Workforce Equity in Promotions Audit

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Report Highlights

Background

The City of Seattle (City) defines workforce equity as when the workforce is inclusive of people of color and other marginalized or underrepresented groups at a rate representative of the greater Seattle area at all levels of City employment. Although the City has published reports on its progress toward workforce equity, the reports have not included any analysis of employees' promotions even though promotion has been identified as an important outcome to assess since 2018. With the intent to create baseline data on City promotions, we analyzed the City's 2021 employee data and reviewed the City's promotion practices.

What We Found

Our analyses of Citywide data for 2021 found that promotion outcomes were slightly higher for women relative to men and employees of color relative to White Employees. However, women of color received a lower average percentage of promotion pay increase compared to other groups of employees. Our analyses were hampered by data gaps in the City's Human Resources Information System. The City has a federated human resources system which contributes to siloed practices and impairs the implementation of promotion best practices across departments. We also found that the City has an outdated Class Specifications System that presents a barrier to employees' advancement.

Recommendations

We identified opportunities for the City to improve its promotion practices and make four recommendations to address data gaps, automate data analysis and reporting, update the Class Specifications System, improve Citywide human resources collaboration, and perform a racial equity analysis of promotion policies.

Department Response

In their formal written response, Seattle Department of Human Resources stated that they concurred with the report's four recommendations (see Appendix A).

WHY WE DID THIS AUDIT

This audit was conducted in response to Seattle City Councilmember Tammy Morales' request for our office to examine workforce equity by establishing City of Seattle employee promotion baseline data and determining if the City is following best practices on promotions and retention, especially for women of color.

HOW WE DID THIS AUDIT

To accomplish the audit's objectives, we:

- Analyzed 2021 City employee data.
- Reviewed relevant state and local laws.
- Reviewed literature and articles on promotions.
- Interviewed City Human Resources staff and stakeholders.
- Reviewed the City's Class Specifications System.
- Reviewed the City's Workforce Equity Strategic Plan and Reports.

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INTRODUCTION

Audit Overview

We conducted this audit at the request of Seattle City Councilmember Tammy Morales to examine workforce equity by establishing City of Seattle employee promotion baseline data and determining if the City is following best practices on promotions and retention, especially for women of color. Our objectives were to:

- Create baseline data on the demographics of employees who were promoted and reclassified upward in 2021.
- Conduct a review of best practices or evidence-based research on workforce equity retention and promotion, especially for women of color.
- Examine whether the City of Seattle is employing these practices and research and where there are gaps.

Background

The City of Seattle's 2016 Workforce Equity Strategic Plan[1] defined Workforce Equity as "when the workforce is inclusive of people of color and other marginalized or underrepresented groups at a rate representative of the greater Seattle area at all levels of City employment; where institutional and structural barriers impacting employee attraction, selection, participation, and retention have been eliminated, enabling opportunity for employment success and career growth". The annual workforce equity reports, published by the Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR), measure the City's progress on its definition of workforce equity. These reports have examined and compared the City of Seattle employee population to the population of the greater Seattle area. However, the reports have not included any analysis of employees' promotions, even though promotion was identified as an important outcome to assess in the first workforce equity report published in 2018.

The most recent workforce equity report, the 2021 Workforce Equity Update Report, concluded that Latinx employees remain the most underrepresented group across the entire City workforce and Women of Color are the most underrepresented at the top levels of pay and supervisory authority. Because of these disproportionalities between the City of Seattle employee population and the population of the greater Seattle area, our audit focuses on the analysis of the City's promotion and reclassification data and compared those data to the City of Seattle employee population.

[1] The Workforce Equity Strategic Plan provides a history of Workforce Equity in City of Seattle government.

Promotion and Reclassification Definitions

The City of Seattle Personnel Rules define promotion as an appointment to a class or position with a higher maximum pay rate than the one for the employee's current position. There are seven actions, described in Exhibit 1, that the City regards as promotions in its Human Resources Information System (HRIS). Promotion policies and procedures for most City employees are guided by the City's Personnel Rules.[2] For public safety employees, such as sworn police and uniformed fire employees, Seattle's Public Safety Civil Service Commission makes and enforces rules and develops examinations for promotions.[3]

Reclassification is defined in the Personnel Rules as placing a position in a different classification due to the gradual accretion of duties over six months or longer, that substantively changes its nature or scope. Reclassification requires an employee or the appointing authority[4] of a department to submit a Position Review Request (commonly known as a Position Description Questionnaire)[5] to SDHR's Class Compensation unit.

[2] In addition to the Personnel Rules, Bargaining Agreements can also guide promotion policies and procedures for represented positions. For example, the Local 77 agreement with Seattle City Light outlines the bid promotion type for vacancies.

[3] The Seattle's Public Safety Civil Service Commission (PSCSC) is an independent body that provides sworn police and uniformed fire employees with a quasi-judicial process for hearings on appeals concerning disciplinary actions, examination and testing, and other related issues. The PSCSC is housed within the Civil Service Commission. The Civil Service Commission (CSC) is a quasi-judicial body that provides fair and impartial hearings of alleged violations of the City's personnel system to most regular City employees. While the PSCSC makes and enforces rules for the administration of the personnel system for public safety employees, CSC reviews and make recommendations regarding the administration of the personnel system for most regular City employees.

[4] An Appointing Authority is the head of an employing unit authorized by ordinance or City Charter to employ others on behalf of the City. The term includes and can be used interchangeably with department head, department director, superintendent, or chief. An employing unit is any department of the City, and, within the Executive and Legislative Departments, any office created by ordinance (City of Seattle Personnel Rules). Elected officials such as City Councilmembers, City Attorney, and Municipal Court Judges head their respective employing units (City Council President for the Legislative Department, City Attorney for the City Attorney's Office, and Presiding Judge for the Seattle Municipal Court).

[5] A Position Description Questionnaire is the form used by the SDHR's Compensation and Classification Division to review the work of a position to determine the best classification for the work. For executive-level positions, a Job Summary Questionnaire is required for the review. The Personnel Rules provide more detail on the reclassification process.

Exhibit 1: Actions That Are Promotions in the City's Human Resources Information System

Promotion Action	Type	Description	Competitive (posted in NEOGOV)*
PROADH	Acting Department Head	Use to show an employee acting as a department head.	No
PROASG	Assignment	Use to show a sworn officer assigned to a specialty title, e.g., Police Officer to Police Officer-Patrol or Fire Fighter to Fire Fighter-Marine Unit.	No
PROBID	Bid	Use to show the promotion of a Local 77 employee by a special bid process.	No
PROMER	Merit	Use to change an employee's rate of pay due to merit. This action is used for employees who receive salary increments based on performance. For Step Progression titles only.	No
PRORRD	Return From Reduction	Use to show an employee took a voluntary reduction and is now returning to their previous title.	No
PROSSQ	Appointment to Higher Class	Use to show an employee who is promoted to a new higher class, in the same or different class. This is what SDHR used to call a Subsequent Appointment.	Yes
PROTTR	Temporary To Regular	Use to show a temporary employee is being appointed permanently.	Most often**

*NEOGOV is the City's hiring platform where available positions are posted.
**This promotion is often competitive but sometimes appointing authorities have the power to appoint a temporary employee to a permanent position.

Source: Seattle Department of Human Resources

Promotion Pay Policies and Procedures

The City's Personnel Rules[6] describe the policies and procedures for determining promotion pay increases. For employees in the step progression pay program (i.e., classified positions) who are promoted, the Personnel Rules require them to be placed at the step in the new salary range closest to one step over their current salary. Employees who are either in the discretionary pay program (i.e., exempt positions) or promoted into discretionary pay programs (e.g., Strategic Advisors and Managers) can be placed anywhere within the pay band of the new position, with the appointing authority's approval.

[6] Section 3.1.4 B of the Personnel Rules titled Salary Step Placement for the Step Progression Pay Program.

Types of Promotions in 2021

In 2021, 937 employees were promoted in the City.[7] As Exhibit 2 shows, 667 employees were promoted to higher classes, 225 temporary employees were appointed to permanent positions, 40 employees received merit promotions, and five employees returned to their previous positions from voluntary reductions.

Exhibit 2: Types of Promotions in 2021

Promotion Action	Type of Promotion	Number of Promotions (%)
PROMER	Merit	40 (4.3)
PROSSQ	Appointment to Higher Class	667 (71.2)
PRORRD	Return From Reduction	5 (0.5)
PROTTR	Temporary To Regular	225 (24.0)

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 promotion data.

[7] Our analysis excluded employees who were promoted in 2021 but left the City on or before December 31, 2021.

PROMOTION DATA ANALYSES

Section Summary

Our analyses of Citywide data for 2021 found that promotion outcomes[8] were slightly higher for women relative to men and for employees of color relative to White Employees. We found that most women of color had slightly higher promotion outcomes than other employees although their average percentage of promotion pay increase was lower than other groups of employees.[9] However, our analyses do not explain the reasons for the differences in promotion outcomes because we could not adjust for all observable and unobservable factors that could influence promotion. Therefore, our analyses do not establish a causal relationship between employees' demographics and promotion outcomes.

Data and Analyses Overview

As of December 31, 2021, there were 12,956 City of Seattle employees. In 2021, 937 employees were promoted, and 75 employees were reclassified. We excluded employees who were promoted in 2021 but left the City by December 31, 2021. Our analyses focused on the promotion data due to the relatively small number of employees who were reclassified in 2021. We assessed the reliability of the data from the City's HRIS that SDHR provided to us and concluded that the dataset was sufficient and appropriate for this audit. However, we found gaps in the data which we discuss below.

We conducted descriptive analyses which calculated for the average percentage of promotion pay increase, frequencies, and percentages of promotions and reclassifications, in addition to adjusted analyses which controlled for some factors that could influence promotion using the multivariate regression analysis method.[10] Adjusting for these factors means we were able to estimate if there are differences in the odds of promotion for employees of color and White employees even if they have the same number of years of service, hourly rate, employment class, employee status, full time status, union representation, and gender. However, we could not adjust for all the observable and unobservable factors, such as education and out-of-

[8] Promotion outcomes include the following calculations: frequencies and percentages of promotions, promotion rates, and adjusted odds of promotion which we assessed as the odds of promotion in one group compared to the odds of promotion in another group. See Appendix G for a detailed description of our analyses methods and Appendix H for a detailed description of our results.

[9] Female employees whose race/ethnicity was unspecified have the lowest average percentage of promotion pay increase.

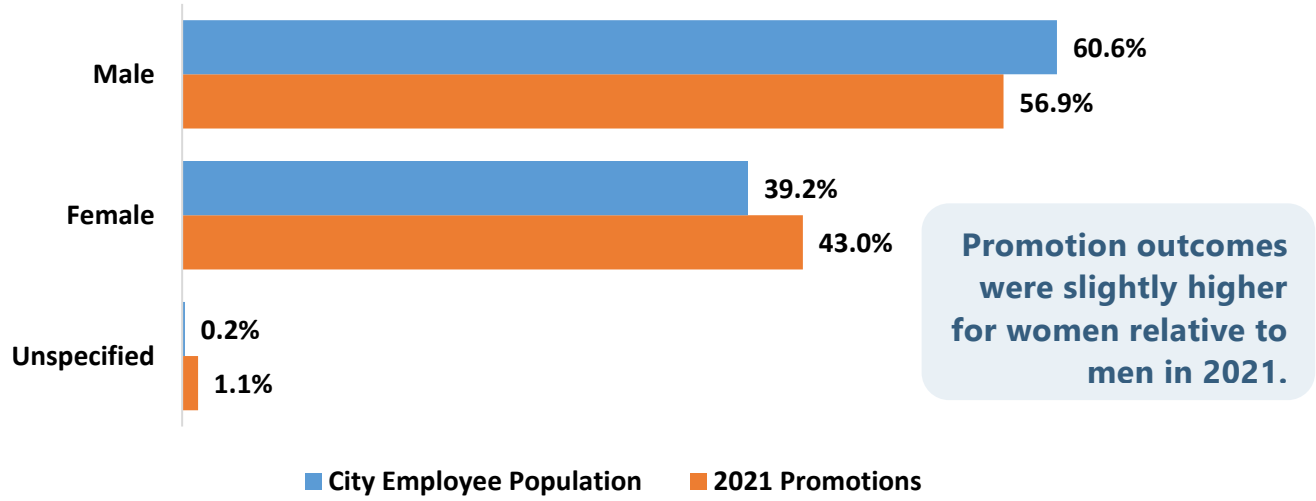
[10] The multivariate statistical methods have been used to examine promotion outcomes in multiple studies. For example, the U.S. Government Accountability Office's State Department: Additional Steps Are Needed to Identify Potential Barriers to Diversity audit published in 2020 used a multivariate statistical regression method (duration regression analysis) to examine promotion outcomes.

class experience,[11] that could influence promotions due to data limitations. Therefore, our analyses do not explain the reasons for the differences in promotion outcomes. Also, our analyses do not establish a causal relationship between employees' demographics and promotional outcomes. We present the major findings below. See Appendix G for detailed description of our analyses methods, Appendix H for detailed description of our results, and Appendix I for department-level analysis.

Promotion Outcomes Were Slightly Higher in 2021 for Women Relative to Men and for Employees of Color Relative to White Employees.

The number and percentages of women promoted in 2021 were slightly higher relative to their representation in the City employee population. As Exhibit 3 shows, women comprised 43 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 39.2 percent of the City employee population. Men comprised 56.9 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 60.6 percent of the City employee population. The promotion rate for women was 7.9 percent compared with 6.8 percent for men and the odds of promotion for women were 1.143 times higher than the odds of promotion for men in 2021 (see Appendix H).

Exhibit 3: Percentage of City Employees and 2021 Promotions by Gender



Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data.

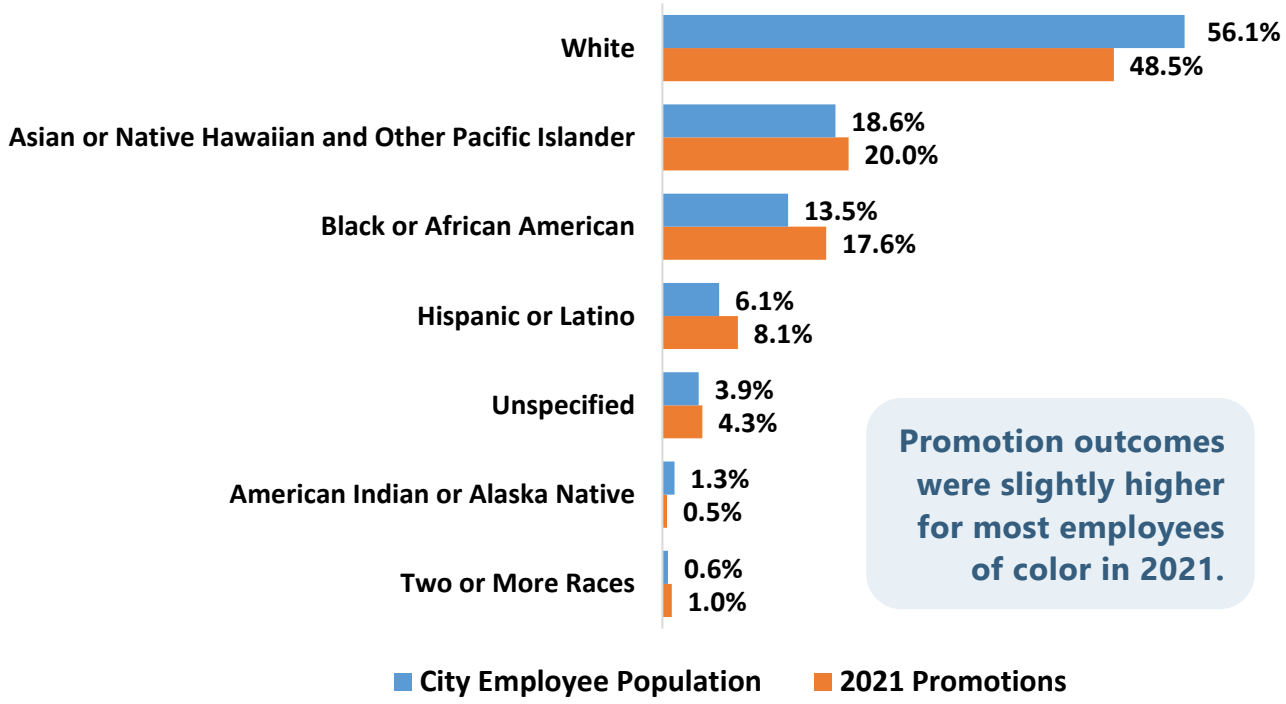
[11] Out-of-class is the temporary assignment of one or more employees to perform the normal ongoing duties and responsibilities associated with a higher-paying title (SMC 4.20.300). Reasons for out-of-class assignments include absence of employee who usually perform those duties, position vacancy, peak workload periods, and completions of special projects. These assignments are intended to support employees' development and address business need. Out-of-Class assignments are limited to six months unless extended by department head. (Personnel Rule 3.5)

Promotion Outcomes Were Slightly Higher for Most Employees of Color in 2021.

