--**

**those who meet minimum educational requirements but who clearly stand above the crowd for their experience--can only be offered in the lower end of the pay band. Conversely, a candidate who meets the maximum educational requirements, but got that education through questionable or second- or third-tier institutions, and who may have experience that is broadly determined by the civil service department to qualify as applicable experience but really is not very good, can be paid from the top of the salary range. Without considering the hiring manager's interview of the candidate (including review of concrete job products and input from professional references), the system does not work in the best interests of the City or the public because we can't attract good talent."**

**"We lost three candidates because the civil service process was so drawn out, and because Civil Service ranked them poorly on the salary matrix due to lack of advanced degree (even though professionals in their field rarely have advanced degrees). It seemed that Civil Service is out of touch with the various specialties of professionals our dept needs."**

"The people in civil service are not always qualified to determine a person's experience for certain jobs. For instance when rating scientific jobs as in the n opd crime lab how can a civil service person know the value of ones experience besides what they see on paper. Weighing online training verses in class training, or how many continuing education credits a person has, real experience vs. experience that has been made to look important. How does a person with 6 years on the job place in the same band for a promotion as a person with 15? Civil service has to evaluate some of it current banding and hiring practices to ensure they are promoting qualified people."

"I know of someone who took a test and when they got there results back from Civil service the person asked them who determined how many bonus points was given in each section. They were told that the person rating the test. The person than said if that is the case and there is no max number than the raters can manipulate the test. The person said all the guy from Civil Service said was I don't think they would do that."

"I took a civil service test and pointed out errors on the test and I was told that I was right. I was told by a civil service employee that they could not change it, because it would change the results of everyone else's test."

"I had an open position and we received applications from many candidates, including a former employee. She was in Band 4 - too low in the bands to hire her. However, since had held the same job prior she was already trained and knew the job. Rather than hiring someone inexperienced needing hours of training (but stunningly ranked higher than the returning employee) I left the position vacant. And it is still vacant and has now been removed from the Budget because I was not able to hire."

"Due to the current practice of hiring directly from the register, it became almost impossible to hire a potential applicant most qualified for the job because I had to first consider others with high test scores. The test is not always a true reflection of the ability to do the work."

“Not qualifying to take the examination for a position that they are obviously qualified for.”

“The hiring process for classified employees is nonsensical. People are hired based on matrixes and there is little discretion given for hiring manager/s to make decisions. It is long and tedious, people who interview for jobs have to wait several months to over a year to be hired. Instead of having civil service fill these positions with qualified candidates the positions are then filled by contractors who cost the city way more than an actual employee would cost who has an actual interest in the position and long term aspirations.”

“Getting a new job title approved is a 2-year process with no rules. CS loves JDs and hates PhD's, which it regards as useless.”

“We are encouraged to use the Master's level interns from the City's best universities. When finding a stellar candidate from this group to hire, it takes an act of congress to get them hired past a list of applicants who have been on file for years!”

“The qualification exam also seemed essentially random, with little relation to my actual job. Finally, in talking with co-workers in the same job classification, there appears to be no rhyme or reason to the acceptance or rejection of experience and education as relevant. People with very similar backgrounds received vastly different levels of credit for their credentials.”

“Civil Service refused to count years of my relevant work experience when I applied for my current job because I worked while in graduate school. This prevented me from applying for a higher tiered position. Civil Service also failed to acknowledge my Ph.D. saying it was not a meaningful degree; all of the work I put in after obtaining my masters was essentially "lost" when it came to my job application with Civil Service.”

“A friend applied for a position. He was an MD in another country and has an MHA from Tulane. He was not applying to use his MD. He was not permitted to take the civil service exam because his Bachelor's degree was from outside the United States.”

“A very qualified employee was mis-labeled for the position she had been performing for years, and had to take a Civil Service test before being reinstated to the correct position.”

“An employee cannot be considered for a different classification because of their current classification. Even though, the employee meets the qualifications, except for grade/step.”

