

## Human Resources



The Human Resources (HR) Department plays a pivotal role in supporting our organization's human capital, ensuring employee satisfaction, and developing and implementing strategic initiatives that contribute to the overall success of our organization. We aim to optimize employee potential to deliver the County's mission and goals. Led by a team of passionate and knowledgeable professionals, we will continue, in partnership with our leaders, to foster a workforce that is engaged and committed to achieving results. The proposed 2025 Budget reflects our commitment to optimizing our HR services and aligning them with the County's strategic goals. The following document outlines the key components of our budget request, providing transparency and justifications for the proposed allocations.

## Level of Service Statement

The HR department is dedicated to the provision of high-quality, equitable and efficient services to all County of Essex employees, including those related to the full lifecycle of employment and the administration of six collective agreements. As a service department, HR strives to provide solutions and expertise in support of all stakeholders in a balanced manner.

## Opportunities and Challenges for 2025

### Talent Acquisition and Retention

In 2025, the HR department plans to ensure the County continues to attract and retain passionate and skilled individuals who bring diverse perspectives, experiences and backgrounds. We intend to review current recruitment and onboarding processes with a view to improving the candidate experience, ensuring equity at all stages of the process and work collaboratively with other County departments to enhance EDIB (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging) initiatives as well as employee engagement and retention programs. We will also continue to review employee benefit offerings and compensation to remain competitive in the job market.

### Employee Development and Training

Promoting professional growth through training programs, leadership development initiatives and career development opportunities remains a priority in 2025. By investing in the skills and capabilities of our employees, we aim to support the long-term success of the organization.

### Employee Well-Being

The HR department is committed to fostering a positive and inclusive workplace culture by proactively addressing employee well-being, promoting fair and transparent communication between management and staff and offering wellness programs, mental health support and promoting a healthy work-life balance. Engaging with employees on leaves of absence regularly with the goal of early and safe return to work will also remain a top priority for the team.

## Performance Management

Enhancing current performance management processes will be a focus in 2025. Incorporating regular feedback and coaching and equipping leaders with the tools they need to feel confident having difficult conversations will be a priority, as will ensuring that performance appraisals align with organizational goals.

## Workforce and Succession Planning

In 2025, the HR department plans to work closely with department heads to develop clear workforce plans to anticipate and meet future staffing needs, including succession planning and adapting to changing work models (e.g., remote work or hybrid work).

## Policy Review and Development

Policy review is a significant priority heading into 2025. The HR department intends to review and update existing policies with a view to ensuring all policies are in alignment with County practices and legislative requirements. Part of this review will also include developing new policies to ensure clarity and consistency for all staff.

## Technology and Data Analytics

With the anticipated go-live of the County's new HRIS software in mid-2025, the HR department plans to leverage technology and data analytics to make more data-driven decisions in HR. This includes using HR analytics for better recruitment, talent management and performance evaluation.

## Employee Feedback and Voice

The HR department intends to continue to implement and improve upon mechanisms for employees to provide feedback and have a voice in decision-making processes.

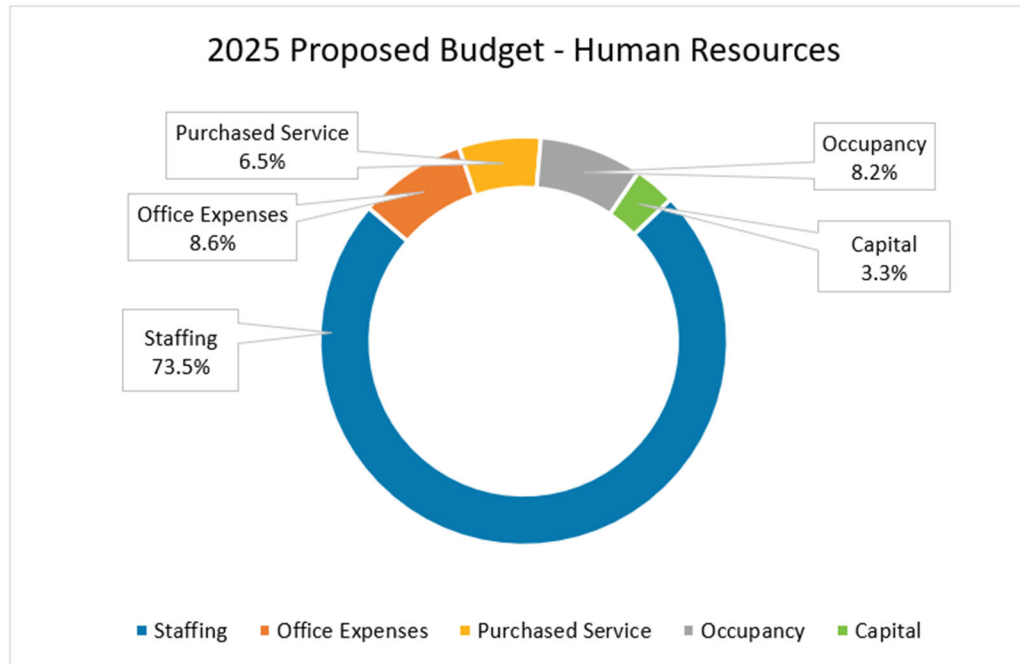
## Health and Safety

As the County continues to grow, the HR department will continue to prioritize enhancing workplace health and safety by strengthening compliance with evolving health and safety regulations, ensuring that all municipal workplaces meet or exceed safety standards, and will continue to promote training programs to address emerging risks, foster a culture of safety and empower employees to identify and mitigate hazards proactively.

## Proposed 2025 Budget Plan

The proposed 2025 Budget represents a strategic investment in our most valuable asset – our employees. It contributes to the organization’s growth and success by supporting our strategic plan to allocate resources effectively and efficiently. The individuals that make up an organization play a vital role in its success and this budget is designed to ensure that our HR department can continue to deliver strategic initiatives that continue to optimize the potential of each employee.

The graph below illustrates the key areas of proposed 2025 Budget spending in Human Resources:



Overall, the proposed 2025 Budget for Human Resources, net of recoveries, totals \$1,234,620 (an increase of \$309,280 (33.4%) over the 2024 Budget of \$925,340).

## Alignment with Strategic Plan Initiatives

### Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation

The HR department will leverage the new HRIS system and will work to streamline current processes in order to adopt data-driven decision-making, enhance efficiency and optimize resource allocation.

### Being an Employer with Impact

The HR team plans to enhance employee acquisition, engagement and retention by implementing a multi-faceted approach that focuses on a supportive, inclusive, and growth-oriented work environment.

### Supporting Dynamic and Thriving Communities Across the County

The HR department will promote community engagement by encouraging volunteering, and actively supporting employee and community engagement programs and events.

### Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

The HR team will work collaboratively with other departments to prioritize cultural competency training for staff including understanding Indigenous histories, and will support the recognition of Indigenous observances and land acknowledgements.