The number and percentages of employees of color promoted in 2021 were slightly higher relative to their representation in the City employee population, except for American Indian or Alaska Native employees. As Exhibit 4 shows, Asian or Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander employees made up 20 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 18.6 percent of the City employee population; Black or African American employees made up 17.6 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 13.5 percent of the City employee population; Hispanic or Latino employees made up 8.1 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 6.1 percent of the City employee population; employees with two or more races made up one percent of 2021 promotions compared to 0.6 percent of the City employee population. However, American Indian or Alaska Native employees had a lower portion of 2021 promotions, 0.5 percent compared to 1.3 percent of the City employee population. White employees made up 48.5 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 56.1 percent of the City employee population.[12]

In addition, the promotion rate for employees of color was 8.5 percent compared with 6.2 percent for White employees and the odds of promotion for employees of color were 1.457 times higher than the odds of promotion for employees of color in 2021 (see Appendix H).

Exhibit 4: Percentage of City Employees and 2021 Promotions by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data.

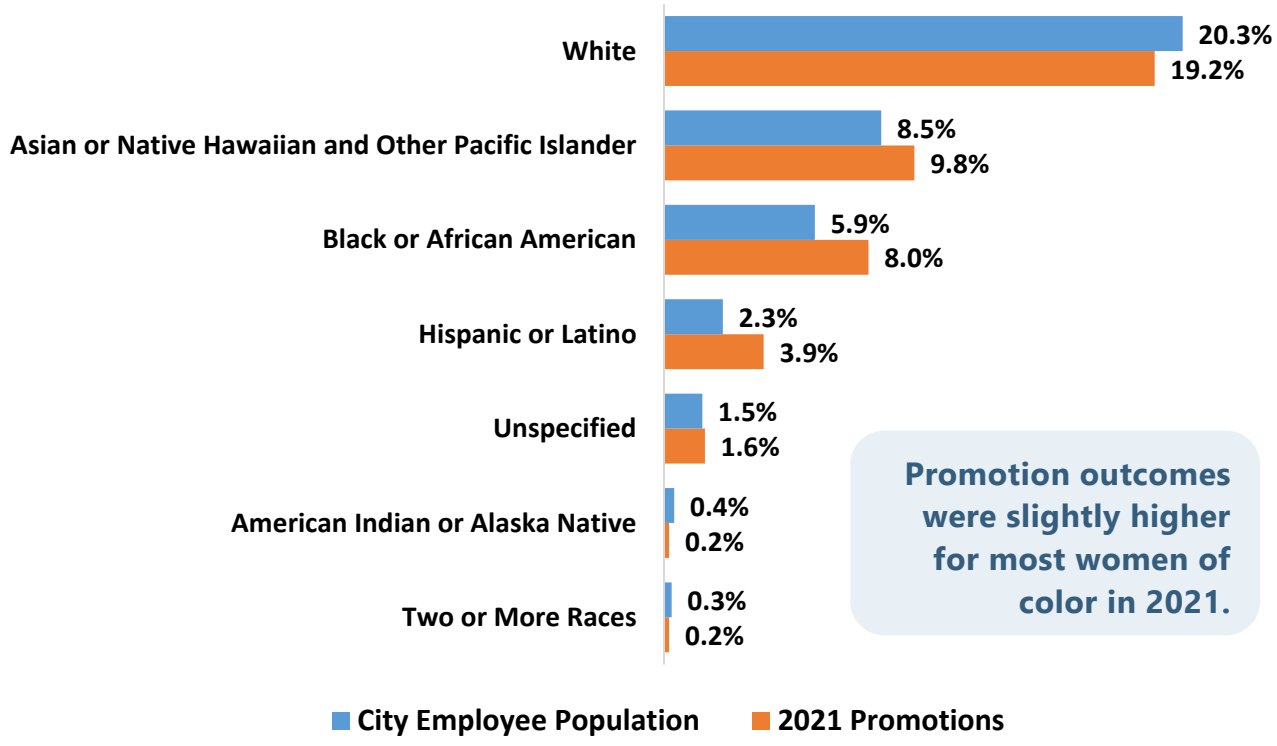
[12] Note that our analysis did not compare the City of Seattle workforce to the population of the greater Seattle area. Our focus is on City of Seattle employee population. See Appendix G for a detailed description of our methods.

Promotion Outcomes were Slightly Higher for Most Women of Color in 2021.

The numbers and percentages of women of color promoted in 2021 were generally higher compared to their representation in the City employee population, except for American Indian or Alaska Native women and women with two or more races. As Exhibit 5 shows, Asian or Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander women comprised 9.8 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 8.5 percent of the City employee population; Black or African American women comprised eight percent of 2021 promotions compared to 5.9 percent of the City employee population; Hispanic or Latino women comprised 3.9 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 2.3 percent of the City employee population. However, American Indian or Alaska Native women had a lower share of 2021 promotions, 0.2 percent compared to 0.4 percent of the City employee population and women with two or more races comprised 0.2 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 0.3 percent share of the City employee population. White women comprised 19.2 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 20.3 percent of the City employee population.

In addition, the odds of promotion for women of color were 1.491 times higher than the odds of promotion for White women in 2021, the odds of promotion for women of color were 1.123 times higher than the odds of promotion for men of color, and the odds of promotion for women of color were 1.698 times higher than the odds of promotion for White men in 2021 (see Appendix H).

Exhibit 5: Percentage of Female Employees and 2021 Promotions by Race/Ethnicity



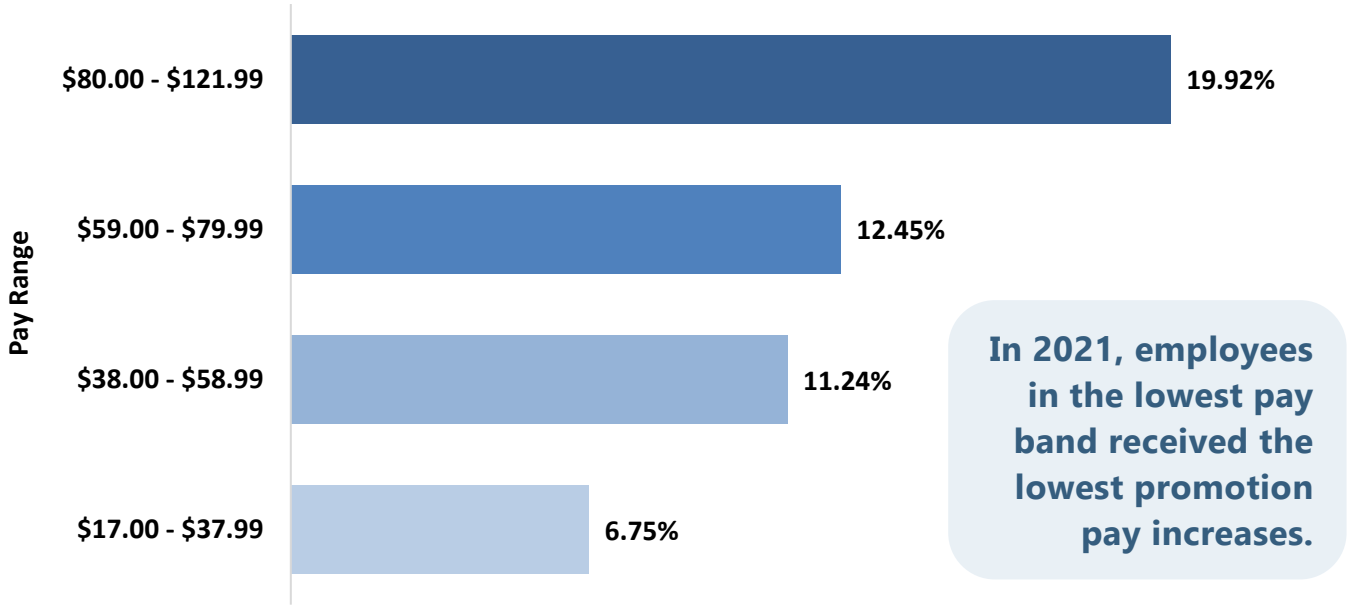
Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data.

In 2021, the Average Percentages of Promotion Pay Increase Differed by Pay Band, Gender, and Race/Ethnicity.

In 2021, Employees in the Lowest Pay Band Received the Lowest Promotion Pay Increase.

Employees in the lowest pay band in 2021 received the lowest average promotion pay increase compared to employees in the higher pay bands. As shown in Exhibit 6, employees who made between $17.00 and $37.99 per hour received an average promotion pay increase of 6.75 percent, compared to employees who made between $80.00 and $121.99 per hour who received an average promotion pay increase of 19.92 percent. Employees who made between $38.00 and $58.99 per hour received an average promotion pay increase of 11.24 percent and employees who made between $59.00 and $79.99 received an average promotion pay increase of 12.45 percent. This means that when employees in the lower pay band are promoted in 2021, they were given smaller pay raises compared to when employees in the higher pay bands were promoted.

Exhibit 6: Average Percentage of Promotion Pay Increase in 2021 by Pay Band

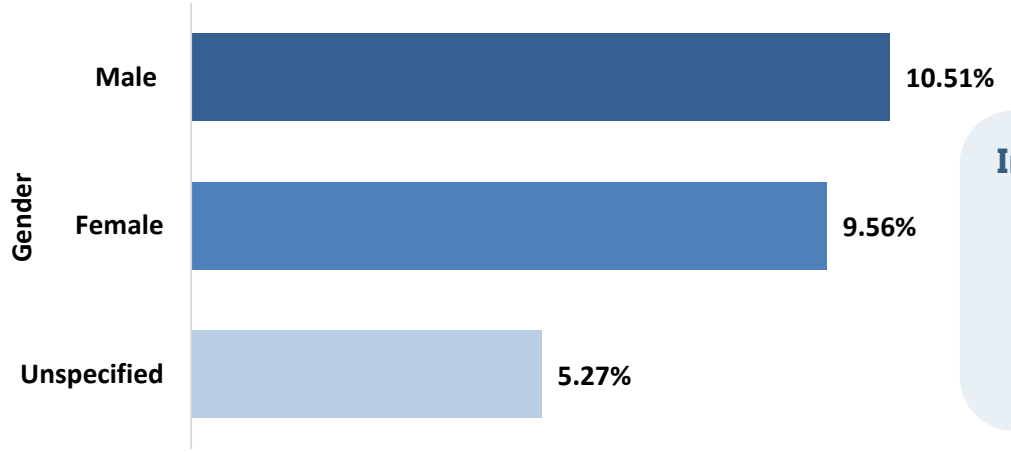


Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee promotion data

In 2021, Women Received Lower Promotion Pay Increases Compared to Men.

Women who were promoted in 2021 received an average promotion pay increase of 9.56 percent compared to men who received an average promotion pay increase of 10.51 percent (see Exhibit 7). There was only one City employee with unspecified gender[13] who was promoted in 2021 and received a promotion pay increase of 5.27 percent.

Exhibit 7: Average Percentage of Promotion Pay Increase in 2021 by Gender



In 2021, women received lower promotion pay increases compared to men.

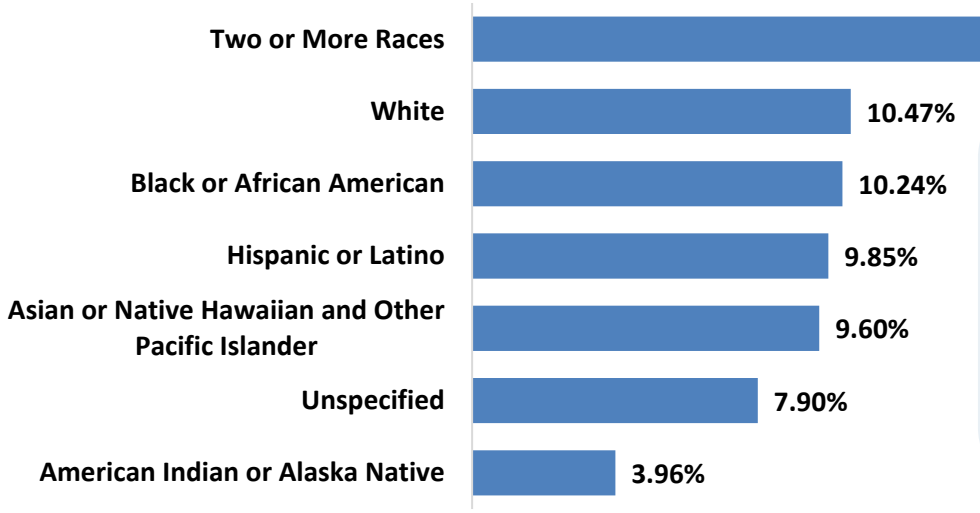
Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee promotion data.

In 2021, American Indian or Alaska Native Employees Received the Lowest Promotion Pay Increase Compared to Other Racial/Ethnic Groups.

The average percentage of promotion pay increase for employees who were promoted in 2021 varied by race/ethnicity. American Indian or Alaska Native employees received the lowest average promotion pay increase of 3.96 percent compared to the highest average promotion pay increase of 14.62 percent received by employees with two or more races (see Exhibit 8). White employees received an average promotion pay increase of 10.47 percent, Black or African American employees received an average promotion pay increase of 10.24 percent, Hispanic or Latino employees received an average promotion pay increase of 9.85 percent, Asian or Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander employees received an average promotion pay increase of 9.6 percent, and employees with unspecified race/ethnicity received an average promotion pay increase of 7.9 percent.

[13] See our discussion below about gaps in the City's data. Also, see Appendix H for a detailed description of our results.

Exhibit 8: Average Percentage of Promotion Pay Increase in 2021 by Race/Ethnicity



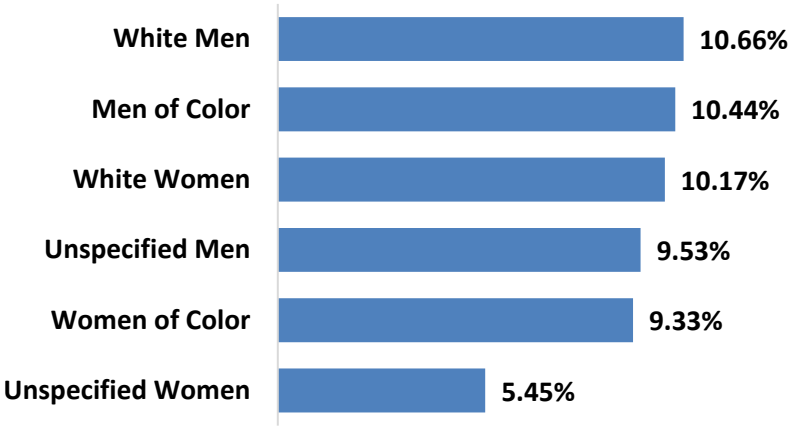
In 2021, American Indian or Alaska Native employees received the lowest promotion pay increases compared to other racial/ethnic groups.