“When applying to work for the City, I began applying to the classified service. I ended up being hired as classified, but because the register was closing prior to the conferring of my master's degree (by 2 months) I had to start in a position that paid \$10,000 less than the one I actually ended up being qualified for when I came to work. Also, as I've hired several employees, the interview process gave me an opportunity to assess computer skills of applicants (something entirely unaddressed by Civil Service) which

was highly pertinent to their ability to perform job functions, but I've also wasted significant time doing this myself. Applicant computer skills should be assessed as part of the application process.”

“When going through the hiring process or even current evaluations past experiences (other than formal education) were not taken into account what-so-ever. A person with past federal security/law enforcement experience and a "Secret" clearance obtained from the federal government as well as a LONG list of training, awards and certifications gets NO consideration of these past experiences in hiring nor current promotional opportunities.”

“Hiring is too slow and does not allow the hiring managers to interpret the applicant’s abilities.”

“I believe that the current system of band ranking employees on a register makes it difficult to select the best candidate for the position. From having interviewing about 30 people on a register before making my selection, I was lucky enough to get the person that was in rank band 1. What if he/she wasn't? I would be forced to hire someone from the higher rank bands even though I knew that they wouldn't be a good fit. For the record, I feel very strongly that Civil Service is in place to protect the classified employee. Employees should have a right to appeal and be governed by rules and regulations. Job security is why I have remained with the City for so long. If I didn't want job stability I would have opted for an unclassified position or better yet I would have went into the private industry. The fact of the matter is that I perform my job to the best of my abilities but how much more difficult can you make my job when I do not have the proper staff, at times buy my own supplies and use my personal car to run city errands. I can only speak for my department when I say - "All I really see is a bunch of dedicated employees that have to hear "Do more with less, do more with less!!!"

“Testing is not secure, test takers are in contact with test givers. Subject matter experts are related to or in close contact with members taking test.”

“Recently, a highly qualified candidate applied for an open position in my department. The Civil Service determined, however, that the person was not qualified, even though this person had more than a decade of exactly the kind of experience we know will be of great benefit in our department. As it turned out, Civil Service didn't even look at the person's resume, only at the application, which in no way conveyed the depth of this person's relevant knowledge and experience. The arbitrary and capricious nature of the decision, and the absence of any room for discussion on the matter, absolutely took my breath away. Truly, one of the most frustrating experiences I've ever had as a supervisor. There is no human resources department--just people who process paperwork (if you're lucky).”

“In the hiring process, I know of highly qualified individuals with a proven track record of meeting and exceeding excellence not being entertained for a position. I understand a cultural fit may be necessary to any organization; however, I certainly believe hiring the best, brightest and most efficient and diligent person is paramount. I do believe there is still room for those within the system to use it to manipulate the process to see that

friends or close associates present as the best candidate and ensuring them an inside track on job opportunities. Recruiting seems limited and more outreach to candidates branding the City as a top seeker for great talent would be an excellent benefit for all. Recruiting advertising through local placement agencies, career centers, public access channel ads, or even a rotating banner on the City's main page website advertising current vacancies needing to be filled, etc.”

“If an internal employee is applying for another position and are more qualified and experienced, then the hiring agent shouldn’t have to go through the entire register to get people to not accept the job before they can just hire the more experienced internal employee in a lower band.”

“Skilled potential employee road blocked by Civil Service procedures - department managers and head all wanted to hire that person, understood their specific skill set; Civil Service using non-technical personnel/codes said no - City of NO lost great potential future hire that dept wanted but Civil Service didn't recognized. Skill sets are not black and white; Civil Service evaluations don't account for that, nor does the expertise of the department in setting the appropriate salary.”

“Employees hired should be based on their skills, knowledge and abilities as needed by the hiring department. Every person that has a degree and passes a preset test may not have the KSAs for the job duties that will be performed. The current system should be used as a pool to attract candidates (the ranking is fine). However, a formal interview process should be the final determining factor in hiring and placement. This limits turnover and the additional resources needed to train a person that has no subject matter background/experience.”

“Civil Service needs a better evaluation system for determining whether a person is qualified or not for a position.”

“Simplify the civil service ratings system to simply provide a list of the "qualified" applicants. Let the department choose the best qualified from that list.”

