


# HALIFAX

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**Item No. 1**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**November 17, 2020**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original Signed  
Caroline Blair-Smith, Director, Human Resources

Original Signed by   
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** October 5, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Annual Workforce Report 2019/20

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## **INFORMATION REPORT**

### **ORIGIN**

The Executive Standing Committee passed a motion on January 22, 2018 to direct staff to provide an annual workforce report to the Executive Standing Committee following fiscal year end which would include information on workforce demographics and trends, staffing and workforce planning, absenteeism, grievance activity by issue/union group as well as an update on HRM's *People Plan* goals including, Leadership, Talent, Culture & Performance, Diversity & Inclusion, Safe Workplaces & Healthy Workforce. This year's report is being provided directly to Halifax Regional Council due to COVID-19.

### **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, SNS 2008, c. 39*

34 (1) The Chief Administrative Officer is the head of the administrative branch of the government of the Municipality and is responsible to the Council for the proper administration of the affairs of the Municipality in accordance with the by-laws of the Municipality and the policies adopted by the Council.

## **BACKGROUND**

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) spans approximately 5,500 square kilometres, comprised of diverse urban, suburban and rural communities. As the largest municipal government in Atlantic Canada, Halifax Regional Municipality employs over 3,400 permanent staff to provide our citizens with a wide range of services.

## **DISCUSSION**

The HRM Annual Workforce Report provides a high-level overview of the HRM workforce at the close of the fiscal year. The annual workforce data provides information on how key workforce initiatives are progressing and informs the strategic direction for Human Resources in the upcoming fiscal period.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications to this report.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

N/A

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Annual Workforce Report Attachment 2019/20

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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# **Halifax Regional Municipality**

## **Annual Workforce Report 2019/20**

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## Overview

The intent of the report is to provide Council with a ‘state of the union’ of the workforce that delivers HRM’s services to its citizens. This report will look at data reflective of our workforce demographics as well as activities associated with the ‘lifecycle’ of our workforce from recruiting to departing.

It is a key objective that HRM’s workforce is both reflective of the communities it serves and is inclusive. Where possible the information presented in the report will focus on indicators which reflect HRMs progress towards making HRM’s workforce more diverse and inclusive.

## Demographics and Distribution

Trend in the demographics of our workforce over the past five years.

Workforce Demographics	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of Permanent Employees	3,183	3,232	3,334	3,404	3,464
Average Employee Age	46.81	45.74	46.67	46.03	45.84
Average Employee Years of Service	13.64	11.67	12.3	11.85	11.45
Percentage of Male/Female*	70/30	71/29	71/29	71/29	71/29

\*This is based on information as recorded in SAP upon hire. SAP only offers male or female options.

### 2019/20 Demographics by Employee Group

Union Groups	Total Full Time Employees	Male	Female	Average Age	Average Years of Service
ATU 508	816	88.6%	11.4%	48.06	8.22
CUPE 108	262	89.7%	10.3%	48.50	13.49
HRPA	653	68.3%	31.7%	42.59	13.34
IAFF 268	475	92.4%	7.6%	43.82	13.88
Non-Union	698	51.4%	48.6%	47.13	11.33
NSUPE 13	560	42.9%	57.1%	45.28	11.09
<b>HRM</b>	<b>3,464</b>	<b>70.5%</b>	<b>29.5%</b>	<b>45.84</b>	<b>11.45</b>

Our demographics trend indicates that the overall average age and years of service continues to decrease as our workforce moves through it's lifecycle and retiring employees are replaced with new younger employees.

The trend also indicates that the ratio of female to male identifying employees remains static and less than the overall female to male ratio in the NS working population. As part of our efforts to identify and reduce barriers to female workers joining our workforce, we are conducting a Pay Equity Analysis of all pay structures at HRM. This analysis will use the principles from the Ontario and a Pay Gap analysis on non-union salaries to determine if there is a pay gap between male and female non-union employees and, if so, what are the causes. From this analysis we can determine if there are any structural changes required to address any pay barriers to females joining our workforce.

**Workforce Distribution**

	Permanent Full Time and Permanent Part Time	Other
2015/16	3,183	1,064
2016/17	3,232	1,400
2017/18	3,334	1,621
2018/19	3,404	1,501
2019/20	3,464	1,645

- The total number permanent full-time and part-time staff is defined as the total gross headcount of active employees as of March 31, 2020.
- Total other includes temporary part-time, recreation programmers, student and seasonal. It does not include volunteer firefighters, Halifax Regional Library staff, Halifax Regional Council, inactive employees (those on a leave of absence), and other temporary part-time employees within the Halifax Forum and Sackville Sports Stadium or any staff with Agencies, Boards or Commissions.

# Recruitment

Recruitment	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of External Hires	639	779	691	684	758
Number of candidates from Employment Equity groups			3,539	5,587	10,337
Percentage hired from Employment Equity groups			6.73%	3.92%	3.86%

We have continued to improve our ability to track our progress in recruiting candidates from Employment Equity groups and since June 2017, candidates have had the ability to select multiple employment equity categories or choose not to identify. The question itself was mandatory and the majority of candidates choose “choose not to identify”. In April 2019, the Self-identification process was changed to add additional categories and candidates were given the ability to select to self-identify (participate) or not. This created a data set that was unique to what HRM had previously and also allowed candidates to select subcategories with multiple selections. The number represented is a distinct count of candidates as there can be multiple records per candidate.