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee promotion data.

In 2021, Women of Color Received Lower Promotion Pay Increase Compared to Men of Color, White Women, and White Men.

The average percentage of promotion pay increase for women of color who were promoted in 2021 was lower compared with that of White women, men of color, and White men. As Exhibit 9 shows, women of color received an average promotion pay increase of 9.33 percent compared to White women who received an average promotion pay increase of 10.17 percent. Men of color received an average promotion pay increase of 10.44 percent and White men received an average promotion pay increase of 10.66 percent.

Exhibit 9: Average Percentage of Promotion Pay Increase in 2021 by Race/Ethnicity and Gender



In 2021, women of color received lower promotion pay increases compared to men of color, White women, and White men.

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee promotion data.

Data Gaps and Opportunity for Streamlining Data Analysis

The City Has Not Included Promotion Analysis in Its Workforce Equity Reports.

The City's Executive Order 2015-02 which established the Workforce Equity Initiative requires SDHR to support continuous analytics of Citywide data and outcomes.[14] The 2015 City of Seattle Workforce Pay Equity and Utilization Report[15] also recommended that the City annually monitor promotion opportunities, promotion pools, and actual promotions. Although promotion analysis was identified as an important outcome to assess in the first workforce equity report published in 2018, we found that none of the subsequent reports have included an analysis of promotion. The 2021 Workforce Equity report (the latest available as of the writing of this report) indicated that there is a challenge in how to define "promotion" in a way that will yield viable results using existing HRIS data. We did not find this a challenge in our analysis of the 2021 data because the City has a list of actions (Exhibit 1) to identify promotions. The lack of analysis of promotion data in the workforce equity reports obstructs transparency in the promotion process and may contribute to employees' complaints about promotions.[16]

Gaps in the City's Human Resources Information System Data Affect Data Analysis.

The City's Human Resources Information System (HRIS), which was implemented about 25 years ago, has data gaps and limitations that affected our analyses. For example, there are 503 employees with unidentified race/ethnicity in the HRIS 2021 employees' data.[17] This represents about 3.9 percent of the 12,956 employees in the City of Seattle in 2021. In addition, there was inconsistency in the number of race/ethnicity categories in the datasets we analyzed. The City employee dataset has seven race/ethnicity categories while the promotion dataset has eight race/ethnicity categories. Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander employees who were promoted in 2021 were grouped as Asian in the City employee dataset. These race/ethnicity limitations affected the disaggregation of data during our analysis.

Additionally, we found that there were 26 employees with unspecified gender in the 2021 HRIS employees' data. HRIS has a limited gender identification of female, male, and unspecified, which limit

[14] The Executive Order 2015-02: Workforce Equity Initiative, which was supported by City Council Resolution 31588, stated that SDHR, in conjunction with SOCR where appropriate, will support continued and ongoing analytics of Citywide data and outcomes (Section 2c) and support continued transparency in government, including determining the methodology and technology to publish City Employee salaries by position and department (Section 2d).
[15] In 2015, SDHR contracted with DCI Consulting Group, Inc., a human resources consulting firm, to complete a workforce pay equity and utilization analysis of City employees.
[16] See Appendix C for an analysis of employees' complaints and legal cases related to promotion and reclassification.
[17] Employees are able to self-report their race/ethnicity in the City's Employee Self Service system. SDHR also works with departments to clean up the race/ethnicity data every two years for the City's federal reporting process. When we asked SDHR to run the 2021 data against the most recently completed clean up, only one employee out of the 503 employees had an updated race/ethnicity information.

identification of nonbinary and genderqueer employees. The limited gender categories could prevent the City from identifying and addressing potential disparities faced by nonbinary and genderqueer employees.[18]

We were unable to include employees' education levels in our analysis of promotion odds because the HRIS does not have complete or accurate data on education. Education level is not a required entry when onboarding new employees and for employees who completed their education while working for the City, there are no means of tracking and updating their education levels. Therefore, we could not assess if or how education level is associated with promotion outcomes.

The Transition of the City's HRIS to Workday HR Offers an Opportunity to Address Data Gaps and Streamline Analysis.

The City's Human Resources Information System (HRIS) is transitioning to Workday HR[19] in 2024. The transition to Workday HR is an opportunity for the City to design and implement systems that will address the gaps in Citywide data and develop processes and structures for the automation of data collection, analysis, and reporting. The Workday system will let City employees view and/or update their personal data and job information. The Workday system also offers reporting and analytics features that will enable better tracking of trends and provide helpful data to guide decision-making.

Exhibit 10: Workday HR Integrated Functionalities

Source: Seattle Department of Human Resources

[18] The Executive Order 2015-02: Workforce Equity Initiative, which was supported by City Council Resolution 31588, stated that SDHR, in conjunction with SOCR where appropriate, will identify effective and innovative best practices to attract and retain women and people of color, including continued analysis of data collection policies relating to sexual orientation, and gender identity, including transgender or gender non-conforming people (Section 1f. iv.).

[19] SDHR describes Workday as a secure, mobile-accessible, and cloud-based system that minimizes compliance and support risks for the workforce. City employees will be able to use the Workday system to view pay slips, personal data, job information, make benefits elections, complete ESS timesheets, request time off and more. New employees will be able to complete onboarding tasks directly in Workday.

Recommendation 1

The Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR) should use the transition of the City's Human Resources Information System to the Workday Human Resources system as an opportunity to evaluate and address data gaps, develop automated analytics, and set up systems to publish regular workforce analysis, including promotion and pay equity studies that use rigorous methodologies. For example, SDHR could explore A) onboarding functions that promote employees' demographics identification and B) automated reporting and analytics features that streamline workforce analyses of promotion and pay equity.

"BEST" PRACTICES FOR PROMOTIONS

Section Summary

Our review of relevant literature and articles yielded a list of promotion best practices from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). We identified improvement opportunities for the City based on these best practices.

Promotion Best Practices from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The list of best practices for promotions discussed in this section is from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).[20] In 1997, the EEOC published a report that examined business practices by which employers are complying with their equal employment opportunity obligations and diversity goals through creative or innovative methods. The report, titled Best Practices of Private Sector Employers, synthesized practices from different companies to produce a list of best practice ideas including those that apply to promotion and advancement. According to the report, "a best practice promotes equal employment opportunity and addresses one or more barriers that adversely affect equal employment opportunity. Not only does a best practice present serious commitment from management to EEO objectives, but it also addresses management accountability for equal employment opportunity."

Although the EEOC report was published over 25 years ago, we found that the best practices in the report are still supported by recent literature on practices that promote workforce equity. A list of the literature we reviewed is included in Appendix E.

For simplicity and adaptability, we grouped the EEOC's best practices into nine categories that are most applicable to the City (see Appendix E). We summarized the City's practices for each category and identified ways the City could improve its current practices (Exhibit 11). The City's practices we described are limited to seven departments that we interviewed during this audit.[21] As stated in the City's

[20] The EEOC is a federal commission responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions, gender identity, and sexual orientation), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information. The laws cover most employers with at least 15 employers and apply to all types of work situations including hiring, firing, promotions, harassment, training, wages, and benefits. In addition to enforcing laws, the EEOC also helps with voluntary compliance through education, training, outreach, and policy guidance. (EEOC Overview | U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (eeoc.gov))

[21] The departments we interviewed include the Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR), Finance and Administrative Services (FAS), Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI), Seattle Police Department (SPD), Seattle Fire Department (SFD), Seattle Center, and Seattle Municipal Court (SMC). FAS, SDCI, SPD, SFD, Seattle Center, and SMC are six of seven large departments in which women of color were a lower percentage of promoted employees compared to their portion of the department employee population (more than two percent difference) in our department-level analysis of the 2021 promotion data. See Appendix I for more detail on the department-level analysis.

Workforce Equity Strategic Plan, recommendations for advancing equity in the workforce cannot and should not be limited to just one report or plan. The City should continue to explore strategies and best practices that will advance workforce equity in the City of Seattle.

Exhibit 11: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Best Practices Categories and Summary of City of Seattle's Practices

This table summarizes the practices that SDHR and some departments' HR units are using to promote workforce equity in promotions at the time of our audit. We identified ways the practices could be improve and/or implemented Citywide.

Best Practices Category	SDHR and Some Departments' HR Units* Practices	Improvement Opportunity
Promotion Policies and Procedures	The City of Seattle Personnel Rules are the main policies and procedures for promotions in the City.	Departments and employees could benefit from a guide to the policies on promotion and reclassification. This could ensure consistent interpretation of the personnel rules and treatment of City employees.
Short- and Long-term Strategic Planning	The City has engaged in long-strategic planning with the workforce equity strategic plans. However, racial equity analysis on promotion practices has not been performed as a short-term strategic plan to identify potential barriers to the long-term goal of an equitable workforce.	Completing a racial equity analysis on promotion could provide an opportunity for the City to engage in short-term strategic planning for workforce equity. See Recommendation 4.
Clearly Defined Criteria and Pathways	The City's Class Specifications System is outdated. This creates unclear criteria and irrelevant requirements for positions.	We recommend that SDHR should develop a plan to update the Class Specifications System. See Recommendation 3.
Communication of Opportunities	Some departments (e.g., Seattle Center) have mechanisms in place for the dissemination of information about promotion opportunities within their departments. The City's hiring platform, NEOGOV, also has features that let City employees be notified of career opportunities.	The City could explore additional ways to enhance the dissemination of promotional opportunities within and across departments.

Best Practices Category	SDHR and Some Departments' HR Units* Practices	Improvement Opportunity
Hiring Panel Training	The departments we interviewed have different requirements and training for people on hiring panels. SDHR has the Talent, Experience, and Alignment (TEA) hiring process methodology which places a stronger emphasis on applicants' potential, skills, and values. Some departments (e.g., Seattle Municipal Court and SDHR's supported departments/offices) have adopted the TEA methodology.	The City could benefit from a collaborative HR system to ensure that promotion best practices are implemented Citywide and core training and requirements for people serving on hiring panels are consistent. See Recommendation 2.
Development Tools and Mentorship	The City has a Career Development Hub with resources about professional growth and skills development. This includes the Cornerstone system with self-paced learning and training opportunities for employees. Regular employees also have access to the City's Career Quest flash mentorship programs. Eight departments (e.g., SDCI, Seattle Center, SDHR) have specific mentorship programs.	As noted on the Mentorship program page, the City should explore software that enhances and streamlines mentorship across all City departments.
Career Management	The City has an E3 Performance Management System which lets employees track and manage their goals before review periods. The E3 system was developed to create a Citywide process that is consistent across all departments. However, not all departments use the E3 system. The E3 system also has an optional development planning function that lets employees plan for their professional career growth in the City.	The City could benefit from a collaborative HR system that promotes Citywide buy-in from departments' HR units for tools available for employees' career management. See Recommendation 2.

Best Practices Category	SDHR and Some Departments' HR Units* Practices	Improvement Opportunity
Transfer and Rotation Opportunities	The City has an Out-of-Class (OOC) system that offers employees opportunities to work in positions temporarily. However, HR Managers told us that the system has flaws. For example, a minimum qualification review is not required for short-term OOC positions. This means an OOC employee may not qualify for a position if it becomes permanent. Also, an OOC opportunity that ended more than a year before a promotion is not considered relevant for promotion salary step placement.	SDHR and relevant stakeholders could explore how to update and strengthen the City's OOC system.
Accountability	All the departments we interviewed told us that workforce equity is at the foundation of their HR practices. However, the City's federated HR system dilutes accountability for workforce equity. Also, promotion analysis has not been included in the annual workforce equity reports, which the City identified as an accountability mechanism for workforce equity in the 2016 Workforce Equity Strategic Plan.	A collaborative HR system, such as a Community of Practice framework, could offer an additional layer of accountability in addition to the annual workforce equity reports. See Recommendations 1 and 2.

*The practices we highlighted are limited to the departments we interviewed during this audit. These departments include the Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR), Finance and Administrative Services (FAS), Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI), Seattle Police Department (SPD), Seattle Fire Department (SFD), Seattle Center, and Seattle Municipal Court (SMC).

THE CITY'S HUMAN RESOURCES SYSTEM

Section Summary

The City's Human Resources (HR) system is a decentralized framework that contributes to siloed practices among departments and hinders Citywide HR collaboration. This system impacts the implementation of promotion best practices across the City.

The City Has a Federated HR System Which Hinders Collaboration.

The City of Seattle Human Resources system is a decentralized framework consisting of:

1) Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR) which delivers some HR services namely HR Investigations, Benefits Administration, Deferred Compensation, Compensation and Classification, Workers' Compensation, Safety, and Workforce Analytics and Reporting, across all City departments/offices;
2) 20 small departments/offices that rely on SDHR for all other HR services such as Talent Acquisition (i.e., Recruitment) and Development; and
3) Large departments (e.g., FAS, SDCI, SFD, SPD, etc.) with semi-independent HR units. The HR units manage HR services such as Talent Acquisition (i.e., Recruitment) and Development for their respective departments.

The City refers to this decentralized framework as a "federated HR system". See Appendix D for lists of departments/offices supported by SDHR and departments with HR units.

The Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) contributes to the City's federated HR system. In our review of the SMC, we found that the SDHR Director has the authority to promulgate, amend, or rescind rules for the administration of the personnel system of the City generally. However, Appointing Authorities[22] (for example, SDCI Director, FAS Director, etc.) have the authority to appoint, assign, and dismiss all employees in conformance with the City's personnel ordinances and rules. This system of power distribution means that departments may choose not to implement practices that SDHR recommends if those practices are not specifically stipulated in the City's Personnel Rules or an ordinance.

[22] An Appointing Authority is the head of an employing unit authorized by ordinance or City Charter to employ others on behalf of the City. The term includes and can be used interchangeably with department head, department director, superintendent, or chief. An employing unit is any department of the City, and within the Executive and Legislative Departments, any office created by ordinance (City of Seattle Personnel Rules). Elected officials such as City Councilmembers, City Attorney, and Municipal Court Judges head their respective employing units (City Council President for the Legislative Department, City Attorney for the City Attorney's Office, and Presiding Judge for the Seattle Municipal Court).

While the City's federated HR system ensures that large departments with nuances in their operations and union relations have their HR units to address their unique needs, it has contributed to isolated practices among departments.

The City's Federated HR System Impacts the Implementation of Promotion Best Practices Citywide.

The City's federated HR system has hindered collaboration among SDHR and departments' HR units on promotion best practices that could be implemented Citywide. Although SDHR convenes a monthly Human Resources Leadership Team meeting to share information with HR leaders across the City, SDHR staff told us that they do not have visibility over large departments' HR practices nor the authority to compel those departments to implement practices that SDHR is using for the 20 small departments it supports with all HR services. SDHR staff stated that they lack centralized authority over Citywide workforce equity initiatives due to the City's federated HR system.

An example is the Talent, Experience, and Alignment (TEA) hiring process methodology. TEA is the hiring process methodology implemented by SDHR across the 20 small departments it supports with all HR services. SDHR stated that TEA reflects the City's commitment to antiracism by removing barriers from the hiring process, deemphasizing formal education and years of experience, and placing a stronger emphasis on the applicants' potential, skills, and values. Although some departments' HR units (e.g., Seattle Municipal Court) have adopted TEA, it has not been implemented Citywide.

A Community of Practice System Could Offer a Model for Citywide HR Collaboration.

