



## KAREN A. YARBROUGH

RECORDER OF DEEDS / REGISTRAR OF TORRENS TITLES  
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

June 15, 2017

Karen A. Yarbrough, Recorder  
Cook County Recorder of Deeds  
118 N. Clark Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Cardelle Spangler, Compliance Administrator  
Office of the Compliance Administrator  
69 W. Washington  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

RE: 2017 Report – May 1, 2017 through June 15, 2017

Dear Madame Recorder and Ms. Spangler:

This is the first report issued by the undersigned Director of Compliance (DOC) and covers the time frame May 1, 2017 to June 15, 2017 pursuant to the Cook County Recorder of Deeds (CCRD) Employment Plan that was filed on August 14, 2013. This report includes the monitoring of activities during the past six and a half weeks. This report will be posted on the Recorder of Deeds website as required by the Employment Plan.

The primary role of the Office of Director of Compliance is to oversee and ensure compliance with the Employment Plan and the Policy and Procedures Manual of the Recorder of Deeds Office.

The Recorder of Deeds Office includes the DOC in meetings, conferences, employment actions and planning sessions. The Recorder has conferred four times with the DOC to facilitate dialogue on a weekly basis. Due to scheduling conflicts, a few weekly meetings were canceled. The DOC looks forward to meeting more frequently with the Recorder as these meetings are informative and beneficial for the goal of Substantial Compliance.

### **NO LONGER WITH CCRD:**

The Office of Cook County Recorder of Deeds (CCRD) saw one resignation, one retirement and two terminations during the period of this report. The DOC is unaware of whether or not an exit interview took place for the employee that was terminated effective May 22, 2017. The DOC was present and the RCA monitored telephonically the exit interview of the employee who resigned from her position effective May 26, 2017. Neither the DOC nor the RCA was present for the exit interview of the employee who retired effective on May 31, 2017. The DOC was also not present for the termination of an Exempt employee on May 31, 2017. It should be noted, however, the DOC was present for a meeting held by the Recorder in which the Recorder



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stated that she would terminate the Exempt employee as a result of an investigation conducted by the interim DOC.

Going forward, the DOC requests and requires to be notified in a timely manner of all exit interviews and will report on the status of this requirement in her next report.

### **REQUESTS TO HIRE / JOB POSTINGS:**

During the time period of this report, a Chief of Human Resources was hired, in accordance with the Employment Plan, Section XI, and effective June 14, 2017.

On May 15, 2017 the position of Cashier II was posted but an error required it to be taken down from Taleo. Notifications have yet to be sent to applicants due to the ongoing transition in the HR Department. The DOC will work with HR to correspond with the applicants.

The DOC was informed by the former Chief of HR that CCRD is looking to post an Investigator II position but the DOC has yet to see a Request to Hire. Furthermore, the DOC, in conjunction with the RCA, has requested clarification and revision of the Job Description prior to moving forward with the posting of the position.

The DOC was also informed by the former Chief of HR that CCRD is looking to post a Supervisor position but the DOC has yet to see a Request to Hire.

### **DESK AUDIT:**

On June 7, 2017 the Human Resources Director conducted a desk audit for the Director of Operations. The DOC and RCA monitored the process. Based on the DOC's observations, the DOC will work with HR to draft procedures in accordance with the Manual. Changes may be proposed to the Desk Audit section of the Manual as well.

### **45 DAY EVALUATIONS:**

One of four employees that were recalled prior to May 1, 2017 received a final 45 day evaluation as he successfully completed the evaluation period. In a collaborative effort, the RCA and DOC recommended that the remaining three employees repeat the 45 day evaluation process beginning the week of 6/12/2017 to ensure that the process is followed properly and that they receive proper training and evaluations. The DOC is monitoring the process in its entirety and will report on its effectiveness in her next report.

### **DISCIPLINE:**

The Office of Director of Compliance is tasked to monitor all facets of the discipline process including Discipline Hearings and Level III Union Grievances.

