



May 14, 2019

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Board of Supervisors**

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*"The mission of the Los Angeles County Health Agency is to improve health and wellness across Los Angeles County through effective, integrated, comprehensive, culturally appropriate services, programs, and policies that promote healthy people living in healthy communities."*

TO: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Fred Leaf  
Interim Director, Health Agency

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SUBJECT: **HEALTH AGENCY QUARTERLY UPDATE**

On August 11, 2015, the Board of Supervisors (Board) approved the establishment of the Los Angeles County Health Agency (Health Agency) to integrate services and activities related to the eight strategic areas across the Departments of Health Services (DHS), Mental Health (DMH) and Public Health (DPH). The Board established a quarterly item on the Board Agenda to report on progress made by the Health Agency. The Health Agency's last report was submitted to the Board on March 19, 2019.

The Health Agency Departments have been working to establish the key initiatives under each Revised Strategic Priority. This report focuses on the workplans, metrics and accomplishments for Priority IV-Implement Just Culture. The remaining Strategic Priorities will be addressed in future Health Agency Reports to the Board.

*Progress on the Health Agency's Revised Strategic Priorities*

In the last Health Agency Report to the Board on March 19, 2019, we provided the workplan and suggested metrics for:

- Priority I-Facilitate Access to Integrated Health Services
- Priority II-Maximize Clinical Resources
- Priority III-Enhance Health Equity and Reduce Health Disparities among Vulnerable Populations.



For Priority IV, the Health Agency Departments have collaboratively worked with their Labor Union Partners to document the progress made to date with implementing Just Culture Agency-wide and identifying suggested metrics and next steps to continue deepening the level of implementation across the departments. It is important to note that the metrics may be modified as the work moves forward on each priority.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The next Health Agency Update to the Board will focus on the remaining Priorities which are:

- V-Improve Administrative and Operational Effectiveness and Efficiencies
- VI-Respond to Emerging Threats
- VII-Engage and Pursue Business Partnerships with the Bioscience Community

As the Health Agency evolves, we will continue to work with staff, union partners, consumers, community stakeholders and your offices to move our priorities forward. If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

FL:CRG:JES:BF  
CT:rj

Attachment

c: Chief Executive Office  
County Counsel  
Executive Office, Board of Supervisor  
Department of Health Services  
Department of Mental Health  
Department of Public Health

## Health Agency Update (May 2019)

### Strategic Priority IV – Implement Just Culture

*IV.1 Vigorously implement Just Culture training, policies and practices in partnership with labor, under the Labor Management Transformation Council (LMTC) structure.*

The Health Agency (Departments of Health Services (DHS), Mental Health (DMH) and Public Health (DPH)) and their respective Labor Union partners (SEIU, AFSCME, UAPD, and Teamsters) are committed to building, maintaining and supporting a Just Culture. A Just Culture is one in which accountability is fairly balanced between systems of organization and the workforce members. A Just Culture environment will encourage and empower members to improve the quality of care and service delivery by the Health Agency (Agency).

#### History of Just Culture at the Health Agency:

Creation of a Just Culture is an agency-wide initiative. To successfully achieve building and sustaining a Just Culture work environment, it is important to bring awareness, knowledge and practical application skills to workforce members about a workplace environment that:

1. Acknowledges human error as an inevitable product of human activity.
2. Works to prevent undesired and unintended outcomes by evaluating such events in an objective, thorough, and impartial manner to define system and human contributions, and responding to them in a way that balances system and individual accountability while avoiding inappropriate blame.
3. Incorporates fairness and balanced accountability into daily work activities to prevent undesired and unintended outcomes.
4. Empowers workforce members to recognize and communicate about system characteristics and human behaviors predictably associated with unintended outcomes.

Since 2010 Just Culture has been a policy at DHS. However, actual understanding and application of Just Culture principles was limited. In 2015, DHS began working with the Labor-Management Transformation Council (LMTC) on a “re-boot” of Just Culture with the intent of improving uptake and application of Just Culture principles and ensuring long-term culture change. When the Agency was formed both DPH and DMH joined the LMTC and it was agreed that the creation of a Just Culture was essential to delivering high quality, safe, and reliable care. It was subsequently identified as the LMTC’s highest priority activity.