The City needs a collaborative HR system to help ensure that SDHR and other departments' HR units can effectively work together to address gaps in the implementation of promotion best practices Citywide and explore innovative practices that could be implemented throughout the City to ensure workforce equity. A resourced Community of Practice system, which SDHR used extensively during the pandemic, could be a model for Citywide HR collaboration. A Harvard Business Review article defined Communities of Practice as groups of professionals who meet regularly and are bound by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise. Their activities may include finding solutions to an issue, sharing their experiences, skills, and knowledge, and identifying creative ways that foster innovative approaches to problems.[23]

The City's Human Resources Leadership Team could be modeled from an information-sharing function into a Community of Practice system

[23] The World Bank's Collaboration for Development program recognized that the Communities of Practice (CoPs) framework can take many forms and consist of many elements. However, most have three basic building blocks: 1) Purpose of the community (what it does and why it exists), 2) People that form the community (the who of the community, including stakeholders), and 3) Practice by which the community functions (how the community organizes itself, its operating principles, and its governance mechanisms).

that promotes collaboration and ensures that challenges to Citywide implementations of current promotion best practices are effectively resolved. But the success of a Community of Practice system will depend on the participation of all departments' HR units and the willingness of Appointing Authorities to implement recommended practices. The Community of Practice system aligns with Executive Order 2015-02: Workforce Equity Initiative, which requires departments to act and devote all resources to support the direction, spirit, and mandates of the Workforce Equity Initiative including the work of analyzing and developing strategies to address potential workforce inequity and align employee-related policies, practices, and processes Citywide.[24]

In addition, if implemented at the HR leadership team level, the Community of Practice framework offers an additional layer of accountability for workforce equity, specifically, peer accountability among City HR units. The current system of accountability for workforce equity in the City hinges on the annual workforce equity reports, which describe activities undertaken to promote workforce equity and the incremental progress made.[25] As we discussed in the first section of this report, promotion analysis has not been included in the City's workforce equity reports.

Recommendation 2

The Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR), in collaboration with other City departments' Human Resources (HR) units, should explore ways to effectively work together to ensure Citywide implementation of promotion best practices. SDHR could consider modeling the City's Human Resources Leadership Team into a Community of Practice system that allows HR Leaders to collaboratively explore how to expand current promotion best practices Citywide.

[24] Executive Order 2015-02, which was supported by City Council Resolution 31588, also requires departments to work to create consolidated and aligned HR policies, processes, and practices that impact the City's ability to maintain consistent and equitable treatment of employees Citywide, such as recruitment and hiring, performance management, promotions, out-of-class assignments, part-time assignments, compensation determinations, discipline determinations, and employee development. (Section 1f. i.)

[25] The City's Workforce Equity Strategic Plan established the current system of accountability for workforce equity. It requires SDHR to develop and provide annual reports to the Mayor and City Council.

THE CITY'S CLASS SPECIFICATIONS SYSTEM

Section Summary

The City's Class Specifications System describes typical duties, responsibilities, minimum qualifications, work environment, licenses, certifications, and other requirements necessary for City positions. In our review of 17 class specifications, we found six class specifications in use that had not been updated since the positions were established in 1991 and none of the class specifications had been updated in the last 15 years. Outdated specifications can limit both the number and diversity of candidates who apply for those positions, and irrelevant requirements could further limit the pools of qualified candidates.

The City's Class Specification System is Outdated.

The City of Seattle Personnel Rules defined a Class Specification as a written description of a classification that includes a title, a description of distinguishing characteristics, a statement of duties and responsibilities, and a statement of minimum qualifications. These descriptions typically consist of characteristic duties, responsibilities, minimum qualifications, work environment, licenses, certifications, and other requirements necessary for City positions.

Multiple City HR managers told us that the City's Class Specifications System has not been updated since it was developed in 1991/93. The HR managers identified the outdated Class Specifications System as a systemic issue that poses problems to employees' advancement and could be contributing to disparities in promotions across departments.[26]

We found that the Class Specifications System has not been updated to ensure descriptions include relevant competencies, skills, and abilities that are required to perform the job. Outdated and irrelevant requirements that could present barriers to candidates have not been eliminated from the class specifications. For example, the Land Use Planner, Permit Specialist, and Engineering and Plans Review series require a State of Washington driver's license or evidence of equivalent mobility in the class specifications. SDCI HR staff told us that other means of transportation, other than driving, could be used for getting around the City to fulfill some of these positions' responsibilities. Furthermore, our review did not find a description of what qualifies as "equivalent mobility". SDCI and FAS HR staff also told us that they had experienced problems with the minimum qualifications review for employees who have international degrees

[26] See Appendix I for our department-level analysis of the City's 2021 promotion data.

and certificates because the City does not recognize these degrees as meeting education requirements.

In addition, our review of 17 class specifications suggested by HR managers, found six class specifications (e.g., Accountant, Mechanical Engineering Assistant) that have not been updated since the positions were established in 1991.[27] None of the class specifications we reviewed have been updated in the last 15 years including the Senior Accountant and Principal Accountant specifications which have not been updated since 2004. FAS HR staff explained that the outdated class specifications create misalignment with current technology and business operations and prevent the use of equivalencies in meeting minimum qualifications, which can contribute to the structural barriers to employees' advancement.

The City's Outdated Class Specifications System Presents a Barrier to Employees.

One of the best practices for promotion and career advancement, identified by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), is for employers to eliminate practices that exclude or present barriers to minorities, women, persons with disabilities, older persons, or any individuals. The City's outdated Class Specifications System presents a barrier to employees. Using obsolete and unclear descriptions of positions' characteristics, duties, responsibilities, and minimum qualifications in job announcements can limit both the number and diversity of candidates who apply for those positions, and irrelevant requirements can further limit the pools of qualified candidates.

The City recently took a step in the process of updating the Class Specifications System with the passage of the ordinance that established the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) as City policy.[28] The ordinance included a request for SDHR to provide the City Council with a plan and proposed timeline for determining how it would consider issues of position classification and exemption from the civil service related to race and social justice work by December 31, 2023.

Recommendation 3

The Seattle Department of Human Resources, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, should develop a multi-year plan to update the City's Class Specifications System. The plan should include a budget proposal for the City Council's consideration and a strategy for periodic updates of the Class Specifications System.

[27] See Appendix F for a list of the class specifications we reviewed based on HR managers' suggestions.
[28] The City's Race and Social Justice Initiative Ordinance went into effect in May 2023.

RACIAL EQUITY ANALYSIS

Section Summary

SDHR and the departments' HR managers[29] told us they consider RSJI factors in their processes, but none of the departments had completed a racial equity analysis on promotion and reclassification practices at the time of our audit. Completing and sharing a racial equity analysis will increase transparency in City's promotion and reclassification practices and could help the City identify and address issues of workforce inequities.

Promotion and Reclassification Policies Have Not Been Reviewed Through the City's Racial Equity Toolkit.

The City's Race and Social Justice Initiative (Executive Order 2014-02) calls for all City departments to eliminate racial disparities and directs departments to use the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) developed by the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR) to review departmental work and to incorporate a racial equity lens in Citywide initiatives. In the City's HR system, this means workforce equity, which SDHR states is the City's commitment to eliminate racial disparities and achieve equity for the City's employees. While HR managers told us they use RSJI factors in their processes, none of the City's HR units had completed a racial equity analysis on promotion and reclassification policies and practices nor submitted a RET on promotion and reclassification policies and practices to SOCR at the time of our audit.[30] HR managers explained that the current RET was not designed for HR processes and needs to be adapted to analyze HR policies and practices. By analyzing promotion policies with the RET, the City can identify potential barriers to the City's long-term goal of an equitable workforce. Completing and sharing a RET on promotion will increase transparency in the City's promotion and reclassification policies and practices.

In addition, the City's Workforce Equity Strategic Plan recommended that workforce equity strategies should be analyzed with the RET as part of the plan's implementation process.

Recommendation 4

The Seattle Department of Human Resources, in collaboration with the Seattle Office for Civil Rights, should adapt the City's Racial Equity Toolkit and perform a racial equity analysis of promotion and reclassification policies.

[29] The HR managers we interviewed were from Seattle Department of Human Resources, Finance and Administrative Services, Seattle Department of Constructions and Inspections, Seattle Police Department, Seattle Fire Department, Seattle Center, and Seattle Municipal Court.

[30] SOCR maintains a Racial Equity Actions database where departments can submit the Racial Equity Toolkits they completed. We searched SOCR City Racial Equity Actions database and found only one action related to Human Resources that was submitted by Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT). SDOT's action was to launch multi-module leadership training, diversity hiring/HR roundtable plan, and a plan for data collection in 2021-2022.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

Objectives

We conducted this audit at the request of Seattle City Councilmember Tammy Morales to examine workforce equity by establishing City of Seattle employee promotion baseline data and determining if the City is following best practices on promotions and retention, especially for women of color. Our objectives were to:

- Create baseline data on the demographics of employees who were promoted and reclassified upward in 2021.
- Conduct a review of best practices or evidence-based research of workforce equity retention and promotion, especially for women of color.
- Examine whether the City of Seattle is employing these practices and research and where there are gaps.

Scope

This audit data analysis focused on the City of Seattle employee population in 2021. With the intent to create baseline data on promotions and reclassifications, we analyzed the 2021 data, which was the most recent year available when we started this audit in 2022. The City HR practices we reviewed were those in place during this audit's data collection phase.

Methodology

To accomplish this audit's objectives, we performed the following:

- Analyzed 2021 data for the City of Seattle employee population including promotion and reclassification datasets. See Appendix G for a detailed description of our analyses methods.
- Reviewed state and local laws and City of Seattle ordinances and executive orders related to promotion and reclassification including the Seattle Municipal Code and the City of Seattle Personnel Rules.
- Reviewed City employees' complaints and legal cases related to promotion and reclassification in 2021.
- Reviewed literature and articles on promotion best practices, especially for women of color.
- Reviewed the City's Class Specifications System.
- Reviewed the City's Workforce Equity Strategic Plan and Reports.
- Interviewed Human Resources staff from seven departments, Seattle Office for Civil Rights staff, Office of Employee Ombud staff, City Attorney's Office staff, and members of City Affinity Groups listed on SDHR's website.

We would like to thank the Human Resources staff we interviewed for their cooperation; and the Seattle Office for Civil Rights staff, Office of

Employee Ombud staff, City Attorney's Office staff, and Affinity Groups members for their valuable input. We also want to express our gratitude to the former City Workforce Equity Director Felecia Caldwell who met with us during retirement and former Deputy City Auditor Virginia Garcia who was a member of our audit team until her retirement in May.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

APPENDIX A

Seattle Department of Human Resources Response

Seattle
Human Resources
Kimberly Loving, Director

Date: July 24, 2023
To: David G. Jones, City Auditor
From: Kimberly Loving, Seattle Human Resources Director
Subject: Workforce Equity in Promotions Departmental Response to Audit Recommendations

Dear David,

The work that your team and the Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR) department have accomplished by collaborating on the Workforce Equity in Promotions Audit this year will help move our equity needle toward identifiable solution-oriented results. As a result of the audit, SDHR will focus on the specific and relevant recommendations to ensure the next steps include attainable best practices and programs to support the City of Seattle's focus on closing the equity gap in the workforce when looking at employee promotions.

The audit findings were favorable in promotional outcomes for Women and Women of Color, while at the same time finding that Women of Color received a lower average percentage of promotion pay increases compared to other groups of employees. These findings also identified that the City of Seattle's Human Resources Information System creates barriers to data collection that would ensure measurements of success could be drilled down to a greater degree in all departments and positions.

SDHR fully concurs with all four recommendations, and we look forward to working collaboratively with other City of Seattle departments as stakeholders to meet the timelines and milestones for the work. Below SHR is providing a response to the outlined auditor's Recommendations 1 and 3:

Recommendation 1: The Seattle Departments of Human Resources (SDHR) should use the transition from the City's antiquated Human Resources (HR) system to the Workday HR system as an opportunity to evaluate and address data gaps, develop automated analytics, and set up systems to Publish regular workforce analysis. SDHR could explore A) onboarding functions that promote Employees' demographic identification and B) automated reporting and analytics features that Streamline workforce analyses of promotion and pay equity.

SDHR Concurrence: Concur **Estimated Date of Completion:** Q4, 2025

SDHR Response: As the Workday implementation moves through stabilization and City leaders become familiar with the tools of the system, a subcommittee will be convened to discuss and gaps in the department's ability to evaluate the data and analytics.

Recommendation 3: the Seattle Department of Human Resources, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, should develop a multi-year plan to update the City's Class Specifications System. The plan should include a budget proposal for the City Council consideration and strategy for periodic Updates of the Class Specifications System.

SDHR Concurrence: Concur **Estimated Date of Completion:** Q4 2025

SDHR Response: SDHR has worked with the City Budget Office to establish a baseline budget in

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2024 for a one-time funding to perform a comprehensive examination of the City-wide Classification And Compensation Program ("Program"). The review is necessary to ensure the Program will Strategically align with City priorities, effectively support retention and attraction of employees, Promote pay equity and compliance with pay equity laws, follow industry best practices and be Legally defensible. At the conclusion of the study, SDHR will then look at Recommendation 3 of this audit to align a multi-year plan to update the system and implement a strategy for ongoing update to the Program.

Sincerely,

(Jul 24, 2023 09:24 PDT)

Kimberly Loving
Director of Human Resources

APPENDIX B

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR) should use the transition of the City's Human Resources Information System to the Workday Human Resources system as an opportunity to evaluate and address data gaps, develop automated analytics, and set up systems to publish regular workforce analysis, including promotion and pay equity studies that use rigorous methodologies. For example, SDHR could explore A) onboarding functions that promote employees' demographics identification and B) automated reporting and analytics features that streamline workforce analyses of promotion and pay equity.
SDHR Concurrence: **Concur**
Estimated Date of Completion: **Q2, 2025**

Recommendation 2: The Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR), in collaboration with other City departments' Human Resources (HR) units, should explore ways to effectively work together to ensure Citywide implementation of promotion best practices. SDHR could consider modeling the City's Human Resources Leadership Team into a Community of Practice system that allows HR Leaders to collaboratively explore how to expand current promotion best practices Citywide.
SDHR Concurrence: **Concur**
Estimated Date of Completion: **Q4, 2024**

Recommendation 3: The Seattle Department of Human Resources, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, should develop a multi-year plan to update the City's Class Specifications System. The plan should include a budget proposal for the City Council's consideration and a strategy for periodic updates of the Class Specifications System.
SDHR Concurrence: **Concur**
Estimated Date of Completion: **Q4, 2025**

Recommendation 4: The Seattle Department of Human Resources, in collaboration with the Seattle Office for Civil Rights, should adapt the City's Racial Equity Toolkit and perform a racial equity analysis of promotion and reclassification policies.
SDHR Concurrence: **Concur**
Estimated Date of Completion: **Q4, 2024**

APPENDIX C

Complaints and Cases about Promotion and Reclassification in 2021

Four City departments handle employees' grievances and legal cases related to promotion and reclassification.

1. Seattle Department of Human Resources' (SDHR) Human Resources Investigative Unit (HRIU) investigates complaints and alleged violations of applicable City Personnel Rules, and/or related policies. This includes allegations of harassment, discrimination, and misconduct. Any current or former City of Seattle employee, their management, Human Resources representative, union representative, or shop steward may request an HRIU investigation.
2. Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR) enforces Seattle's civil rights laws, which include protections against discrimination in employment. It has jurisdiction within Seattle City limits, which includes people employed by the City of Seattle.
3. Office of the Employee Ombud's (OEO) mission is to ensure that City employees have access to a resource for informally addressing workplace concerns fairly and equitably.
4. The City Attorney's Office's (CAO) Employment Section along with the City's Human Resources Department, is responsible for personnel policy development and labor relations matters, including litigation, civil service, and arbitration proceedings.

These departments reported that they handled 23 complaints and two legal cases related to promotion and/or reclassification in 2021.