During the time period of May 1, 2017 through June 15, 2017 there were three Disciplinary Hearings in the Office of CCRD. One incident resulted in immediate termination and two incidents were dismissed. One employee received a Supervisor Counseling as a result of an



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COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

incident report prepared prior to May 1, 2017. There were three Level III Union Grievances. The DOC was present for all of these actions as prescribed by the Employment Plan.

### **INELIGIBLE FOR REHIRE:**

On May 31, 2017 the Chief of Human Resources was terminated as a result of recommendations made by the Interim DOC which were wholly accepted by the Recorder. Chief Legal Counsel has submitted information to the RCA for review regarding placing the former Chief of HR on the Do No Rehire Without Further Consideration list.

### **TRAINING:**

Four employees, including the DOC, received Employment Plan and Policy and Procedures Manual training during the period of this report. The training occurred within the first 18 days of the hiring of the DOC and Human Resources Director. The other two employees were hired in 2016 and received the training several months after they began employment with the CCRD. The DOC will work in conjunction with HR to ensure that new employees receive training within the first 30 days of employment as required by the Plan.

The RCA informed the DOC that a current CCRD employee has not yet received training on the Employment Plan or the Policy and Procedures Manual. The DOC will work with HR to ensure that this employee, along with any others identified, receives the training on the Employment Plan and the Policy and Procedures Manual.

Annual training as prescribed by the Employment Plan has yet to be undertaken by the Recorder of Deeds.

With the assistance of HR, over eighty CCRD employees completed a web based, IT sponsored, training through Security Mentor, Inc. All employees are required to complete the training by 6/30/2017.

On June 15, 2017 the DOC, the new Chief of HR, the HR Director and the HR Executive Assistant attended Taleo training conducted by Oracle. The DOC has also met with the Cook County HR Compliance Officer in order to receive additional training on Taleo. The system, which was also utilized by the City of Chicago during the DOC's tenure with the Office of the Inspector General will be a primary tool for ensuring transparency and allow the DOC to monitor the hiring process in its entirety.

### **RECOMMENDED / ONGOING TRAINING:**

- Employment Plan – Overall goal of annual training for all CCRD employees incorporating the changes that are to be agreed upon by CCRD, RCA & Plaintiff's Counsel.



## **KAREN A. YARBROUGH**

RECORDER OF DEEDS / REGISTRAR OF TORRENS TITLES  
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

- Policies and Procedures Manual – Overall goal of annual training for all CCRD employees incorporating the changes that are to be agreed upon by CCRD, RCA & Plaintiff's Counsel.
- Security Mentor, Inc. – Required completion date of 6/30/2017.
- Time & Attendance – The DOC will recommend that management staff receive training regarding Time & Attendance portions of the Manual. There seems to be confusion regarding notification requirements, approvals for time off and swiping procedures.
- Professionalism (courtesy, supervisory & harassment) – CCRD would benefit from training regarding workplace relations.
- Lexus Nexus – As a result of a Pre-Disciplinary Hearing which was dismissed, an area of operations was identified in which there was confusion regarding a payment process that was interpreted by two CCRD employees to be fraudulent when, in fact, there was no fraudulent activity.

### **RECALLED EMPLOYEES:**

No CCRD employees were recalled during the period of this report.

### **DOC INVESTIGATIONS:**

The DOC has initiated 7 investigations relative to allegations of misconduct into the Employment Plan or Policy and Procedures Manual. The investigations are ongoing and the status / findings of the investigations will be addressed in her next report.