#### Strategies Implemented to Support Just Culture

##### ***Collaboration Among Three Departments and Labor Partners***

- A “Just Culture Committee” of the LMTC was formed. In this Committee, the Departments

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worked with the labor partners to revise the existing DHS policy and to create a “guide” (also known as “the algorithm”) and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list, which were adopted by the Agency and its three Departments in 2017. The policy describes the desired culture and requires that response to adverse events be based on careful assessment of the incident and the behavioral choices made by workforce members involved in the incident, rather than just the outcome. The “guide” is designed to be used in analyzing an error or adverse event and managing employee behaviors and to ensure that Just Culture principles are considered.

- A “Just Culture Training Subcommittee” was formed and a three-tiered plan developed to educate all Agency Department employees about Just Culture. Each Department set a training goal that essentially all workforce members were to receive Just Culture training by the end of 2018. Completion of initial Just Culture training was identified as the LMTC’s highest priority for 2018.
  - Champions, who were anticipated to have key roles in adoption of Just Culture, including acting as trainers, consultants, and subject matter experts completed a 2-day training on Just Culture fundamentals, application, conducting assessments of incidents, and how to support other members in understanding and applying Just Culture. They were given a copy of a standard training slide deck to allow them to provide similar training to others. In 2017 and 2018, each of the three Departments hosted and coordinated a 2-day Champions training sponsored by the LMTC, co-taught by members of labor and management, and attended by staff of all three departments, as well as individuals from LA County Fire Department and the County CEO’s Office. In total, approximately 300 champions have been trained to date.
  - Managers and supervisors are in the process of completing a 3-4 hour in-person abbreviated version of the 2-day Champion training intended to provide essentials of application of Just Culture.
  - All workforce members are in the process of completing a 1-hour online “Basics of Just Culture” overview training. The online training module was developed by the LMTC Just Culture Training Subcommittee and launched in March 2018.
- A set of “Just-Culture Implementation Team” (JCIT) co-leads, consisting of labor and management members, was identified to lead Just Culture education at the local levels of each Department. DMH partnered with DHS, DPH, and labor partners to produce quarterly web-based broadcasts to support the JCIT co-leads. Each broadcast featured particular topics and guest speakers.

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- On August 30, 2017, the LMTC partners hosted a virtual town meeting entitled “A Just Culture for All” that was broadcast to DMH, DPH, and DHS personnel countywide. During the broadcast, speakers, including the Directors of the Agency and each Department, talked about the short term and long-term vision for Just Culture, and effectuating culture change within the entire Health Agency.
- In the “Communications Committee” of the LMTC, the Departments and labor partners collaborated on the creation of a communication campaign included screensavers, flyers, posters, and videos to increase awareness of Just Culture and the training requirements.
- In January 2018 a short video featured the three Departmental Human Resources Managers (DHS, DPH, and DMH) discussing Just Culture concepts was created by a DMH videographer and broadcast to the three Departments.
- In February and March of 2018, a Just Culture related “pulse survey” was sent to all Agency Department staff in order to determine a baseline level of understanding of Just Culture. Approximately 42% of Agency personnel responded to the survey, and the following baseline was obtained:
  - 63% of the respondents indicated that “in my work unit, I am treated fairly”
  - 64% of respondents indicated that they had a “good understanding of Just Culture”
  - 49% of respondents agreed that “managers respond appropriately to employees whose behavior or performance fails to meet expectations”
  - 58% of respondents agreed that “it’s easy to speak up about errors and mistakes”
  - 59% of respondents indicated that “When an error or mistake occurs, my manager looks at both the employee’s actions and operational issues to determine what led to the incident”
  - 60% of respondents agreed that “the manager I work with emphasizes learning rather than blaming when staff make mistakes”
- Throughout 2018, a series of eight webinars were presented by the LMTC to support those individuals tasked with ensuring completion of training at the departmental level.
- Scenario-based training modules for use at the local level were developed to bolster and continue Just Culture education.
- Each Department added to its performance management intake form, a question asking whether Just Culture had already been considered and applied.
- Each Department has access to a confidential event reporting system where adverse events, near-misses, and unsafe conditions can be reported for review.

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### *Department of Health Services (DHS)*

- In September 2017, DHS used its annual two-day Patient Safety Conference as a kick-off to the training schedule, hosting a two-day Champion training and several 3-4 hour manager/supervisor training sessions for participants from all departments and labor partners. Across the three departments 200 workforce members completed the two-day Champion training, and 300 managers/supervisors completed the 4-hour in person training.
- By December 2018, 95% (n=2,645) of DHS managers and supervisors completed the four hour in-person training. By December 31, 2018, 91 % (n=22,528) of all DHS employees had completed the required one hour Just Culture training. Marketing of the required trainings included department-wide emails, targeted email to division/program directors, Co-leads, computer screensavers, intranet website screen banner, consistent email reminders, poster/flyer postings, and all staff meetings.
- By December 2018, DHS conducted more than 80 four-hour in-person trainings across all facilities.
- Starting January through December 2019, a four-hour in-person training is conducted every two months at the Health Services Administration and as scheduled in some of the DHS facilities for the newly hired and promoted managers and supervisors.