“1.) Provide informational class/es and training to new hires classified and unclassified. Jefferson Parish has an excellent new hire process and holds a one day course for all new hires to educate them on everything from insurance to sexual harassment claims. They have strong HR department and Civil Service system that supports employees and are advocates for the employees. 2.) Require that departments have policies and procedures to provide to new hires on their first day and training to explain it all. Most new hires are "thrown to the wolves" and must fend for themselves because the department lacks any written or followed procedure. 3.) Require that all departments have written and accessible Employee Rules in place and provide their departmental rules to employee. Ex.) dress code. 4.) Allow the hiring managers to have more discretion for classified employees instead of having a stringent matrix that determines how candidates are ranked. 5.) the interview process is way too long and cumbersome. Even if a candidate has interviewed for a position, if he has applied for more than one position he must come in and interview for each one (if qualified) even if the interviewers are the same people with the same questions to ask him. 6.) We have a fiduciary

responsibility to the citizens and businesses of Orleans Parish to maximize their tax dollars and eliminate wasteful government spending. Therefore, a.) Positions that are not necessary should be eliminated. b.) Employees who under-achieve, who are negligent, who are fraudulent, and who are under-achievers, and just plain bad employees should be eliminated through a serious and regular review process that is adhered to. c.) Potential employees should not be shuffled around in the hiring process because the great candidates will move on to other opportunities. Rules that require Civil Service to adhere to slow and arduous procedures such as mailing notices to potential candidates after taking WEEKS to rank them are antiquated and should be rewritten. d.) Productive and happy city employees are the key to a successful city. They provide better service to citizens. They think on their feet and problem solve instead of being part of the problem. e.) Accountability- Every employee should be a contributing employee who has a strong track record evidenced by actual work product and achievements. Shuffling papers or surfing the internet are not contributing to the system. Employees should be able to factually state why they are essential to the City of New Orleans and how they improve the lives of our residents and visitors.”

**...regarding the need for managers to be more involved in setting minimum qualifications and examination, provided that the Commission can independently override any disagreements between the Department of Civil Service and the hiring managers:**

**“When seeking qualified candidates for the department you are forced by the ranking band system of civil service which does not accurately assess the candidate KSA [knowledge, skills and abilities] for duties performed thus we selected an applicant who was really poor in the job function and thus had a turnover of the position which was not filled thereafter.”**

**“My director was not able to hire a person that was a really good candidate for the job because of an experience "after degree" problem that was brought to her attention. Even though that person had plenty experience before her degree.”**

“Based upon my personal experiences, at least one Civil Service entrance examination (Professional Series), needs to be completely revised. Some of the test questions were/are dated and do not accurately measure an individual's specialized skill level. A number of the test questions were too narrowly focused and did not allow for a generalized evaluation of an individual's knowledge base. In this series, specific questions should test an individual's ability to identify and utilize techniques and resources that would normally be available and utilized in the work environment, in performance of the stated job function.”

“For instance, the testing process for current city positions is bogus. You take a test and then are placed into a Band and then you have to wait until they reached that particular band for an interview. Some registers have 300 plus people on them and therefore anyone in a lower band does not have a shot of being pulled from the register. I would like to see this process eliminated and a new process set into place.”

“I applied for a position in the Inspector General's Office. I have the necessary degree and experience. I spoke to numerous people in my department, and the experience

listed on the position was related to the experience I was gaining in my department. However upon applying for the position, I was sent a letter saying I was disqualified because I didn't have the necessary experience. When I went upstairs to Civil Service to speak to someone about why I wasn't qualified, I was told that it was because I work on the first floor, which makes no sense whatsoever. Then, I asked what kind of jobs on a resume they are looking for that would give someone the required experience, but the person could not give me an answer. So, I left Civil Service being told that the reason that I am not qualified is because I work on the first floor of City Hall. The problem I have is how can they tell me that I am not qualified when they don't even know what jobs I need on my resume? I wouldn't be able to get a law degree without knowing how to inspect, evaluate, and make reports, which is what attorneys must know to perform their job, and which I already do on my job at City Hall that I have worked for over a year making a mere \$30,000 a year. I am under the impression that Civil Service evaluated me based on what they THINK I do in my position rather than what I actually do in my department. I have specific duties and responsibilities given to me that are not given to the rest of my coworkers that makes me stand out above the others. City Hall will lose my expertise if they cannot figure out how to adequately place its own employees.”