### **DOC ONGOING / FUTURE PROJECTS:**

- Recommendation Letters – In accordance with the Plan, Section III, D, 2, b, submissions of recommendation letters in Taleo must be retrieved, printed, disseminated and logged.
- Taleo Onboarding and creation of Exempt positions – In an effort to improve transparency, oversight and auditing capabilities, the DOC is requesting that Taleo be updated as it relates to positions that have been filled during this administration.
- Job Descriptions Review & Updates (In conjunction with HR) – Exempt and Non-Exempt, all positions to be reviewed and revised in accordance with the Plan.
- Employee Evaluations – The DOC has learned that employee evaluations, aside from those that are conducted relative to the Recalled Employees' 45 Day Evaluation process, have not been issued in several years. This practice, in conjunction with the review of Job Descriptions is critical for substantial compliance.
- Hearing Officers – Based on the DOC's observations of the disciplinary hearings that she has attended, the DOC (with HR) hopes to draft and recommend procedures in accordance with the Plan and Manual and provide personnel with training to that effect.



## **KAREN A. YARBROUGH**

RECORDER OF DEEDS / REGISTRAR OF TORRENS TITLES  
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

- Request to Hire – The DOC plans to submit a Request to Hire for an Assistant Director of Compliance. The procedures outlined in the Plan will be followed.
- Meeting with Union Stewards – The DOC has spoken to a few stewards about meeting to discuss issues and or concerns.
- Referral process – The DOC in conjunction with CCRD staff are discussing a process to be incorporated in the Plan that will detail how the DOC can monitor an employment action, or allegation of misconduct, without having to personally conduct each investigation.

### **OBSERVATIONS / AREAS OF RISK:**

The DOC has observed that Major and Minor infractions are being handled differently in that the allegations involving Major infractions require fact finding investigations by Supervisors or Directors prior to the Incident Report being issued to the accused employee. The DOC plans to confer with Labor Counsel and management staff to ensure that this process is not only being done universally but to establish criteria for such.

An employee reported to the DOC that after a promotion, she has been in the wrong salary grade for several years. This issue was forwarded to HR for resolution.

The DOC was involved in conversations regarding reorganizing an area of Operations due to a retirement which left four employees without a Supervisor. The proposed reassignment of these employees did not appear to meet the criteria established by the Plan in that the Supervisor absorbing these four employees would be acting outside of her job description. The DOC then learned that this Supervisor claimed to never have received a job description. The DOC halted this reorganizing effort to evaluate whether or not these additional responsibilities fall within the Supervisor's job duties and/or if the Supervisor would require additional training as required by the Plan.

The DOC became aware of questions by the HRD regarding the time and attendance database. It appears that a meeting is required with system administrators to understand the process fully. The DOC is concerned that system allowances are creating issues when it comes to compensatory time and overtime. In conjunction with the Plan & Manual, the DOC looks forward to understand this process more and improving it in order to benefit operations and oversight.

### **RELATIONS:**

CCRD, along with representatives from the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, have met with Plaintiff's Counsel and the RCA and / or her attorney to discuss revisions to the Employment Plan. These meetings have been quite beneficial in the DOC and HRD's introduction to the Plan and have allowed us the unique opportunity to provide feedback.



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RECORDER OF DEEDS / REGISTRAR OF TORRENS TITLES  
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The DOC has met twice with the OIIG and looks forward to maintaining a positive working relationship as CCRD works towards overall compliance. The DOC and OIIG have committed to meeting at least one time per month.

The DOC and the HRD have established a positive and collaborative working relationship with the RCA's office. Daily phone calls, weekly meetings and cooperative efforts are integral in CCRD reaching substantial compliance.

The DOC does not attend the weekly CCRD Executive Staff meetings. Therefore, separate meetings (perhaps bi-weekly) with the Directors of the different CCRD sections would be beneficial. Operationally, it is imperative that the DOC remains informed.

The DOC suggested that the legal section maintain and update employee disciplinary records, as it already does, while saving it in an electronic drive that is accessible to the Chief of HR, the HR Director, the DOC and the legal staff.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The DOC is optimistic and excited to continue her work at CCRD. Although the time period of this report is relatively short, the DOC has learned a great deal and has great hopes for the success of CCRD's compliance efforts.

Sincerely,

Alexis L. Serio  
Director of Compliance  
Cook County Recorder of Deeds

Cc: Matt Pryor, Recorder's Compliance Administrator's Attorney