### *Department of Public Health (DPH)*

DPH launched Just Culture in the winter of 2017. A Just Culture overview was provided to the DPH Executive Leadership and Dr. Ferrer. DPH hosted its first two-day Champion Training in June of 2017 with over 100 attendees, including DHS and DMH workforce members, and union partners. The training attendees were provided options to serve in different roles including trainers, workgroup members, or both. Trainees were also given an opportunity serve as a Bureau Co-lead. Trainers were provided additional training to enhance facilitation skills and workgroup members reviewed the instructor-led training curriculum to ensure that the materials would resonate with DPH employees.

- Training was strongly supported by the DPH Director and training compliance was monitored monthly. Marketing of the training was implemented via multiple modes: All Staff Meetings, webinar, department-wide mass emails, targeted email to division/program directors, bureau Co-leads, computer screensavers, DPH intranet website screen banner, consistent email reminders, poster/flyer postings, and DPH all staff meetings.

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- By the end of December 2018, web-based training compliance was 96.2% (n=3,877) and instructor-led workshop compliance by supervisors/managers was 97% (n=717).
- DPH formed a Just Culture Leadership Committee consisting of representatives from Human Resources, Risk Management, Organizational Development & Training, Quality Improvement & Accreditation, and DPH's Just Culture subject matter experts. As the initiative progressed, bureau co-leads were included in the Committee.
- Every DPH Bureau has identified Just Culture Champions and has an assigned Public Health Transformation Advocate to assist with the implementation of Just Culture practices.
- Existing DPH policies are being evaluated and updated to be consistent with Just Culture and Equity application. This initial evaluation of 30 DPH policies began in December 2018 and is expected to be completed by June 2019. Additional Department-wide policies will subsequently be reviewed and the remaining DPH policies will be delegated to respective Bureaus for review to ensure alignment with the Just Culture and Equity. All DPH policies will be reviewed by June 30, 2021.
- In the development of a Just Culture systems error reporting and resolution process, the DPH Just Culture Leadership Committee drafted an algorithm for all DPH staff to follow when reporting a system error. The algorithm assists the reporter in identifying the type of system error (policy/procedure, environmental, lack of resources, and education/training) and provides a link to an online portal for reporting the error. Submitted errors will be reviewed by each bureau's Public Health Transformation Advocate for processing and determining how best to resolve the identified system issue; this may include recommending a Quality Improvement Project.

### ***Department of Mental Health (DMH)***

- Just Culture DMH Departmental policy was issued on September 17, 2017, by the DMH Director. A "Just Culture" link was placed on the DMH intranet, which contains Just Culture resources, training calendar, and where contact information can be accessed by all workforce members.
- In May 2018 DMH hosted a two-day Just Culture Champion training at St. Anne's for Health Agency personnel (DMH, DHS, DPH, and some Fire Department personnel).
- By June 30, 2018, 98.7% of the 827 managers and supervisors at DMH completed the live four-hour training.
- By December 31, 2018, 94% of all DMH employees completed required online training.

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- AFSCME Locals 2712 & 3511 educated their members about the existence and purpose of Just Culture in multiple venues, including but not limited to New Employee Orientations, membership meetings, joint Labor-Management meetings, newsletters, lunchtime site visits, during investigational processes and during grievances.
- UAPD provided CME credit for a live four-hour training session on Just Culture at one of the psychiatrist quarterly meetings.

### Sustainability of Just Culture

#### ***Collaboration Among the Three Departments and Labor Partners***

- Each Department is adding an introduction to Just Culture into their New Employee Orientation. New workforce members in each Department are required to complete the online training and all new managers/supervisors are required to complete the four hour in-person training.
- The LMTC Just Culture Committee and Department leadership will develop continued culture change and sustainability plan and tools, including scenario-based discussion modules. An area of focus will be on ensuring that managers and supervisors are well-versed in the application of Just Culture and apply it appropriately.
- Worker Education and Resource Center (WERC) in collaboration the LMTC Just Culture Committee is developing an interactive e-learning app which will allow users to enhance their understanding of Just Culture principles and application.
- Department Performance Management staff will evaluate the application of Just Culture in performance management requests.
- A repeat pulse survey on Just Culture will be conducted throughout the Agency in 2019 to assess improvement in knowledge and understanding of Just Culture.