Department Investigating	No. of Cases	Involved Departments	Status	Complainant's Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Financial Impact
CAO	2	SDOT SCL	Both cases are still open	Black/African - 2	Male - 2	To Be Determined
SDHR	7	ITD SPD SDOT - 2 SCL OAC FAS	All seven cases have been closed with "Unsupported Claim" conclusions.	Black/African American - 5 Asian - 1 Hispanic or Latino - 1	Male - 5 Female - 2	None for all seven cases.
OEO	15	OEO could not provide the involved departments due to confidentiality issues.	All 15 cases have been closed.	Asian - 4 Caucasian - 5 Black/African American - 3 Hispanic or Latino - 1 Unknown - 2	Male - 9 Female - 6	None for all 15 cases.
SOCR	1	FAS	Case closed with the conclusion of "No Reasonable Cause".	Black/African American - 1	Male - 1	None

SDOT – Seattle Department of Transportation, SCL – Seattle City Light, ITD – Information Technology Department, SPD – Seattle Police Department, OAC – Office of Arts and Culture, FAS – Finance and Administrative Services

Sources: City Attorney's Office, Seattle Department of Human Resources, Office of the Employee Ombud, Seattle Office for Civil Rights.

APPENDIX D

Lists of Departments/Offices Supported by SDHR and Departments with Semi-Independent HR Units

20 Small Departments/Offices SDHR Supports with all HR Services
City Budget Office
Civil Service Commission
Community Police Commission
Department of Education and Early Learning
Department of Neighborhoods
Ethics and Elections Commission
Mayor's Office
Office for Civil Rights
Office of Arts and Culture
Office of Economic and Revenue Forecasts
Office of Economic Development (+ Office of Film & Music)
Office of Emergency Management
Office of Housing
Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs
Office of Intergovernmental Relations
Office of Labor Standards
Office of Planning & Community Development
Office of Sustainability & the Environment
Office of the Employee Ombud
Seattle Department of Human Resources

Large Departments with HR Units
City Attorney's Office
Community Safety and Communications Center
Finance and Administrative Services
Human Services Department
Legislative Department
Seattle Fire Department
Seattle Information and Technology Department
Seattle Municipal Court
Seattle Parks and Recreation
Seattle Police Department
Seattle Center
Seattle City Light
Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections
Seattle Department of Transportation
Seattle Public Library
Seattle Public Utilities

APPENDIX E

Research and Articles on "Best" Practices for Promotions

EEOC Best Practice Ideas Applicable to Promotion and Advancement

The Best Practices of Private Sector Employers | U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (eeoc.gov) report was published in 1997. The report examined business practices by which employers are complying with their Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) obligations and diversity goals through creative or innovative methods.

According to the report, "a best practice promotes equal employment opportunity and addresses one or more barriers that adversely affect equal employment opportunity. Not only does a best practice present serious commitment from management to EEO objectives, but it also addresses management accountability for equal employment opportunity."

The report identified the following as barriers that adversely affect EEO in career advancement and promotion:

- Lack of employee access to mentoring.
- Deficient performance evaluation and promotion processes.
- Lack of management training.
- Lack of opportunities for career development and rotational job assignments.
- Failing to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities.
- Poor career planning and development.
- Little or no access to informal networks of communication.
- Inability to get feedback.
- Different standards of performance and disparate treatment.
- Lack of career counseling and exclusion from career ladders.
- Lack of equal access to assignments that provide key career experiences.
- Lack of equal access to assignments that provide visibility and interaction with senior managers.
- EEO directors not included in the recruitment process for higher levels.
- Limited pool of targeted group of persons with required qualifications.
- Failure to post/advertise promotional opportunities.

The EEOC report also synthesized practices from different companies to produce a list of best practice ideas applicable to promotion and advancement. For simplicity and adaptability purposes, we grouped the identified best practice ideas applicable to promotion and advancement into nine categories that are most applicable to the City.

The nine categories we grouped the best practices into include:

1. Promotion Policies and Procedures
    - Establish a policy for promotion and career advancement, including criteria, procedures, responsible individuals, and the applicability of diversity and affirmative action.
2. Short- and Long-term Strategic Planning
    - Engage in short-term and long-term strategic planning: Define aims; Identify the applicable barriers to equal employment opportunity; Make a road map for implementing the plan.
    - Provide for succession planning.
    - Develop methods to identify high-potential persons.

   - Build talent pools.
3. Clearly defined Criteria and Pathways
   - Communicate the competencies, skills, and abilities required.
   - Eliminate practices that exclude or present barriers to minorities, women, persons with disabilities, older persons, or any individuals.
4. Communication of Opportunities
   - Establish a communication network notifying interested persons of opportunities, including advertising within the organization and, where applicable, not only with the general media, but with minorities, persons with disabilities, older persons, and women-focused media.
5. Hiring Panel Training
   - Ensure that personnel involved in the promotion and advancement process are well trained in their equal employment opportunity responsibilities.
6. Development Tools and Mentorship
   - Provide sufficient training and opportunities for additional education.
   - Establish mentoring and networking programs and systems to help develop high-potential individuals.
7. Career Management
   - Provide tools to enable employees to self-manage their careers.
   - Provide employee resource centers, so individuals may have more opportunities to develop career plans.
   - Ensure that tools for continuous learning and optimum job performance are available.
   - Develop career plans and programs for high-potential employees.
8. Transfer and Rotation Opportunities
   - Provide job transfer/rotation programs for career-enhancing developmental experiences.
9. Accountability
   - Include progress in equal employment opportunity in advancement and promotion as factors in management evaluation.

Additional Sources for Best Practices for Promotions

- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission – Best Practices of Private Sector Employers | U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (eeoc.gov) Pages 106-126; 229
- U.S. Department of Labor (Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs) – Best Practices for Ensuring Equal Opportunity in Promotions | U.S. Department of Labor (dol.gov)
- State of Vermont – Promotions & Advancements Best Practices | Workplaces For All (vermont.gov)

Additional Research and Articles on Workforce Equity in Promotions

Pace, C. (2018). How Women of Color Get to Senior Management. Harvard Business Review

This article is based on dissertation case study research into how women of color at a Fortune 500 company get into leadership roles. It presented three steps organizations can take to elevate women of color to leadership roles: educate managers about the work realities faced by women of color; integrate conversations on workplace biases into sponsorship programs; and ensure women of color's access to essential business experiences.

Liu, S. et al. (2019). Patching the "Leaky Pipeline": Interventions for Women of Color Faculty in STEM Academia. APA PsycNet

This article used intersectionality theory to identify the specific barriers in selection, promotion, and retention faced by women of color faculty within the scope of academic Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) careers. The article also proposed interventions to address these barriers. Some interventions identified for retention and promotion are: Creating Social Support Networks; Mentorship Programs; Establishing Transparent and Equal Workload Distributions; Formally Rewarding Service Work.

Orr, C.D. & Conner M.L. (2020). Women of Color: The Path to Equity in the Public Sector | icma.org. International City/County Management Association

This article from two members of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA) highlighted the role of mentorship in the career development of women of color and how membership organizations like NFBPA can be a source of support and skill sharing for employees. It advocated for professional development opportunities and flexible work schedules to support mentor relationships.

Hale, J. & Zamora, S. (2022). Trends in Talent Attraction and Retention. Center for Advanced Human Resources Studies, Cornell University.

This white paper from two researchers from Cornell University's Center for Advanced Human Resources Studies was a benchmarking study conducted with 16 global partners of the Center to gain a holistic understanding of how employers are handling the rapid shifts in the labor market due to proclaimed higher-than-usual levels of attrition. The article's findings highlighted how emerging trends in talent attraction and retention practices by firms taking transformative actions amidst the "Great Resignation". It identified a simple four-step framework that includes equipping organizational members with a well-rounded skill set to mitigate toxic behaviors and ensure psychological safety is embedded in day-to-day practices; connecting members across increasingly disaggregated organizations by launching a clear and consistent communication strategy; development by normalizing recurring coaching and career conversations, democratizing learning opportunities, offering talent exchange programs, rotation programs, and gig assignments; and tracking data and delivering results informed by employee sentiment, sense of belonging, intent to leave, among others.

APPENDIX F

Class Specifications We Reviewed

The City's Class Specifications System provides descriptions of characteristic duties, responsibilities, minimum qualifications, work environment, licenses, certifications, and other requirements necessary for City positions. Our review of 17 class specifications suggested by HR managers found six class specifications in use that had not been updated since the positions were established in 1991 and none of the class specifications had been updated in the last 15 years.

Positions	Established Date	Latest Revision
Accountant	01/02/1991	–
Senior Accountant	01/02/1991	01/14/2004
Principal Accountant	01/02/1991	01/14/2004
Manager 1, Engineering and Plans Review	01/07/1998	11/05/2002
Manager 2, Engineering and Plans Review	01/07/1998	11/05/2002
Manager 3, Engineering and Plans Review	01/07/1998	11/05/2002
Mechanical Engineering Assistant I	01/02/1991	–
Mechanical Engineering Assistant II	01/02/1991	–
Mechanical Engineering Assistant III	01/02/1991	–
Permit Specialist (Entry)	02/03/2006	–
Permit Specialist I	02/03/2006	–
Permit Specialist II	02/03/2006	–
Land use Planner I	01/01/2002	–
Land use Planner II	01/01/2002	–
Land use Planner III	01/01/2002	–
Land use Planner IV	01/01/2002	–
Photographic Services Supervisor	02/01/1991	–

Source: City of Seattle's Class Specifications System

APPENDIX G

Descriptive and Adjusted Analyses of Citywide 2021 Promotion Data

Descriptive Analysis

We calculated frequencies and percentages of promotions and reclassifications for our descriptive analysis. We also calculated promotion rates as the number of promoted employees in each category divided by the number of employees in that category. We stratified our data by departments, race/ethnicity, and gender, and reported the frequency and percentages of promotions and reclassifications. We computed the average percentage increase in pay that employees got when they were promoted (i.e., promotion raises) in 2021 and stratified the data by pay band, gender, and race/ethnicity.

Adjusted Analysis

We performed adjusted analyses using the multivariate regression analysis method to examine the statistical relationships between race/ethnicity, and promotion and gender and promotion. The multivariate models accounted for factors that could influence promotion, including years of service, hourly rate, employment class, employee status, full time status, union representation, in addition to race/ethnicity and gender. Adjusting for these factors means we were able to estimate if there are differences in the odds of promotion for employees of color and White employees even if they have identical characteristics such as years of service, hourly rate, employment class, employee status, full time status, union representation, and gender. However, we could not adjust for all the observable factors, such as education and out-of-class experience, that could influence promotions due to data limitations. According to SDHR, the City's Human Resources Information System (HRIS) does not have complete or accurate data on education because it is not a required entry when onboarding new employees.

Our analytical method could not control for unobservable factors such as performance evaluation, employees' skills, and motivation. Therefore, our analyses do not explain the reasons for differences in promotion outcomes. Also, our analyses do not establish a causal relationship between demographics and promotion outcomes, (i.e., correlation does not imply causation). These analyses aim to provide insights and help identify potential areas of concern; however, they should be interpreted with caution.

Detailed Description of Analyses Methods

The 2021 City of Seattle employee data from SDHR was used to explore the associations between employee demographics and promotion outcomes. The analytical steps include:

- Descriptive analysis was completed using Excel and the statistical software package R (version 4.2.2). Adjusted analysis was completed using R (v 4.2.2).
- Frequency and percentages of promotions and reclassifications were reported for categorical variables – race/ethnicity, gender, employee status, employee class, and time (part or full-time).
- We calculated the skewness and kurtosis of the quantitative variables. The median and interquartile ranges were reported for the quantitative variables – hourly rate and years of service – because of their skewed distributions.

- The variables were stratified by race/ethnicity and gender to report the promotion rates for each group of employees. Promotion rates were calculated as the number of promoted employees in each category divided by the number of employees in that category.
- We calculated the average percentage increase in pay that employees got when they were promoted (i.e., promotion raises) in 2021 and stratified the data by pay band, gender, and race/ethnicity.
- Adjusted analysis – bivariate and multivariate methods – were used to examine the statistical relationship between gender, racial/ethnicity, and promotion.
- Bivariate analyses were used to explore the association between promotion and each variable in 2021. Mann-Whitney U tests (also called Wilcoxon Rank Sum Test) were used to assess the associations between promotion and quantitative variables with skewed distributions, including hourly rate and years of service. Pearson's Chi-squared tests and Fisher's Exact tests were used to assess the associations between promotions and categorical variables, including race/ethnicity, gender, employee status, employee class, and time. Fisher's Exact tests were reported due to the small sample sizes of some variables.
- To determine whether race/ethnicity and gender were predictive of promotion, bivariate logistic regressions were used to assess the association between each predictor variable and promotion. A focus of this audit is the association between promotion and race/ethnicity and gender, which we assessed by multivariate logistic regression models that controlled for other predictor variables.
- Multivariate logistic regression models were used due to the relatively small population of City employees. These models provide insights into the extent to which race/ethnicity and gender are related to promotion outcomes after accounting for other predictive variables, but the models do not establish the variables as key causal factors. The results produced adjusted odds ratios of promotion.
- For the multivariate logistic regression models, the quantitative variables – hourly rate and years of services – were transformed (i.e., squared) to normalize the data for the models because these continuous variables were not normally distributed.
- For exploratory analysis, the predictor variables were used to run the following multivariate models:
    - Model 1: controlled for Gender and Race/Ethnicity
    - Model 2: controlled for Years of Service, Years of Service squared, Gender, and Race/Ethnicity
    - Model 3: controlled for Years of Service, Years of Service squared, Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, Gender, and Race/Ethnicity
    - Model 4: controlled for all the variables (Years of Service, Years of Service squared, Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, Hourly rate, Time, Employee Status, Union Representation, Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Employment Class)
    - Model 5: controlled for all the variables except Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, and Union Representation (presented in the body of the report)
- Finally, we ran multivariate models using data filtered by Gender and Race/Ethnicity:
    - Model 6a: controlled for all variables (Females Only)
    - Model 6b: controlled for all variables except Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, and Union (Females Only)
    - Model 7a: controlled for all variables (Males Only)

  - Model 7b: controlled for all variables except Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, and Union (Males Only)
  - Model 8a: controlled for all variables (for People of Color Only)
  - Model 8b: controlled for all variables except Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, and Union (for People of Color Only)
  - Model 9a: controlled for all variables (for Whites Only)
  - Model 9b: controlled for all variables except Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, and Union (for Whites Only)
  - Model 10: Odds of Women of Color vs. White Men
- There are observable variables/factors such as education and out-of-class experience that may affect promotions that we could not account for because SDHR do not have complete or accurate data on those factors. Additionally, we were not able to control for unobservable factors such as performance evaluation, employees' skills, and motivation. As a result, our analyses do not explain the reason for the differences in the odds of promotion nor do our analyses establish a causal relationship between the variables and promotion outcomes.
- Our analysis did not adjust for factors such as age when entering the City, veteran's status, and employees' occupations/positions.
- Odds Ratio Interpretation:
  - OR = 1 means the variable does not affect the odds of promotion.
  - OR>1 means the variable is associated with higher odds of promotion.
  - OR<1 variable is associated with lower odds of promotion.
  - Note that OR of 3.0 does not mean that promotion is thrice as likely to occur, but rather the odds are threefold greater.
  - Note that OR greater than one does not establish a causal relationship. i.e., correlation does not imply causation.
- p-value Interpretation: this represents the statistical significance for which the analysis results in the rejection of the Null Hypothesis that there is no difference in the odds of promotion. For this analysis, we established statistical significance at $p<0.05$.

APPENDIX H

Detailed Results of Analyses on Citywide 2021 Promotion Data

Promotion Outcomes Were Slightly Higher for Women Relative to Men in 2021.

Our descriptive analysis shows that the number and percentages of women promoted in 2021 were slightly high relative to their representation in the City employee population. As Table 1 shows, women comprised 43 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 39.2 percent of the employee population. Men comprised 56.9 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 60.6 percent of the employee population.