**...regarding the need for the Civil Service Department to broadly use the classifications they already have and establish meaningful performance standards to act most efficiently under a City environment of constrained resources:**

**“During the six years I worked at City Hall, I was unable to hire technical personnel due to lack of current technical job descriptions and positions. New hires had to be shoehorned into totally different job descriptions in order to be paid a competitive salary. When I requested that positions be added and job descriptions created, I was instructed by Civil Service to do a "job study" of the requested changes and new positions, a process that literally took years to complete. I was never so disgusted with bureaucracy as I was/am with Civil Service in the City of New Orleans.”**

**“I know of a critical employee who needed additional staff to assist in maintaining our core systems but was unable to get accurately vetted candidates from Civil Service for 18 months. The position did not exist and it took too long to create the position. Once created, Civil Service staff did not have the qualifications to understand what made a viable potential candidate and sent many clearly unqualified individuals to the department for interview. This placed the City at great risk having no backup to a key resource and placed an undue burden on this key resource. This individual had to work 65+ hours every week to keep things running.”**

## **II. BETTER CAREERS**

**“Several of our employees are paid far below what they would be paid for comparable education and experience by another employer. Employees have expressed disinterest in high-quality work performance because monetary compensation is based on longevity, rather than work product.”**

**“I have been in the position to receive two promotions and have watched a colleague receive a promotion. In both cases, the promotions that were requested by our department took 9 months to over a year to receive. The current classifications and salaries for personnel are outdated and do not coincide with the needs of the department. Suggestions from an expert for tiered salary levels for a position in the department were ignored ensuring that we were unable to hire qualified personnel to fill the position.”**

“High performing employees obtain Bachelor and Master Degrees and are unable to be promoted and compensated in their current positions and other positions because of Civil Service processes and band rankings on test. The current Civil Service process hinders advancement of current employees based on testing procedures.”

“I work with an MBA who is being paid \$18,500 a year. She is highly qualified but we can't find a way to promote her. It would be easier to promote her if she quit and were re-hired. Additionally, most of your categories of employees are outdated and don't actually reflect the current world of skills, qualifications, training or remuneration.”

“Civil Service regulations work to give job security (good) but not much incentive to do excellent work since many cannot rise above their current level due to lack of formal education, degrees or training (bad).”

“The best employee is not always the longest tenured employee, thereby beating out someone just because of seniority.”

“I have been running my division for almost 2 years. I have not been compensated fairly, to date for the service that I am providing to the City. I have taken classes and tests that would allow me the opportunity to be paid fairly for the duties I am required to perform, to no avail. I get various excuses about how there is really nothing anyone can do to promote me into these positions but there are people from outside the system that are hired to do the job and their gone shortly after. My question is, if I'm qualified and in house why can I not be considered for position? Why bring in someone who does not know the city system and I still have to do the work.”

“If an internal employee is applying for another position and are more qualified and experienced, then the hiring agent shouldn't have to go through the entire register to get people to not accept the job before they can just hire the more experienced internal employee in a lower band.”

“I lost three key employees due to the civil service list and they resigned to work for other company.”

“In trying to apply for a promotion, I was alternately told I did & did not need to fill out a personal history form. The form itself states that it only needs to be filed out once. Because of the runaround, it took me an additional month to apply.”

“Young professionals are leaving our department because they are not getting any promotional step increase in their division. My co-worker and i are experiencing the

same thing, however we have no opportunity for transfer, we are manager i and have been eligible to become manager ii since hurricane Katrina, with no luck!"

"I have been waiting for more than 5 years for a promotional exam. Meanwhile they continue to promote from a long expired list of sub-par candidates when there are far more qualified personnel who are waiting for a test that should have been given years ago."

"Longevity should not be a factor in raises, etc. Performance and productivity should be the major factor for promotions and raises. It is also a travesty that you can only go up to the next level... in 2 years. If merit is shown within those two years, or productivity exceeds expectations, you should be able to be rewarded based on that. I find that some people have limited or non-existent duties and others are overwhelmed with their work load, and the compensation does not necessarily reflect accurately. In this system you are not rewarded by performance, it seems you are rewarded the longer you sit at your desk. I was hired from the private sector, due to personal reasons I needed a "steady job", prior to this I had my own business. Basically, by taking this job I have incurred a 35% drop in income. I am currently looking for other employment. It is sad. I actually really like my job but do not feel I am being compensated fairly for the amount of work I accomplish. This system does NOT promote or compensate fairly or does it create incentive for employees to work harder."