#### ***Department of Health Services (DHS)***

- A section on Just Culture will be added to the new employee Orientation Manual.
- The application of Just Culture is integrated and contextualized through discussion and activities within the curriculum of the DHS's new manager on-boarding (The TOP Program) and the DHS's WE CARE service model essential core behaviors.
- The LMTC supported DHS Care Improvement Teams will work to identify and create unit-based projects to promote Just Culture.



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- DHS policies will be reviewed and updated to be consistent with Just Culture principles. The plan and timeline for this work is currently being developed.
- The DHS Patient Safety and Performance Improvement programs will work to identify additional needs and opportunities.
- Just Culture sensitive questions will be incorporated into periodic staff surveys as appropriate.

### ***Department of Public Health (DPH)***

- DPH created and will implement a calendar year 2019 Just Culture Implementation Plan that defined work outcomes for 2019 and subsequent years. Please see Attachment II.
- DPH will implement a Just Culture Coaching Program which will provide guidance and coaching to DPH staff on applying Just Culture principles. The program summary is being finalized, which will include the hiring of a Program Manager.
- Develop and implement an additional analysis tool to monitor and address systems issues that are identified through application of the Just Culture algorithm for DPH.
- Incorporate Just Culture trainings on DPH's Mandatory Training list and in DPH University. Training will also be incorporated in their New Employee Orientation.
- Convene meetings of all Just Culture Team Members (e.g., Champions/trainers/coaches) annually to provide updates, trainings/resources and opportunities for engagement and deliberations around DPH Just Culture efforts.

### ***Department of Mental Health (DMH)***

- Sustain above 90% of DMH workforce participation in the Basics of Just Culture on-line training module.
- The development and utilization of Mental Health Transformation Advocates (MHTA) by DMH in 2019 to help continue to message, model, and coach the workforce members about Just Culture implementation.
- MHTA's will also collaborate with DMH managers to provide Just Culture scenario-based exercises during staff meetings in an effort to continue educating a changing workforce.

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- DMH will provide periodic refresher trainings as well as continuing to provide training to newly onboarded staff. Tailor training for supervisors and managers on coaching skills.
- Creation of a robust feedback loop from workforce to the LMTC. Judicious use of surveys (to avoid survey fatigue) and reports from the trenches from labor partners working closely with frontline staff.

### Challenges and Opportunities with Just Culture

- Resolving employee fear of bringing up concerns that impact the work environment due to past experiences remains a challenge.
- Variable understanding and management and communication styles among supervisors and managers can affect consistent application of Just Culture. There is a need to offer multiple opportunities for managers/supervisors to enhance communication skills, which will help managers/supervisors to effectively implement Just Culture.
- Engagement of staff in regularly scheduled team meetings could be used to enhance problem-solving and identify workplace innovations and quality practices.
- As members transition to other county positions or leave the department; it has been difficult to replace Just Culture Champions and/or Co-leads resulting in a shortage of trainers. Although a challenge in one respect, such transitions also present an opportunity to better disseminate Just Culture to other areas of the County.
- Throughout the Agency there are many worksite locations making it difficult to have Just Culture Champions at each site.
- The need for more dialogue regarding Just Culture application may compel units without regular staff communication to initiate new efforts, such as all staff meetings. This can result in better information transfer, additional opportunities to identify and discuss innovations and systems improvement, and increased team rapport.
- Review and revision of policies will allow the Departments to effectively update older policies and retire those that are no longer needed.

### Suggested Metrics to Monitor the Implementation of Just Culture

It is important to note that as departments review available data for this priority, the metrics may be modified as this work moves forward.

- Increase in number of adverse event reports in the event reporting systems, the theory

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being that if people feel that they won't be unfairly blamed for mistakes, they are more likely to report mistakes, errors, and adverse outcomes, which in turn will allow us to examine and fix contributing problems.

- Continue periodic administration of the Just Culture Pulse Survey to assess increase in understanding of Just Culture.
- Measure the percentage of member participation in Just Culture scenario-based exercises on a quarterly basis.

# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (DPH) JUST CULTURE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Through our Labor-Management Transformation Council (LMTC) collaboration, the Health Agency and labor partners identified the following goals to support efforts to enhance our capacity to create a Just Culture within our organizations:

- All DPH workforce completed the online training or the instructor-led workshop by June 30, 2018.
- All supervisors and managers completed the instructor-led workshop by December 31, 2018.
- Increase positive response to Pulse Survey question 2, "I have a good understanding of Just Culture," by 20% by next Pulse Survey in March 2019
- Each Department will ask its supervisors to consider the Just Culture principles when referring matters to Human Resources (HR) Performance Management.

In addition to meeting these shared goals, DPH is committed to collectively work to provide LMTC designed trainings, offer additional shared learning opportunities, and align policies and practices with Just Culture. Strategies identified were informed by feedback provided by program directors and frontline staff.

## INITIAL TRAINING FOR DPH STAFF

1. As of December 31, 2018, overall DPH compliance is 95.7%.
2. As of December 31, 2018, 97% of DPH supervisors and managers have completed instructor-led training.
3. Instructor-led training will be offered on a quarterly and/or as needed basis starting January 2019. DPH Just Culture trainers will continue to train these sessions.

## NEW EMPLOYEE TRAINING

1. All DPH employees will complete the mandatory online training within 90 days of hire.
2. New supervisors/managers will complete the mandatory instructor-led training within 90 days of assignment to supervisory responsibilities.

## ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING PLAN

1. DPH Programs will incorporate Just Culture Discussion Modules – which will be made available on the intranet – once every quarter in their regularly scheduled staff meeting.
2. DPH employees will have access to a new optional web-based learning module. In development by WERC. Estimated pilot launch is June 2019.

3. Just Culture Coaching Program will be developed to support DPH staff to effectively apply Just Culture in their work area. The Program is anticipated to begin in Spring/Summer 2019.

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

DPH Human Resources began baseline data collection to assess our alignment of Just Culture principles with Performance Management practices in May 2018, in accordance with LMTC goals. Additional DPH objectives include:

1. By October 2018, a toolkit was made available on the DPH intranet webpage that contains Just Culture materials (policy, rubrics, case studies).
2. By December 2018, all supervisors were trained to use a rubric that incorporates the Just Culture Algorithm before advancing performance management concerns to DPH HR.
3. By December 2018, DPH HR's Performance Management Unit assessed for Just Culture practice for every intake of performance management consultation. A tracking sheet with a "yes/no" for each consultation will be developed by March 1, 2019.
4. By March 2019, all performance management forms will require supervisors to document use of the Just Culture Algorithm.

## POLICY ALIGNMENT

1. As of December 30, 2018, a DPH Policy Revision Workgroup has been convened and a Workgroup Charter adopted to assess and revise current departmental policies in alignment with Health Equity, Just Culture, and relevant codes, rules, and regulations.
2. By June 30, 2019, the DPH Policy Revision Workgroup will review and revise at least 30 general administrative policies.
3. By June 30, 2019, the DPH Policy Revision Workgroup will develop an action plan with timelines for review and revision of the remaining DPH policies.
4. By June 30, 2021, the DPH Policy Revision Workgroup will review and revise all remaining DPH policies.

## ADDRESSING IDENTIFIED SYSTEMS CONCERNS

1. Create algorithms for how employees at all levels of organization identify system concerns, by April 2019.
2. Create portal for reporting of system concerns on Just Culture website, by June 2019.
3. Hire and train 4 Public Health Transformation Advocates to participate in system concerns tracking and improvement, by July 2019.
4. Incorporate system concerns reporting procedures into the Just Culture in-person trainings, by July 2019.
5. Email blast notification to all staff of Just Culture system concerns reporting procedures, by July 2019.

## EVALUATION

1. DPH will adopt the LMTC metrics for assessing progress on implementation of Just Culture.
2. Beginning January 2019, DPH employees will be asked to complete an annual survey developed by the LMTC to assess the progress of Just Culture implementation.
3. Annually, DPH will partner with Labor to host a town hall meeting to review survey results, discuss implementation challenges, and identify additional opportunities to align our organization with Just Culture practices.
4. Starting in FY 2020/2021, all MAPP employees and supervisors will include a performance metric related to successful implementation of Just Culture.
5. A tracking tool will be developed by June 2019 for assessing implementation of systems changes identified through Just Culture partners.
6. A dashboard will be developed to measure impact of Just Culture on performance management reviews, disciplinary action, and arbitrations.