The descriptive analysis in Table 2 shows that the promotion rate for women was higher than that of men in 2021. We calculated promotion rates as the number of promoted employees in each category divided by the number of employees in that category. The promotion rate for women was 7.9 percent compared with 6.8 percent for men. However, our promotion rate calculation does not account for the different factors besides gender that may affect promotions.

Our adjusted analysis of the 2021 data, controlling and accounting for factors other than gender that could influence promotions (such as years of service, hourly rate, employment class, employee status, full time status, union representation, and race/ethnicity), found that the promotion odds were slightly higher for women compared to men (Table 3, Model 5). After adjusting for factors that could influence promotions, the odds of promotion for women were 1.143 times higher than the odds of promotion for men in 2021 (the corresponding 95 percent Confidence Interval is 0.990, 1.320). The adjusted odds ratio is not statistically significant ($p=0.067$). It is important to note that saying "women are 1.143 times more likely to be promoted than men" is not an accurate interpretation of the odds ratio. The odds ratio compares the odds of promotion in one group to the odds of promotion in another group.

Table 1: Number and Percentage of City Employees, Promotions, and Reclassifications in 2021

^	All Employees Number (%)	Promotions Number (%)	Reclassification Number (%)
Race/Ethnicity			
American Indian or Alaska Native	168 (1.3)	5 (0.5)	2 (2.7)
Asian or Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	2408 (18.6)	188 (20.0)	11 (14.7)
Black or African American	1745 (13.5)	165 (17.6)	11 (14.7)
Hispanic or Latino	784 (6.1)	76 (8.1)	2 (2.7)
Two or More Races	79 (0.6)	9 (1.0)	0 (0.0)
Not Specified	503 (3.9)	40 (4.3)	1 (1.3)
White	7269 (56.1)	454 (48.5)	48 (64.0)
Gender			
Female	5082 (39.2)	403 (43.0)	47 (62.7)
Male	7848 (60.6)	533 (56.9)	28 (37.3)
Unknown (N)	26 (0.2)	1 (1.1)	0 (0.0)
Union Representation			
Represented	9473 (73.1)	686 (73.2)	
Non-represented	3483 (26.9)	251 (26.8)	
Employee Status			
Regular	11270 (87.0)	934 (99.7)	75 (100.0)
Temporary	1686 (13.0)	3 (0.3)	0 (0.0)
Employee Class			
Exempt	3542 (27.3)	160 (17.1)	15 (20.0)
Non-exempt	7292 (56.3)	632 (67.4)	60 (80.0)
Public Safety	2122 (16.4)	145 (15.5)	0 (0.0)
Time			
Full Time	10583 (81.7)	871 (93.0)	74 (98.7)
Part Time	2373 (18.3)	66 (7.0)	1 (1.3)

^Column percentages are reported for the total in each category. Adding percentages in some categories (e.g., race/ethnicity) may be over 100 due to rounding.

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population, promotion, and reclassification data.

Table 2: City Employees Characteristics and Bivariate Associations with Promotions in 2021

	All N=12956	Promotions N=937	
	Median (IQR)	Median (IQR)	p-value[a]
Years of Service (years)	8.0 (3.0, 17.5)	4.0 (2.0, 11.0)	<0.001*
Hourly Rate ($)	44.9 (33.1, 57.3)	43.0 (32.8, 57.0)	0.761
[1]	N (%)	N (%Rate)	p-value[b]
Gender			0.040*
Male	7848 (60.6)	533 (6.8)	
Female	5082 (39.2)	403 (7.9)	
Unspecified	26 (0.2)	1 (3.8)	
Race/Ethnicity			<0.001*
White	7269 (56.1)	454 (6.2)	
People of Color	5184 (40.0)	443 (8.5)	
Unspecified	503 (3.9)	40 (8.0)	
Employment Class			<0.001*
Non-exempt	7292 (56.3)	632 (8.7)	
Exempt	3542 (27.3)	160 (4.5)	
Public Safety	2122 (16.4)	145 (6.8)	
Time			<0.001*
Full Time	10583 (81.7)	871 (8.2)	
Part Time	2373 (18.3)	66 (2.8)	
Employee Status			<0.001*
Regular	11270 (87.0)	934 (8.3)	
Temporary	1686 (13.0)	3 (0.2)	
Union Representation			0.970
Represented	9473 (73.1)	686 (7.2)	
Non-represented	3483 (26.9)	251 (7.2)	

[a]Mann Whitney test [b]Fisher's Exact test *.05 Significance level

[1] Column percentages are reported for the total in each category while the promotions columns are reported as rates for each row.

IQR = Interquartile Range

p-value Interpretation: this represents the statistical significance for which the analysis results in the rejection of the Null Hypothesis that there is no difference in the odds of promotion. For this analysis, we established statistical significance at $p<0.05$.

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data.

Table 3: Comparing Factors Associated with Promotions in 2021

			Multivariate Model 5	
	Crude OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Years of Service (years)	0.951 (0.942, 0.959)	<0.001*	0.895 (0.875, 0.917)	<0.001*
Years squared	0.998 (0.998, 0.999)	<0.001*	1.001 (1.001, 1.002)	<0.001*
Hourly Rate ($)	1.003 (0.999, 1.007)	0.140	~~~	~~~
Hourly Rate squared	1.000 (1.000, 1.000)	0.187	~~~	~~~
Time (part time vs full time)	0.319 (0.245, 0.408)	<0.001*	0.963 (0.716, 1.274)	0.794
Employee Status (temporary vs permanent)	0.020 (0.005, 0.051)	<0.001*	0.013 (0.003, 0.034)	<0.001*
Union (represented vs non-represented)	1.005 (0.866, 1.170)	0.945	~~~	~~~
Race/Ethnicity		<0.001*		<0.001*
White (reference)				
People of Color	1.403 (1.224, 1.607)	<0.001*	1.457 (1.266, 1.677)	<0.001*
Unspecified	1.297 (0.913, 1.793)	0.130	0.919 (0.642, 1.282)	0.630
Gender		0.040*		0.081
Male (reference)				
Female	1.182 (1.033, 1.352)	0.015*	1.143 (0.990, 1.320)	0.067
Unspecified	0.549 (0.031, 2.596)	0.557	0.349 (0.019, 1.719)	0.308
Employment Class		<0.001*		0.299
Non-exempt (reference)				
Exempt	0.499 (0.416, 0.594)	<0.001*	0.858 (0.704, 1.040)	0.125
Public Safety	0.773 (0.639, 0.929)	0.007*	0.970 (0.793, 1.179)	0.763

OR= Odds Ratio *.05 Significance level ~~~Variable was not included in the model
95% CI = 95% Confidence Interval
Crude ORs do not consider other factors that could influence promotion.
Adjusted ORs consider factors that could influence promotions that were included in the model.
Odds Ratio Interpretation:

- OR = 1 means the variable does not affect the odds of promotion.
- OR>1 means the variable is associated with higher odds of promotion.
- OR<1 means the variable is associated with lower odds of promotion.
- Note that OR of 3.0 does not mean that promotion is thrice as likely to occur, but rather the odds are threefold greater.
- Note that OR greater than one does not establish a causal relationship. i.e., correlation does not imply causation.

p-value Interpretation: this represents the statistical significance for which the analysis results in the rejection of the Null Hypothesis that there is no difference in the odds of promotion. For this analysis, we established statistical significance at $p<0.05$.

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data.

Promotion Outcomes Were Slightly Higher for Employees of Color Compared to White Employees in 2021.

Our descriptive analysis shows that the number and percentages of employees of color promoted in 2021 were generally high relative to their representation in the City employee population, except for American Indian or Alaska Native employees. As Table 1 shows, Asian or Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander employees made up 20 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 18.6 percent of the employee population; Black or African American employees made up 17.6 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 13.5 percent of the employee population; Hispanic or Latino employees made up 8.1 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 6.1 percent of the employee population; employees with two or more races made up 1 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 0.6 percent of the employee population. However, American Indian or Alaska Native employees had a lower makeup of 2021 promotions, 0.5 percent compared to 1.3 percent of the employee population. White employees made up 48.5 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 56.1 percent of the employee population. Note that our analysis did not compare the City of Seattle workforce to the population of the greater Seattle area. Our focus is on City of Seattle employee population.

Table 2 shows that the promotion rate for employees of color was higher than that of White employees in 2021. We calculated promotion rates as the number of promoted employees in each category divided by the number of employees in that category. The promotion rate for employees of color was 8.5 percent compared with 6.2 percent for White employees. However, our promotion rate calculation does not account for the different factors besides race/ethnicity that may affect promotions.

Our adjusted analysis of the 2021 data, controlling and accounting for factors other than race/ethnicity that could influence promotions (such as years of service, hourly rate, employment class, employee status, full time status, union representation, and gender), found that the promotion odds were slightly higher for employees of color compared to White employees (see Table 3, Model 5). After adjusting for factors that could influence promotions, the odds of promotion for employees of color were 1.457 times higher than the odds of promotion for White employees in 2021 (the corresponding 95 percent Confidence Interval is 1.266, 1.677). The adjusted odds ratio is statistically significant ($p<0.001$). It is important to note that saying "employees of color are 1.457 times more likely to be promoted than White employees" is not an accurate interpretation of the odds ratio. The odds ratio compares the odds of promotion in one group to the odds of promotion in another group.

Promotion Outcomes Were Slightly Higher for Women of Color Compared to Other Groups of Employees in 2021.

Our descriptive analysis shows that the numbers and percentages of women of color promoted in 2021 were generally higher compared to the total number of women of color in the City employees population, except for American Indian or Alaska Native women and women with two or more races. As Table 4 shows, Asian or Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander women comprised 9.8 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 8.5 percent of the employee population; Black or African American women comprised 8.0 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 5.9 percent of the employee population; Hispanic or Latino women comprised 3.9 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 2.3 percent of the employee population. However, American Indian or Alaska Native women had a lower share of 2021 promotions, 0.2 percent compared to 0.4 percent of the employee population and women

with two or more races had 0.2 percent of 2021 promotions compared to a 0.3 percent share of the employee population. White women comprised 19.2 percent of 2021 promotions compared to 20.3 percent of the employee population.

Our adjusted analysis of 2021 data, controlling and accounting for factors other than race/ethnicity and gender that could influence promotions (such as years of service, hourly rate, employment class, employee status, full time status, and union representation), found that the promotion odds were slightly higher for women of color compared to White women (see Table 13), men of color (see Table 15), and White men (see Table 17). After adjusting for factors that could influence promotions, the odds of promotion for women of color were 1.491 times higher than the odds of promotion for White women in 2021 (the corresponding 95 percent Confidence Interval is 1.203, 1.850). The adjusted odds ratio is statistically significant ($p<0.001$). After adjusting for factors that could influence promotions, the odds of promotion for women of color were 1.123 times higher than the odds of promotion for men of color in 2021 (the corresponding 95 percent Confidence Interval is 0.913, 1.382). The adjusted odds ratio is not statistically significant ($p=0.273$). After adjusting for factors that could influence promotions, the odds of promotion for women of color were 1.698 times higher than the odds of promotion for White men in 2021 (the corresponding 95 percent Confidence Interval is 1.379, 2.089). The adjusted odds ratio is statistically significant ($p<0.001$). It is important to note that saying "women of color are 1.491 times more likely to be promoted than White women" or "women of color are 1.123 times more likely to be promoted than men of color" or "women of color are 1.698 times more likely to be promoted than White men" are not accurate interpretations of odds ratios. The odds ratios compare odds of promotion in one group to the odds of promotion in another group.

Table 4: City Employees, Promotions, and Reclassifications by Race/Ethnicity and Gender in 2021

	All Employees Number (%)^	Promotions Number (%)	Reclassification Number (%)
American Indian/Alaska Native	168 (1.3)	5 (0.5)	2 (2.7)
Female	58 (0.4)	2 (0.2)	1 (1.3)
Male	110 (0.8)	3 (0.3)	1 (1.3)
Asian or Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	2408 (18.6)	188 (20.1)	11 (14.7)
Female	1102 (8.5)	92 (9.8)	10 (13.3)
Male	1305 (10.1)	96 (10.2)	1 (1.3)
Unspecified	1 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Black or African American	1745 (13.5)	165 (17.6)	11 (14.7)
Female	762 (5.9)	75 (8.0)	7 (9.3)
Male	983 (7.6)	90 (9.6)	4 (5.3)
Hispanic or Latino	784 (6.1)	76 (8.1)	2 (2.7)
Female	304 (2.3)	37 (3.9)	1 (1.3)
Male	480 (3.7)	39 (4.2)	1 (1.3)
Not Specified	503 (3.9)	40 (4.3)	1 (1.3)
Female	188 (1.5)	15 (1.6)	0 (0.0)
Male	304 (2.3)	24 (2.6)	1 (1.3)
Unspecified	11 (0.1)	1 (0.1)	0 (0.0)
Two or More Races	79 (0.6)	9 (1.0)	0 (0.0)
Female	36 (0.3)	2 (0.2)	0 (0.0)

	All Employees Number (%)^	Promotions Number (%)	Reclassification Number (%)
Male	40 (0.3)	7 (0.7)	0 (0.0)
Unspecified	3 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
White	7269 (56.1)	454 (48.5)	48 (64.0)
Female	2632 (20.3)	180 (19.2)	28 (37.3)
Male	4626 (35.7)	274 (29.2)	20 (26.7)
Unspecified	11 (0.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

^Column percentages are reported for the total in each category.

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population, promotion, and reclassification data.

Table 5: City Employees and Promotions, Stratified Characteristics by Gender in 2021

	Female Employees Total	Female Employees Promotions	Male Employees Total	Male Employees Promotions
	Median (IQR)	Median (IQR)	Median (IQR)	Median (IQR)
Years of Service (years)	7.0 (2.0, 16.0)	4.0 (2.0, 8.0)	8.0 (3.5, 19.0)	5.0 (2.0, 13.0)
Hourly rate ($)	41.7 (30.1, 54.3)	41.7 (31.2, 55.0)	47.6 (34.7, 59.1)	44.0 (35.2, 59.5)
[1]	N (%)	N (%Rate)	N(%)	N (%Rate)
Race/Ethnicity				
White	2632 (51.8)	180 (6.8)	4626 (58.9)	274 (5.9)
People of Color	2262 (44.5)	208 (9.2)	2918 (37.2)	235 (8.1)
Unspecified	188 (3.7)	15 (8.0)	304 (3.9)	24 (7.9)
Employment Class				
Non-exempt	3005 (59.1)	291 (9.7)	4279 (54.5)	341 (8.0)
Exempt	1831 (36)	90 (4.9)	1693 (21.6)	69 (4.1)
Public Safety	246 (4.8)	22 (8.9)	1876 (23.9)	123 (6.6)
Time				
Full Time	3854 (75.8)	364 (9.4)	6721 (85.6)	507 (7.5)
Part Time	1228 (24.2)	39 (3.2)	1127 (14.4)	26 (2.3)
Employee Status				
Regular	4274 (84.1)	400 (9.4)	6975 (88.9)	533 (7.6)
Temporary	807 (15.9)	3 (0.4)	873 (11.1)	0 (0.0)
Union Representation				
Represented	3095 (60.9)	253 (8.2)	6363 (81.1)	432 (6.8)
Non-represented	1987 (39.1)	150 (7.5)	1485 (18.9)	101 (6.8)

There were 26 employees with unspecified gender.

[1] Column percentages are reported for the total in each category while the Promotions columns are reported as rates for each row.

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data.