"Promotions should be based on employee job quality.....not longevity....."

"Clear org chart for every department Reporting relationships - not based on who has been there the longest but those employees that show promise. Goals and timelines to be established annually and be in line with Administration goals (in spite of your feelings about the current Mayor) Goals for unclassified employees as well and annual reviews pay for performance not for longevity. Hire well initially, hiring the best on paper who is unable to communicate in a professional setting Provide training - Excel, memo writing PPT, Customer service training, standardize phone etiquette, have zero tolerance for bad behavior."

"Current employees should be required to take tests for promotions but successful completion of the test should be enough to allow for a promotion, not where one falls in the test band. Departments should be able to hire employees who are quality and meet their specific requirements, not the ones Civil Service say one must hire. Employees working in current positions should have priority with promotions, if management is pleased with their performance, because their overall knowledge of the total operation is a strength and minimizes the length of training necessary for a new hire. The current process forces departments to hire individuals who rank high on tests but not necessarily the best qualified person for the job."

### **III. BETTER PAY**

**"Allow raises within the pay grades. A system will have to be created to ensure this is done fairly and efficiently. Smaller departments with less money available than larger departments will have to be give the same potential as richer departments."**

"I am a hard worker. I handle a very important task for [a public safety department]. It is sad that my title and job classification is based on what is available at the time. Civilians are often overlooked and never appreciated. Salaries should be controlled by supervisors not civil service, not by people who do not know what my actual job skillset requires. I have to leave my office for half days in order to take civil service classes where the training guides haven't been updated in nearly 30 years."

"... the fact that employees have to wait 5 years to get a 2.5% increase, is a bad experience for everyone. Not everyone is able to find a promotable position and it's a shame, the only other way to have an increase, is to be promoted to another position."

"18-months were spent trying to create a position in order to give an existing employee a raise."

"Extensive revision of the Civil Service Rules. Departments must ... be able to reward good employees without jumping through 10000 hoops."

"Promote based on competency and skill, encourage further training and improvement coursework. But bottom line, reward those who WORK, and work WELL."

"When an employee is doing a job out of their classification, they should receive adequate compensation for doing the work, until the position is filled."

"No ability to recognize outstanding performers with incentive [pay]"

"Understanding AHRIS and the rules is the key to moving documents through the process. With this understanding, most experiences will be good. However, if New Orleans wants to keep top performers, pay must be tied to performance."

"Reform the pay scale, narrowing the gap between certain private and public-sector positions. Allow annual ratings-based bonuses and pay increases."

"You should be able to have pay increases, and promotions in place. You should be rewarded for performance. Performance appraisals should reflect exactly how you work and not everyone should get a 5.0 performance."

"Give annual step increases in pay for staff who perform well."

#### **IV. BETTER PROCESSES**

**"There should be an implementation of a merit raise system. Employees evaluations should be a factor in granting merit raises."**

**"The yearly evaluation form is useless. It is generic and fails to properly reflect the individual's knowledge, skills and performance. The form needs to be reworked with the form reflecting their current job description; i.e. police officer, firefighter, clerk, engineer."**

**“I feel the CS system should adapted to [have] ... yearly pay incentives for evaluation [because] this would cause a behavior change to the current culture. Also, I think there should be a way to conduct a mid-year review so that employees can know where they have deficiencies, this will help them in a true sense, the evaluation should also allow for peer as well as outside department input, there are many who conduct duties are aid selflessly daily which may not be apparent to their direct supervisor these individual should have the opportunity to give some insight during the evaluation period.”**

“Though each department may be run and policies established by the head- there should be some consistency across the departments that necessitates honest employee performance reviews annually and the opportunity to advance or receive FAIR raises and compensation for good work, constructive criticism with a reevaluation within an allotted time frame, and dismissal for repeat offenders.”

