



Administrative Report

To: Warden MacDonald and Members of Essex County Council

From: Gary Filiatrault, Human Resources Business Partner

Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2025

Subject: Human Resources Annual Service Report 2024

Report #: 2025-0507-HR-R01-GFBB

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide County Council with a data-driven overview of Human Resources (HR) performance to support strategic decision-making. By analyzing key indicators such as attrition rates, recruitment and retention outcomes, claims statistics, and health and safety data, the report offers insights that inform workforce planning and policy development. It serves as a tool to evaluate progress toward the County's strategic goals, including building organizational resilience, enhancing employee experience, and delivering effective, accountable public service.

Background

Human Resources Services play a vital role in supporting the County of Essex's vision for organizational excellence and public sector leadership, as outlined in the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. With responsibilities spanning recruitment, retention, compensation, employee engagement, health and safety, and labour relations, HR supports the County's ability to attract, develop, and retain a high-performing workforce. This report presents key workforce metrics and trends, including staffing demographics, employment dynamics, workplace safety, and labour relations, to provide context for ongoing and future HR initiatives aligned with strategic objectives.

Discussion

The County of Essex's workforce is diverse, experienced, and central to the delivery of quality public service. A review of current staffing demographics provides important context for understanding both the strengths of the organization and the planning required to sustain it. As of 2024, the County employed a total of 805 staff, with 530 in full-time positions and 275 in part-time roles. Employees are represented across several union groups, as

detailed in **Appendix A**, each contributing uniquely to service delivery. The average age and length of service – 42 and 10, respectively – reflect a seasoned workforce, while also highlighting the importance of succession planning and continued professional development.

As part of the County's Strategic Goal of **Working as Team Essex County**, demographic tracking is being modernized through the full implementation of a new Human Resource Information System (HRIS). This system will support more effective workforce planning and decision-making across departments. Additional activities, such as preparing and presenting this report and our team's annual strategic planning session, help guide the conversation about potential programs and strategic initiatives that the team should undertake.

Our workforce continues to evolve, and so do the challenges and opportunities associated with recruitment and retention. Year-over-year attrition data from 2022 to 2024 provide insight into where turnover is occurring and is presented in **Appendix B**. These insights support targeted strategies for workforce stabilization. In 2024, HR facilitated 138 job postings, receiving a total of 8,248 applications – 7,572 external and 676 internal. These numbers highlight the County's ability to attract external talent while promoting growth from within. Retention rates at the 2 (82%), 5 (61%), and 10 (62%) year milestones further reinforce workforce stability, allowing for targeted improvements to onboarding, engagement, and career development strategies.

Supporting the Strategic Goal of **Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence**, HR, in collaboration with Administration, is developing a recruitment strategy and a comprehensive employee development program, including onboarding, development and succession planning. The framework for these programs is targeted for completion in 2025.

In addition to attracting and retaining talent, the County continues to invest in developing its workforce. A key tool in this effort is the tuition reimbursement program, which supports employees pursuing further education and training aligned with their roles and career paths. In 2024, 46 applications were approved under the program, reflecting strong interest in professional development and the County's ongoing commitment to building internal capacity and leadership across departments.

Labour relations activity supports stability and collaboration throughout the organization. In 2024, 3 collective agreements were successfully ratified. Looking ahead, 2 agreements are scheduled for negotiation in 2025 and 3 in 2026. The ongoing partnership development with CUPE, ONA and Teamsters continued with 44 grievances filed and 19 resolved. This further illustrates the County's commitment to addressing issues constructively and maintaining strong working relationships with these groups and the employees they represent.

Occupational Health and Safety is critical to ensuring the well-being of County employees and minimizing potential risks. Ensuring compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) is a top priority, and we achieve this through regular policy updates (15 in 2024), training and education, emergency drills, and other proactive measures, fully outlined in **Appendix C**, that help maintain a safe work environment.

The highlighted training efforts, such as Health and Safety Awareness Training and Health and Safety for Leaders, demonstrate our commitment to equipping team members with the knowledge needed to work safely. Additionally, Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) training and other specialized programs ensure that both employers and employees collaborate effectively to maintain a safe workplace.

Looking ahead, we will continue to explore opportunities to enhance training, complete policy updates, and offer tailored courses to address identified and potential risks. These initiatives will not only support ongoing compliance with the OHSA, but will also contribute to our **Strategic Goals of Working as Team Essex County** and **Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence**.

Injury claims management and absenteeism monitoring are key components of a responsive and supportive workplace. During the reporting period, 428 claims were managed, with 387 resolved or closed. The County also tracked the percentage of sick time taken, using this information to inform early intervention efforts and guide support programs where needed. In alignment with **Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence**, we will continue to address wellness and attendance-related issues.

Each of the data points tells a part of the broader HR story – one of a department actively engaged in sustaining a healthy, safe, and service-ready workforce. Together, they reflect how HR continues to evolve and respond to

workforce trends, while remaining aligned with the County's operational needs and long-term strategic direction.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report, as it provides key HR analytics for Council's awareness. Any financial considerations related to HR services are managed within the approved annual County budget.

Consultations

N/A

Strategic Plan Alignment

Working as Team Essex County	Growing as Leaders in Public Service Excellence	Building a Regional Powerhouse
<input type="checkbox"/> Scaling Sustainable Services through Innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focusing on "Team Essex County" for Results <input type="checkbox"/> Advocating for Essex County's Fair Share	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being an Employer with Impact <input type="checkbox"/> A Government Working for the People <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promoting Transparency and Awareness	<input type="checkbox"/> Providing Reliable Infrastructure for Partners <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Dynamic and Thriving Communities Across the County <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonizing Action for Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Advancing Truth and Reconciliation

Recommendation

That Essex County Council receive report number 2025-0507-HR-R01-GF, Human Resources Annual Service Report 2024 as information.

Approvals

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Filiatrault

Gary Filiatrault, Human Resources Business Partner

Concurred with,

Kyla Pritiko

Kyla Pritiko, Director, Human Resources

Concurred with,

Sandra Zwiers

Sandra Zwiers, MAcc, CPA, CA, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix	Title
A	Staffing Composition by Employment Type and Union Group
B	Attrition Data (2022 – 2024)
C	Health and Safety Activities Summary (2024)