Table 6: City Employees and Promotions, Stratified Characteristics by Race/Ethnicity in 2021

	Employees of Color Total	Employees of Color Promotions	White Employees Total	White Employees Promotions
	Median (IQR)	Median (IQR)	Median (IQR)	Median (IQR)
Years of Service (years)	7.0 (2.5, 18.0)	4.0 (2.0, 10.0)	8.0 (4.0, 18.0)	4.0 (2.0, 12.0)
Hourly rate ($)	39.5 (29.5, 53.3)	40.1 (29.3, 52.3)	49.4 (36.9, 59.5)	47.6 (37.1, 60.0)
[1]	N (%)	N (%Rate)	N(%)	N (%Rate)
Gender				
Male	2918 (56.3)	235 (8.1)	4626 (63.6)	274 (5.9)
Female	2262 (43.6)	208 (9.2)	2632 (36.2)	180 (6.8)
Unspecified	4 (0.1)	0 (0.0)	11 (0.2)	0 (0.0)
Employment Class				
Non-exempt	3125 (60.3)	311 (10.0)	3859 (53.1)	288 (7.5)
Exempt	1558 (30.1)	92 (5.9)	1859 (25.6)	64 (3.4)
Public Safety	501 (9.7)	40 (8.0)	1551 (21.3)	102 (6.6)
Time				
Full Time	4073 (78.6)	396 (9.7)	6097 (83.9)	437 (7.2)
Part Time	1111 (21.4)	47 (4.2)	1172 (16.1)	17 (1.5)
Employee Status				
Regular	4376 (84.4)	440 (10.1)	6463 (88.9)	454 (7.0)
Temporary	808 (15.6)	3 (0.4)	806 (11.1)	0 (0.0)
Union Representation				
Represented	3784 (73.0)	323 (8.5)	5318 (73.2)	334 (6.3)
Non-represented	1400 (27.0)	120 (8.6)	1951 (26.8)	120 (6.2)

There were 503 employees with unspecified race/ethnicity.

[1] Column percentages are reported for the total in each category while the Promotions columns are reported as rates for each row.

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data.

Results of Analyses on Citywide 2021 Promotion Pay Data

Table 7: Average Promotion Pay Increase by Pay Band

Salary Band	City of Seattle Employees	Number of Promotions	Average Hourly Rate for Employees who got promoted (95% CI)	Average % Increase (95% CI)
*Band 1 ($0.00 - $16.99)	79	0	0	0
Band 2 ($17.00 - $37.99)	4639	342	30.49 (30.01, 30.96)	6.75 (5.70, 7.81)
Band 3 ($38 .00- $58.99)	5385	380	47.24 (46.66, 47.81)	11.24 (10.02, 12.46)
Band 4 ($59.00 - $79.99)	2607	188	66.67 (65.88, 67.46)	12.45 (10.82, 14.09)
Band 5 ($80.00 - $121.99)	246	27	91.47 (88.00, 94.94)	19.92 (14.62, 25.23)

*Includes Civil Service Commissioners, Youth Employment Enrollees, Work Training Enrollees, and Student Assistants

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data

Table 8: Average Promotion Pay Increase by Gender

Gender	Number of Promotions	Average Hourly rate (95% CI)	Average % Increase (95% CI)
Male	533	47.79 (46.39, 49.19)	10.51 (9.55, 11.47)
Female	403	44.38 (42.86, 45.91)	9.56 (8.39, 10.74)
Unspecified	1	22.56	5.27

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee promotion data

Table 9: Average Promotion Pay Increase by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Promotions	Average Hourly rate (95% CI)	Average % Increase (95% CI)
American Indian or Alaska Native	5	42.55 (29.64, 55.46)	3.96 (-2.41, 10.32)
Asian or Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	188	43.48 (41.14, 45.83)	9.60 (7.99, 11.20)
Black or African American	165	43.51 (40.75, 46.26)	10.24 (8.41, 12.08)
Hispanic or Latino	76	41.99 (38.96, 45.01)	9.85 (7.09, 12.62)
Two or More Races	9	41.72 (35.53, 47.90)	14.62 (7.91, 21.33)
Not Specified	40	47.45 (42.37, 52.54)	7.90 (3.94, 11.85)
White	454	49.23 (47.82, 60.64)	10.47 (9.41, 11.52)

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee promotion data

Table 10: Average Promotion Pay Increase by Race and Gender

	Number of Promotions	Average Hourly Rate (95% CI)	Average % Increase (95% CI)
Women of Color	208	42.47 (40.26, 44.69)	9.33 (7.65, 11.02)
White Women	180	46.72 (44.60, 48.84)	10.17 (8.53, 11.82)
Unspecified Women	15	42.85 (35.82, 49.87)	5.45 (-2.23, 13.14)
Men of Color	235	43.82 (41.70, 45.94)	10.44 (9.03, 11.84)
White Men	274	50.88 (49.02, 52.74)	10.66 (9.28, 12.04)
Unspecified Men	24	51.37 (44.76, 57.99)	9.53 (5.13, 13.93)

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee promotion data

Results of Multivariate Logistic Regression

Model 1: controlled for Gender and Race/Ethnicity
Model 2: controlled for Years of Service, Years of Service squared, Gender, and Race/Ethnicity
Model 3: controlled for Years of Service, Years of Service squared, Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, Gender, and Race/Ethnicity
Model 4: controlled for all the variables - Years of Service, Years of Service squared, Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, Time, Employee Status, Union Representation, Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Employment Class
Model 5: controlled for all the variables except Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, and Union Representation (presented in the body of the report)

Table 11: Comparing Factors Associated with Promotions in 2021

			Multivariate Model 1		Multivariate Model 2	
	Crude OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Years of Service (years)	0.951 (0.942, 0.959)	<0.001*			0.947 (0.925, 0.970)	<0.001
Years squared	0.998 (0.998, 0.999)	<0.001*			1.000 (0.999, 1.001)	0.681
Hourly Rate ($)	1.003 (0.999, 1.007)	0.140				
Hourly Rate squared	1.000 (1.000, 1.000)	0.187				
Time (part time vs full time)	0.319 (0.245, 0.408)	<0.001*				
Employee Status (temporary vs permanent)	0.020 (0.005, 0.051)	<0.001*				
Union (represented vs non-represented)	1.005 (0.866, 1.170)	0.945				
Race/Ethnicity		<0.001*		<0.001*		<0.001*
White (reference)						

			Multivariate Model 1		Multivariate Model 2	
	Crude OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
People of Color	1.403 (1.224, 1.607)	<0.001*	1.387 (1.210, 1.590)	<0.001*	1.346 (1.173, 1.545)	<0.001*
Unspecified	1.297 (0.913, 1.793)	0.130	1.307 (0.919, 1.809)	0.120	1.012 (0.710, 1.406)	0.945
Gender		0.040*		0.087		0.262
Male (reference)						
Female	1.182 (1.033, 1.352)	0.015*	1.155 (1.008, 1.321)	0.037*	1.080 (0.942, 1.237)	0.269
Unspecified	0.549 (0.031, 2.596)	0.557	0.533 (0.030, 2.542)	0.539	0.363 (0.020, 1.731)	0.322
Employment Class		<0.001*				
Non-exempt (reference)						
Exempt	0.499 (0.416, 0.594)	<0.001*				
Public Safety	0.773 (0.639, 0.929)	0.007*				

OR= Odds Ratio; *.05 Significance level

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data.

Table 12: Comparing Factors Associated with Promotions in 2021

	Multivariate Model 3		Multivariate Model 4		Multivariate Model 5	
	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Years of Service (years)	0.926 (0.904, 0.949)	<0.001*	0.895 (0.874, 0.918)	<0.001*	0.895 (0.875, 0.917)	<0.001*
Years squared	1.001 (1.000, 1.001)	0.147	1.001 (1.001, 1.002)	<0.001*	1.001 (1.001, 1.002)	<0.001*
Hourly Rate ($)	1.031 (1.015, 1.049)	<0.001*	0.968 (0.951, 0.986)	0.001*		
Hourly Rate squared	1.000 (1.000, 1.000)	0.058	1.000 (1.000, 1.000)	<0.001*		
Time (part time vs full time)			0.908 (0.658, 1.236)	0.545	0.963 (0.716, 1.274)	0.794
Employee Status (temporary vs permanent)			0.013 (0.003, 0.034)	<0.001*	0.013 (0.003, 0.034)	<0.001*
Union (represented vs non-represented)			1.024 (0.852, 1.234)	0.803		
Race/Ethnicity		<0.001		<0.001		<0.001*
White (reference)						
People of Color	1.484 (1.289, 1.708)	<0.001*	1.444 (1.252, 1.666)	<0.001*	1.457 (1.266, 1.677)	<0.001*
Unspecified	1.007 (0.705, 1.400)	0.970	0.913 (0.638, 1.275)	0.606	0.919 (0.642, 1.282)	0.630
Gender		0.162		0.062		0.081
Male (reference)						
Female	1.119 (0.976, 1.283)	0.107	1.158 (1.001, 1.340)	0.048*	1.143 (0.990, 1.320)	0.067
Unspecified	0.423 (0.024, 2.030)	0.402	0.352 (0.019, 1.739)	0.313	0.349 (0.019, 1.719)	0.308
Employment Class				0.075		0.299
Non-exempt (reference)						

	Multivariate Model 3		Multivariate Model 4		Multivariate Model 5	
	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Exempt			0.776 (0.620, 0.966)	0.025*	0.858 (0.704, 1.040)	0.125
Public Safety			0.993 (0.806, 1.217)	0.945	0.970 (0.793, 1.179)	0.763

OR= Odds Ratio; *.05 Significance level

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data

Table 13: Comparing Factors Associated with Promotions (for Female Employees) in 2021

Model 6a: controlled for all variables.

Model 6b: controlled for all variables except Hourly Rate and Union.

	Multivariate Model 6a		Multivariate Model 6b	
	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Years of Service (years)	0.886 (0.854, 0.919)	<0.001*	0.884 (0.854, 0.917)	<0.001*
Years squared	1.001 (1.001, 1.003)	0.006*	1.002 (1.001, 1.003)	0.005*
Hourly Rate ($)	0.983 (0.958, 1.008)	0.176		
Hourly Rate squared	1.000 (1.000, 1.000)	0.136		
Time (part time vs full time)	0.824 (0.538, 1.233)	0.354	0.869 (0.586, 1.256)	0.464
Employee Status (temporary vs permanent)	0.027 (0.006, 0.075)	<0.001*	0.027 (0.006, 0.077)	<0.001*
Union (represented vs non-represented)	1.035 (0.805, 1.334)	0.791		
Race/Ethnicity		0.001*		<0.001*
White (reference)				
People of Color	1.477 (1.187, 1.839)	<0.001*	1.491 (1.203, 1.850)	<0.001*
Unspecified	0.807 (0.443, 1.372)	0.454	0.811 (0.446, 1.379)	0.465
Employment Class		0.219		0.188
Non-exempt (reference)				
Exempt	0.784 (0.582, 1.049)	0.105	0.797 (0.607, 1.035)	0.094
Public Safety	1.130 (0.680, 1.798)	0.622	1.122 (0.685, 1.757)	0.630

OR= Odds Ratio; *.05 Significance level

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data

Table 14: Comparing Factors Associated with Promotions (for Male Employees) in 2021
Model 7a: controlled for all variables.
Model 7b: controlled for all variables except Hourly Rate, Hourly Rate squared, and Union.

	Multivariate Model 7a		Multivariate Model 7b	
	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Years of Service (years)	0.901 (0.873, 0.931)	<0.001*	0.902 (0.875, 0.931)	<0.001*
Years squared	1.001 (1.000, 1.002)	0.034*	1.001 (1.000, 1.002)	0.020*
Hourly Rate ($)	0.961 (0.938, 0.983)	0.001*		
Hourly Rate squared	1.000 (1.000, 1.001)	<0.001*		
Time (part time vs full time)	1.063 (0.642, 1.718)	0.853	1.131 (0.714, 1.729)	0.634
Employee Status (temporary vs permanent)	0.004 (0.000, 0.028)	<0.001*	0.004 (0.000, 0.026)	<0.001*
Union (represented vs non-represented)	1.008 (0.766, 1.336)	0.941		
Race/Ethnicity		0.001*		0.001*
White (reference)				
People of Color	1.422 (1.177, 1.718)	<0.001*	1.431 (1.188, 1.723)	<0.001*
Unspecified	0.982 (0.618, 1.499)	0.881	0.988 (0.622, 1.507)	0.902
Employment Class		0.299		0.848
Non-exempt (reference)				
Exempt	0.775 (0.551, 1.075)	0.126	0.939 (0.700, 1.243)	0.643
Public Safety	0.983 (0.779, 1.236)	0.888	0.956 (0.765, 1.187)	0.677

OR= Odds Ratio; *.05 Significance level

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data

Table 15: Comparing Factors Associated with Promotions (for Employees of Color) in 2021
Model 8a: controlled for all variables.
Model 8b: controlled for all variables except Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, and Union.

	Multivariate Model 8a		Multivariate Model 8b	
	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Years of Service (years)	0.910 (0.878, 0.944)	<0.001*	0.909 (0.878, 0.943)	<0.001*
Years squared	1.001 (1.000, 1.002)	0.203	1.001 (1.000, 1.002)	0.162
Hourly Rate ($)	0.960 (0.935, 0.986)	0.003*		
Hourly Rate squared	1.000 (1.000, 1.001)	0.001*		
Time (part time vs full time)	1.097 (0.724, 1.634)	0.658	1.221 (0.840, 1.741)	0.289
Employee Status (temporary vs permanent)	0.015 (0.004, 0.043)	<0.001*	0.015 (0.004, 0.043)	<0.001*
Union (represented vs non-represented)	1.026 (0.785, 1.350)	0.853		
Gender		0.205		0.262
Male (reference)				
Female	1.142 (0.925, 1.410)	0.217	1.123 (0.913, 1.382)	0.273
Unspecified	0.000	0.962	0.000	0.963

	Multivariate Model 8a		Multivariate Model 8b	
	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Employment Class		0.636		0.723
Non-exempt (reference)				
Exempt	0.878 (0.641, 1.192)	0.409	0.970 (0.736, 1.268)	0.828
Public Safety	0.907 (0.618, 1.304)	0.609	0.866 (0.597, 1.227)	0.431

OR= Odds Ratio; *.05 Significance level

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data

Table 16: Comparing Factors Associated with Promotions (for Whites Employees) in 2021

Model 9a: controlled for all variables.

Model 9b: controlled for all variables except Hourly rate, Hourly rate squared, and Union.

	Multivariate Model 9a		Multivariate Model 9b	
	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value	Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Years of Service (years)	0.873 (0.845, 0.903)	<0.001*	0.875 (0.847, 0.904)	<0.001*
Years squared	1.002 (1.001, 1.003)	<0.001*	1.002 (1.001, 1.003)	<0.001*
Hourly Rate ($)	0.979 (0.953, 1.004)	0.096		
Hourly Rate squared	1.000 (1.000, 1.000)	0.026*		
Time (part time vs full time)	0.624 (0.347, 1.058)	0.081	0.625 (0.359, 1.021)	0.061
Employee Status (temporary vs permanent)	0.000	<0.001*	0.000	<0.001*
Union (represented vs non-represented)	1.046 (0.804, 1.370)	0.738		
Gender		0.090		0.102
Male (reference)				
Female	1.199 (0.970, 1.480)	0.092	1.185 (0.961, 1.458)	0.111
Unspecified	0.000	0.993	0.000	0.993
Employment Class		0.096		0.169
Non-exempt (reference)				
Exempt	0.707 (0.506, 0.977)	0.039*	0.772 (0.572, 1.028)	0.084
Public Safety	1.046 (0.807, 1.349)	0.733	1.044 (0.814, 1.331)	0.732

OR= Odds Ratio; *.05 Significance level

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data

Table 17: Comparing Promotion Odds (Women of Color vs White Men) in 2021

	Crude OR (95% CI)	p-value	~Adjusted OR (95% CI)	p-value
Women of Color vs White Men	1.608 (1.332, 1.939)	<0.001*	1.698 (1.379, 2.089)	<0.001*

OR= Odds Ratio; *.05 Significance level

~Adjusted for years of service, years of service squared, employment class, time, and employee status.