“I never received a performance plan with standards (e.g. outstanding, satisfactory, unacceptable) describing expectations for my position”

“The ratings system seems systematically based on the past years, there is no apparent method of evaluating yearly or even a mid-year recap, there are no goals so nothing to evaluate against. And frankly folks seem too scared to rate their peers badly, as they have to hang out with them at lunch!”

“During yearly evaluations several areas that could have been commented on and pertained to my job directly were left blank. It seemed the only areas marked were the basic requirement areas.”

“Reform the evaluation process so that employees who exceed expectations can get merit raises, and those that don't perform can either be fired or demoted, or take a cut in pay. Reform the process to create incentives to do well, instead of the current system that rewards longevity...Require managers and agency heads to conduct true and accurate performance evaluations. Hold those managers/directors/agency heads accountable if evaluations are not accurate. The system will continue to perpetuate itself if agency heads are not held accountable.”

“Someone's transfer was delayed because Civil Service didn't complete the paperwork.”

“[We need to be] more concerned about the well-being of the City and its employees than strict adherence to an arbitrary rule book.”

“I think the employee's should receive increases that are partly tied into their performance evaluations. Bonus plans should be put in place for positions in which the employee's performance can be measured. It would be nice to have an employee appreciation day, every so often. Maybe provide lunch for all the employee's and possibly give out awards to employee's that have excelled in their position. There are many things that can be done to booster moral, and not all of them cost money.”

"Multiple civilian employees with the same issue... They are "good employees" for a year, until they are off probation. Once they were permanent, they began arriving late for work, or NOT AT ALL, and did not notify a supervisor. They had behavior problems, resulting in fights with each other, and became sick leave abusers. When the supervisors would write them up for the incident, they would file a complaint on the supervisor. Truly, this box is NOT big enough to write all the issues about the Civil Service System."

## V. BETTER TRAINING

**"Update civil service classes, classes should be online. Actually hold people accountable for their productivity. Job performance = pay raise, just because someone has been here the same amount of time I've been here doesn't mean they should be making the same amount of money I am."**

**"Long time clerical employees do not have the skills to use today's technology. If I rate them too low, I could lose the position due to budget cuts. Must provide training that matches the needed skills. Must allow new hire when someone leaves or retires."**

"Offer free on-site training on topics such as Microsoft Excel, and announce training in a daily e-mail (to also include job announcements and other news and info) to all employees, and on an Intranet site."

"My experiences with the civil service training courses has been horrendous. At best, these classes are barely palatable. At worst, they are offensively useless and instructed by people who seem barely able to construct a complete sentence. The idea that anyone who has already been hired by city hall is gaining anything of value from these courses is wholly unbelievable."

"Personally, I was never given an opportunity to attend training to learn any of the operating systems that I use on a daily basis (BuySpeed, CCIOL- \*which i don't even know what the actual program is called\*). When I did ask questions about the specifics of a program, I was ALWAYS told either, "I don't know" or "We used to have classes, but don't anymore." This slows my work down, but also doesn't allow me any opportunity to learn additional functions that are clearly possible via these operating systems."

"Introduction to City Government class should occur within first month of employment, not six to nine months after hiring."

"I had civil service training courses. I wouldn't consider it good or bad, but some of the courses was informative."

"Civil Service should: 1) Limit its training offerings to things that are specific to city government (e.g., purchasing, police & fire training, emergency dispatch), and work with local educational institutions to provide other educational opportunities (e.g., basic literacy, grammar and composition, computer skills, etc.) 2) Learn more about what employees actually do in their day-to-day jobs, so that employees can be accurately

classified and compensated. 3) Provide formal training for appointees on Civil Service rules and procedures.”

“Make more training available to those that want it instead of those that are just favorites of supervisors.”

“Provide adequate training at all levels, from new employee to manager/supervisor. Require all newly hired managers to take training in sexual harassment, compliance with federal laws such as ADA, FMLA, etc., evaluating employee performance, creating measurable work performance standards.”

“Training should be limited to those areas that are strictly governmental in nature, whereas basic clerical and equipment training can be provided through working with local schools. This would free up Civil Service to handle other matters. Also I think that it would be beneficial for Civil Service to have a greater familiarity with the day to day operations of the departments so that they could understand actual job requirements and skill sets.”