

Human Resources Management Review

Commissioner's Executive Team

This serves to memorialize the Human Resources (HR) Management Review conducted during a 2-day period April 7-8, 2022.

Background

During the week of April 4, 2022, you asked me to conduct a HR Management Review of your executive team members and asking specific questions about you. I initiated the management review immediately. I conducted confidential and individual interview with all executive team members and one former member asking the following questions you provided:

- 1) Are you afraid of the Commissioner in any way?
- 2) Are you afraid to bringing issues or concerns to the Commissioner's attention?
- 3) Do you believe that the Commissioner is a micromanager?

The following 11 and one former executive team member were interviewed by the HR Division Director over a span of two days.

- Corliss Lawson – Deputy Commissioner
- Vicki Kozikoujekian – General Counsel
- Tamela Griffin – Acting Chief Financial Office
- Rich Richmond – Associate Commissioner, Child Protection Investigations
- Lisa Kanne – Chief Operation Officer
- Deneen Darden – Associate Commissioner, Child Protection Services
- Kez Wold – Associate Commissioner, Adult Protective Services
- Chance Watson – Chief Audit Officer
- Jose Martinez – Chief Accountability, Appeals and Internal Affairs Officer
- Stephen Black – Associate Commissioner, Statewide Intake
- Sasha Rasco – Chief Prevention and Community Well-Being Officer
- Jim Sylvester – Former, Associate Commissioner, Child Protection Investigations

Results

Question #1: Are you afraid of the Commissioner in any way?

100% of those interviewed said "No". The following are a sample of answers provided without prompting or when asked to explain:

- She is approachable.
- She is not overbearing.
- She has firm opinions but she has to be firm and have strong opinions as the Commissioner.
- I feel like no matter how she reacts; I can speak my mind.
- She is open to concerns.
- Maybe at first until I got to know her.
- She can be intimidating but once I gained her trust, concerns faded.
- There's no reason to be.
- I can and do push back.
- Most welcoming and transparent I have worked for in 30 years of public service.

Question #2: Are you afraid of bringing issues or concerns to the Commissioner's attention?

100% of those interviewed said "No". The following are a sample of the answers provided without prompting or when asked to explain:

- There are things that she has made decisions on that I disagree with, but I came back to her to discuss. I was not afraid though.
- She is always there for me and I know I can go to her.
- I try not to have to but she empowers us.
- We don't have to agree but I am able to say what I need to say.
- The Commissioner, on day one, encouraged us to think freely and express any concerns.

Question #3: Do you believe that the Commissioner is a micromanager?

84% of those interviewed said "No". Two of 12 interviewed answered "Yes". The following are a sample of the answers provided without prompting or when asked to explain:

- She is hands on but not a micromanager.
- She is accountable to the courts, legislators, and other stakeholders and will be criticized for not knowing so she must get into the weeds.
- Absolutely not, it's one of her strengths.

- Hard to answer yes or no. Some could see it as micromanaging. But digging down is part of the learning process for this agency.
- Absolutely 100% not.
- We have autonomy.
- She questions me but doesn't tell me to do something.
- Never comes to me to tell me how to handle something. She trusts me to get it done. I have full latitude.
- She is so busy; she doesn't have time to micromanage.
- She has trust issues, so she has to micromanage.

Interviewer Impressions

All individuals interviewed were thoughtful and provided answers and feedback without hesitation. All interviewed seemed to be thankful for the opportunity to provide feedback and freely answered asked.