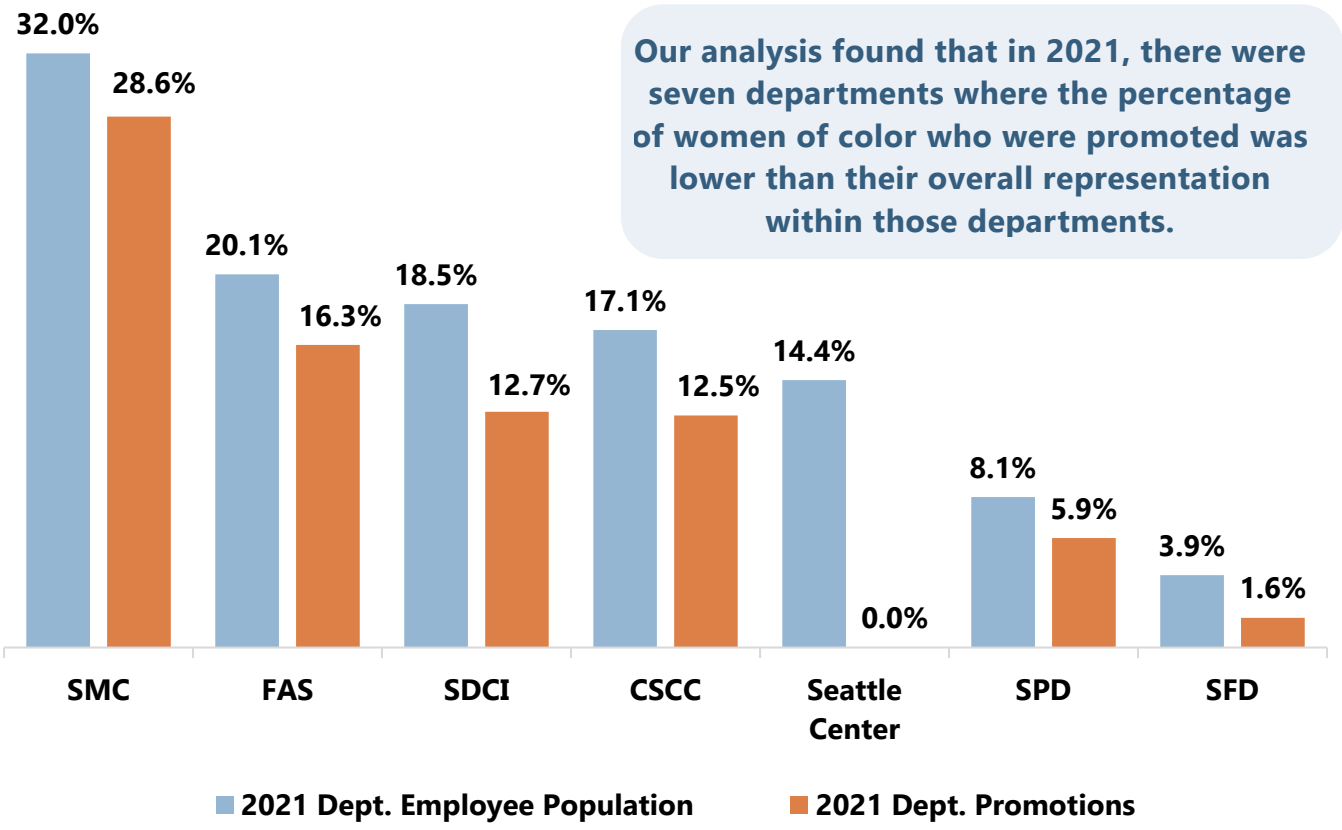
Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data.

APPENDIX I

Department-level Analysis of 2021 Promotion Data

We conducted descriptive analysis for department-level data by calculating the frequencies and percentages of promotions and reclassifications for the 18 City departments with over 100 employees in 2021 (see table below). The 18 departments represented about 96 percent of the City employee population, 95 percent of promotions, and 95 percent of reclassifications in 2021. We identified departments with more than two percentage point difference between the portion of women of color and their proportion of employees who were promoted in 2021. Our analysis found that in 2021 there were seven departments in which women of color were a lower percentage of promoted employees compared to their portion of the department employee population (more than two percent difference). These departments are Finance and Administrative Services (FAS), Seattle Department of Constructions and Inspections (SDCI), Seattle Police Department (SPD), Seattle Fire Department (SFD), Seattle Center, Seattle Municipal Court (SMC), and Community Safety and Communication Center (CSCC) (see Exhibit 11). We interviewed HR managers from FAS, SDCI, SPD, SFD, SMC, and Seattle Center. They explained that 2021 was a challenging year for their department due to the COVID-19 pandemic disruptions and cited some of the issues we discussed in this report as potential causes of the disproportionality.

Percentages of Women of Color in Promotions vs. Department Employees Population in 2021



Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population and promotion data.

Department-Level Analysis of Promotions and Reclassifications by Gender and Race/Ethnicity in 2021

Eighteen departments (with >100 Employees) representing about 96 percent of the City workforce, 95 percent of promotions, and 95 percent of reclassifications in 2021.

^	All Employees Number (%)	Promotions Number (%)	Reclassification Number (%)
Departments			
Community Safety and Comm Ctr Dept.	**117 (0.9)**	**16 (1.7)**	**0**
Women of Unspecified Race	9 (7.7)	0	0
Women of Color	20 (17.1)	2 (12.5)	0
White Women	49 (41.9)	4 (25.0)	0
Men of Unspecified Race	7 (6.0)	0	0
Men of Color	5 (4.3)	2 (12.5)	0
White Men	27 (23.1)	8 (50.0)	0
Seattle Dept. of Construction & Inspections	**426 (3.3)**	**55 (5.9)**	**5 (6.7)**
Women of Unspecified Race	14 (3.3)	2 (3.6)	0
Women of Color	79 (18.5)	7 (12.7)	0
White Women	86 (20.2)	16 (29.1)	2 (40.0)
Men of Unspecified Race	22 (5.2)	2 (3.6)	0
Men of Color	74 (17.4)	9 (16.4)	0
White Men	151 (35.4)	19 (34.5)	3 (60.0)
Dept. of Education & Early Learning	**120 (0.9)**	**10 (1.1)**	**0**
Women of Unspecified Race	5 (4.2)	0	0
Women of Color	62 (51.7)	6 (60.0)	0
White Women	28 (23.3)	2 (20.0)	0
Men of Color	17 (14.2)	1 (10.0)	0
White Men	8 (6.7)	1 (10.0)	0
Finance & Administrative Services	**578 (4.5)**	**49 (5.2)**	**3 (4.0)**
Women of Unspecified Race	8 (1.4)	2 (4.1)	0
Women of Color	116 (20.1)	8 (16.3)	2 (66.7)
White Women	134 (23.2)	10 (20.4)	1 (33.3)
Men of Unspecified Race	17 (2.9)	4 (8.2)	0
Men of Color	122 (21.1)	14 (28.6)	0
White Men	181 (31.3)	11 (22.4)	0
***Seattle Fire Department**	**1109 (8.6)**	**62 (6.6)**	**1 (1.3)**
Women of Unspecified Race	2 (0.2)	0	0
Women of Color	43 (3.9)	1 (1.6)	0
White Women	106 (9.6)	8 (12.9)	0
Men of Unspecified Race	16 (1.4)	0	0
Men of Color	220 (19.8)	13 (21.0)	0
White Men	722 (65.1)	40 (64.5)	1 (100.0)
Human Services Department	**399 (3.1)**	**46 (4.9)**	**13 (17.3)**
Women of Unspecified Race	9 (2.3)	1 (2.2)	0

^	All Employees Number (%)	Promotions Number (%)	Reclassification Number (%)
Women of Color	160 (40.1)	29 (63.0)	3 (23.1)
White Women	138 (34.6)	11 (23.9)	8 (61.5)
Men of Unspecified Race	5 (1.3)	0	0
Men of Color	47 (11.8)	2 (4.3)	1 (7.7)
White Men	39 (9.8)	3 (6.5)	1 (7.7)
White Unspecified Gender	1 (0.3)	0	0
Information Technology Department	**612 (4.7)**	**34 (3.6)**	**3 (4.0)**
Women of Unspecified Race	7 (1.1)	1 (2.9)	0
Women of Color	104 (17.0)	12 (35.3)	0
White Women	119 (19.4)	5 (14.7)	1 (33.3)
Men of Unspecified Race	11 (1.8)	1 (2.9)	0
Men of Color	144 (23.5)	7 (20.6)	0
White Men	227 (37.1)	8 (23.5)	2 (66.7)
Law Department (City Attorney's Office)	**181 (1.4)**	**2 (0.2)**	**0**
Women of Unspecified Race	3 (1.7)	0	0
Women of Color	38 (21.0)	1 (50.0)	0
White Women	85 (47.0)	1 (50.0)	0
Men of Unspecified Race	3 (1.7)	0	0
Men of Color	8 (4.4)	0	0
White Men	44 (24.3)	0	0
Legislative Department	**103 (0.8)**	**3 (0.3)**	**5 (6.7)**
Women of Unspecified Race	1 (1.0)	0	0
Women of Color	29 (28.2)	2 (66.7)	0
White Women	30 (29.1)	0	3 (60.0)
Men of Color	9 (8.7)	0	0
White Men	33 (32.0)	1 (33.3)	2 (40.0)
Unspecified Gender and Race	1 (1.0)	0	0
Seattle Municipal Court	**228 (1.8)**	**14 (1.5)**	**1 (1.3)**
Women of Unspecified Race	2 (0.9)	0	0
Women of Color	73 (32.0)	4 (28.6)	1 (100.0)
White Women	70 (30.7)	6 (42.9)	0
Men of Unspecified Race	1 (0.4)	0	0
Men of Color	44 (19.3)	4 (28.6)	0
White Men	38 (16.7)	0	0
Seattle Parks & Recreation	**1485 (11.5)**	**86 (9.2)**	**3 (4.0)**
Women of Unspecified Race	9 (0.6)	0	0
Women of Color	316 (21.3)	23 (26.7)	1 (33.3)
White Women	279 (18.8)	15 (17.4)	1 (33.3)
Men of Unspecified Race	16 (1.1)	0	0
Men of Color	492 (33.1)	32 (37.2)	1 (33.3)
White Men	372 (25.1)	16 (18.6)	0
Unspecified Gender and Race	1 (0.1)	0	0
***Seattle Police Department**	**1600 (12.3)**	**119 (12.7)**	**4 (5.3)**

^	All Employees Number (%)	Promotions Number (%)	Reclassification Number (%)
Women of Unspecified Race	21 (1.3)	1 (0.8)	0
Women of Color	129 (8.1)	7 (5.9)	2 (50.0)
White Women	276 (17.3)	26 (21.8)	1 (25.0)
Men of Unspecified Race	56 (3.5)	5 (4.2)	0
Men of Color	337 (21.1)	30 (25.2)	0
White Men	778 (48.6)	50 (42.0)	1 (25.0)
Unspecified Gender and Race	2 (0.1)	0	0
White Unspecified Gender	1 (0.1)	0	0
Seattle Center	**591 (4.6)**	**5 (0.5)**	**0**
Women of Unspecified Race	6 (1.0)	0	0
Women of Color	85 (14.4)	0	0
White Women	136 (23.0)	1 (20.0)	0
Men of Unspecified Race	6 (1.0)	0	0
Men of Color	92 (15.6)	3 (60.0)	0
White Men	265 (44.8)	1 (20.0)	0
Unspecified Gender and Race	1 (0.2)	0	0
Seattle City Light	**1660 (12.8)**	**104 (11.1)**	**7 (9.3)**
Women of Unspecified Race	26 (1.6)	1 (1.0)	0
Women of Color	215 (13.0)	13 (12.5)	2 (28.6)
White Women	240 (14.5)	17 (16.3)	2 (28.6)
Men of Unspecified Race	87 (5.2)	7 (6.7)	1 (14.3)
Men of Color	391 (23.6)	26 (25.0)	1 (14.3)
White Men	700 (42.2)	40 (38.5)	1 (14.3)
Unspecified Gender and Race	1 (0.1)	0	0
Seattle Dept. of Human Resource	**106 (0.8)**	**6 (0.6)**	**4 (5.3)**
Women of Unspecified Race	5 (4.7)	1 (16.7)	0
Women of Color	36 (34.0)	2 (33.3)	0
White Women	36 (34.0)	1 (16.7)	4 (100.0)
Men of Unspecified Race	1 (0.9)	0	0
Men of Color	6 (5.7)	2 (33.3)	0
White Men	22 (20.8)	0	0
Seattle Dept. of Transportation	**1044 (8.1)**	**102 (10.9)**	**10 (13.3)**
Women of Unspecified Race	16 (1.5)	1 (1.0)	0
Women of Color	164 (15.7)	16 (15.7)	5 (50.0)
White Women	190 (18.2)	19 (18.6)	0
Men of Unspecified Race	19 (1.8)	4 (3.9)	0
Men of Color	312 (29.9)	31 (30.4)	1 (10.0)
White Men	340 (32.6)	31 (30.4)	4 (40.0)
Unspecified Gender and Race	1 (0.1)	0	0
Person of Color Unspecified Gender	1 (0.1)	0	0
White Unspecified Gender	1 (0.1)	0	0
Seattle Public Library	**629 (4.9)**	**56 (6.0)**	**3 (4.0)**
Women of Unspecified Race	9 (1.4)	1 (1.8)	0

^	All Employees Number (%)	Promotions Number (%)	Reclassification Number (%)
Women of Color	165 (26.2)	22 (39.3)	0
White Women	184 (29.3)	11 (19.6)	1 (33.3)
Men of Unspecified Race	9 (1.4)	0	0
Men of Color	125 (19.9)	15 (26.8)	1 (33.3)
White Men	125 (19.9)	6 (10.7)	1 (33.3)
Unspecified Gender and Race	2 (0.3)	1 (1.8)	0
Person of Color Unspecified Gender	3 (0.5)	0	0
White Unspecified Gender	7 (1.1)	0	0
Seattle Public Utilities	**1433 (11.1)**	**122 (13.0)**	**9 (12.0)**
Women of Unspecified Race	16 (1.1)	3 (2.5)	0
Women of Color	251 (17.5)	34 (27.9)	1 (11.1)
White Women	277 (19.3)	18 (14.8)	2 (22.2)
Men of Unspecified Race	23 (1.6)	1 (0.8)	0
Men of Color	398 (27.8)	37 (30.3)	2 (22.2)
White Men	466 (32.5)	29 (23.8)	4 (44.4)
Unspecified Gender and Race	1 (0.1)	0	0
White Unspecified Gender	1 (0.1)	0	0

^ may add up to less than or over 100% due to approximation

* The Fire and Police departments consist of sworn police and uniformed fire employees in the Public Safety Civil Service System which makes and enforces rules and develops examinations for promotions (Public Safety Civil Service Commission Rules of Practice and Procedure).

Source: Office of City Auditor analysis of the City's 2021 employee population, promotion, and reclassification data

APPENDIX J

Seattle Office of City Auditor Mission, Background, and Quality Assurance

Our Mission:
To help the City of Seattle achieve honest, efficient management and full accountability throughout City government. We serve the public interest by providing the City Council, Mayor, and City department heads with accurate information, unbiased analysis, and objective recommendations on how best to use public resources in support of the well-being of Seattle residents.

Background:
Seattle voters established our office by a 1991 amendment to the City Charter. The office is an independent department within the legislative branch of City government. The City Auditor reports to the City Council and has a four-year term to ensure their independence in deciding what work the office should perform and reporting the results of this work. The Office of City Auditor conducts performance audits and non-audit projects covering City of Seattle programs, departments, grants, and contracts. The City Auditor's goal is to ensure that the City of Seattle is run as effectively, efficiently, and equitably as possible in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

How We Ensure Quality:
The office's work is performed in accordance with the Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. These standards provide guidelines for audit planning, fieldwork, quality control systems, staff training, and reporting of results. In addition, the standards require that external auditors periodically review our office's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that we adhere to these professional standards.

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