Our efforts to increase recruitment of candidates from Employment Equity groups this year include:

**Employment Equity Program Implementation**

Key deliverables in the implementation of Employment Equity Program for the Municipality have been identified, and a Steering Committee formed to guide the implementation. Deliverables for this multi-year implementation are being reviewed by the Steering Committee, and key performance indicators to measure success are being defined. Details of the implementation plan will be presented to Council at a future date.

**Hiring & Community Engagement Strategy**

The Hiring and Community Engagement Strategy seeks to build trust and establish relationships with employment equity groups and other underrepresented groups over the next two years. Three key focus areas have been identified - Community Outreach and Engagement, Job Fairs and Employment Partnerships, Employer Branding, Communications and Social Media. We are currently determining the most appropriate means to engage the communities in the context of Covid-19.

# Departures

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Percentage Employee Turnover*	6.41	6.70	5.04	5.70	5.51
Number Employee Retirements	134	120	98	106	113

\*Employee Turnover is based on the total number of employee resignations and retirements divided by the number of permanent and permanent part-time employees.

Turnover continues to be low and in line with Public Sector standard. Retirements are relatively stable reflecting a regular refresh of the workforce.

# Other Workforce Data

## Absenteeism

The continuing COVID-19 situation presents challenges to addressing absenteeism in the workplace. Employees who are feeling unwell will need to take additional sick time until they can be tested or are through a quarantine period. In addition, medical certification is more difficult to obtain as in person appointments continue to be discouraged.

The global pandemic is also changing how sick leave usage is perceived. It is now clearer than ever that it is everyone’s best interests that employees who are unwell should stay at home and not risk spreading their illness in the workplace. This perspective challenges the way we have traditionally reported on absenteeism in the workplace. By focusing on the ups and downs of the overall usage we may have inadvertently put a negative connotation on usage which is reflective of employees who are acting in the best interests of the workplace by not attending work while sick.

As result, we will not be reporting on the overall absenteeism numbers and will shift our focus in the future to looking at patterns of sick leave usage that may be negatively impacting productivity. It is hoped that this approach may yield more effective methods for dealing with absenteeism that impacts productivity.

## Grievance Detail

Over the past five years, the average number of grievances filled annually is 64. Most grievances are resolved internally, without requiring third party involvement.



Grievances Filed	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
ATU Local 508	14	12	17	21	19
CUPE Local 108	25	40	33	14	17
CUPE Local 4814	0	0	2	1	1
HRPA	9	8	11	2	11
IAFF Local 268	21	6	2	4	0
NSUPE Local 13	2	2	9	9	9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>57</b>
Grievances Resolved					
Resolved through internal grievance process	59	51	40	41	37
Resolved with third party (mediation, arbitration)	5	3	0	1	2

A grievance filed in one fiscal year may still be active at the start of the following year. At March 31, 2020, there were 78 total active grievances.

## Conclusion

Human Resources collects key data to help inform our strategic initiatives in support of the organization. It is noteworthy that over the past five years:

- Demographics are not changing significantly year over year.
  - Some minor movement in age as older employees retire and younger people enter the workforce.
  - Male to female ratio is not changing. Removing Fire & Police, historically male dominated professions, has little impact. Ratio is still 68.15% male to 31.85% female.
- The number of candidates choosing to self-identify from employee groups is increasing but percentage hired is not.
- Turnover is not currently a problem but needs to be monitored.
- Our perspective on sick leave usage has shifted with the global pandemic.

In addition to the programs specifically noted above, Human Resources has several initiatives in progress with the goal of creating a workplace that is safe and welcoming for all including:

### Flex Work Program

Halifax Flex Work Program is a strategic business initiative responding to demographic, economic, and technological changes in the workplace, giving employees the ability to apply for flexible work arrangements and locations.

## **Safe Workplace**

Implementation of recommendations from the human resources policy and program external review, to support the provision of a safe, healthy, diverse, inclusive and harassment-free environment where all persons are treated with dignity and respect.

With the full support and participation of leaders at every level of the organization, we anticipate that these initiatives will further enable hiring, succession planning, and retention practices that support the development of a more diverse and inclusive workforce representative of the community we serve.

## Definition of Terms

- **FTE (Full Time Equivalent)**  
Used for budget purposes to quantify the number of positions approved by the Executive Management Team and Council. The FTE count records only permanent positions (both full-time and part-time). One FTE is equal to one annual work year as defined by the applicable Collective Agreement and/or Non-Union Terms of Employment.
- **Employee Headcount**  
The actual number of employees (people not positions) employed at HRM at a specific point in time.
- **Permanent Employee**  
An employee who has been hired in a position on a permanent basis without a predetermined time limit.
- **Temporary Employee**  
A temporary employee means an employee who is hired (a) for up to eighteen (18) continuous months in any one temporary position, or (b) for the period for which an employee is absent from her/his permanent position where the Employer has chosen to cover off that permanent position for a period.
- **Seasonal Employee**  
An employee who is hired in a position designated to perform duties on a seasonal basis. The employee is hired with a predetermined termination date.
- **Student Employee**  
“Student” is a person who is engaged in a recognized work/study program at a school or university whose course of study requires or permits the student to participate in study related work programs as an integral part of the certificate, degree or diploma, co-op students, students working in seasonal jobs, and students working in jobs where at least some of the funding is obtained from outside agencies.