



District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Board of Directors

Human Resources and Labor Relations Committee July 8, 2026 / 11:00am

Microsoft Teams meeting

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 84 808 315 399 79 Passcode: DN2s7zj6

Call in (audio only) [+1 202-753-6714,,385660659#](#)

Phone Conference ID: 985 660 659#

1. **Call to Order** _____ Jed Ross, Chairperson
2. **Roll Call** _____ Debra Mathis, Acting Board Secretary
3. **Moment of Reflection** _____ Jed Ross, Chairperson
 - Wellness Moment _____ Amber Jackson, Chief People Officer and Executive Vice President
4. **Labor Relations Update** _____ Shawn Brown, Vice President, Employment, Labor, and HR Compliance
5. [HR Report Out](#) _____ Amber Jackson, Chief People Officer, and Executive Vice President
6. **Executive Session*** _____ Jed Ross, Chairperson
7. **Adjournment** _____ Jed Ross, Chairperson

This meeting is governed by the Open Meetings Act. Please address any questions or complaints arising under this meeting to the Office of Open Government at opengovoffice@dc.gov.

1The DC Water Board of Directors may go into executive session at this meeting pursuant to the District of Columbia Open Meetings Act of 2010, if such action is approved by a majority vote of the Board members who constitute a quorum to discuss certain matters, including but not limited to: matters prohibited from public disclosure pursuant to a court order or law under D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(1); terms for negotiating a contract, including an employment contract, under D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(2); obtain legal advice and preserve attorney-client privilege or settlement terms under D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(4)(A); collective bargaining negotiations under D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(5); facility security matters under D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(8); disciplinary matters under D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(9); personnel matters under D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(10); third-party proprietary matters under D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(11); train and develop Board members and staff under D.C. Official Codes § 2-575(b)(12); adjudication action under D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(13); civil or criminal matters or violations of laws or regulations where disclosure to the public may harm the investigation under D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(14); and other matters provided under the Act.



District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Board of Directors

Human Resources and Labor Relations Committee Meeting – Executive Summary July 8, 2026 / 11:00am

Human Resources Update

DC Water's Enterprise Human Capital Strategy focuses on attracting, developing, and retaining talent to fulfill its mission. The strategy includes initiatives in various areas such as compensation, succession planning, performance management, and talent acquisition. Below are updates on a variety of People & Talent topics that have occurred since the last report.

I. People & Talent

Amber Jackson, Chief People Officer, participated as a panelist at the ACE 26 Conference for the session "Workforce 2050: Are You Ready?" She joined industry leaders in a dynamic discussion on preparing for the future of work emphasizing adaptability, innovation, and the importance of prioritizing employee well-being to build a resilient, future-ready workforce.



II. Learning & Development

Announcing the Kickoff of LinkedIn Learning for Employee Growth

We officially kicked off LinkedIn Learning on July 1, 2026 and we are excited to share this initiative designed to enhance our employees' professional development and skill-building opportunities. All of the LinkedIn Learning courses are now available in Oracle. This platform provides access to a vast library of courses covering a wide range of topics, enabling employees to learn at their own pace and align their growth with our organizational goals.

The implementation of LinkedIn Learning reflects our commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning and development. This resource will empower employees to enhance their skills and support our overall mission of maintaining a highly skilled and adaptable workforce.

We encourage all employees to take full advantage of this valuable tool, and we look forward to seeing the positive impact it will have on our organization. Thank you for your support as we embark on this exciting journey together.

DC Water Summer Internship Program

The 2026 Summer Internship Program officially launched on May 18 with a comprehensive orientation, welcoming a cohort of 51 interns representing both national and international institutions. The 12-week program is designed to provide meaningful, hands-on learning experiences aligned with DC Water's mission and operations.

Early program activities focused on organizational immersion and team integration. Interns participated in a guided tour of Headquarters (HQO) as well as critical operational sites, including the Main Pump Station and Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant on May 28. These experiences provided valuable insight into the organization's infrastructure, innovation, and service delivery.

On May 29, interns further strengthened collaboration and engagement through an off-site team-building event at Terrapin Adventures, fostering relationship-building, communication, and leadership skills.

Overall, the program began with strong engagement, providing interns with exposure to key facilities and leadership, while laying a solid foundation for a productive and impactful summer experience.

CEO Meet & Greet with Summer Interns - DC Water's Summer Internship Program hosted a meet-and-greet session featuring CEO David Gadis, providing interns with direct access to executive leadership and organizational insights. The session offered a valuable opportunity for interns to gain a deeper understanding of DC Water's strategic priorities, vision, and future direction.

During the discussion, Mr. Gadis shared their professional journeys and perspectives on leadership, emphasizing the organization's commitment to service, operational excellence, and community impact. A key highlight was the reinforcement of DC Water's "People, Place, and Pay" philosophy, underscoring the Authority's focus on investing in its workforce while delivering value to the region it serves.

The conversation was highly engaging, particularly through the use of sports analogies that resonated with interns and illustrated themes of teamwork, discipline, competition, and leadership. This approach fostered strong connections and encouraged active participation, creating a dynamic and memorable experience.

Overall, the session made a meaningful impression on interns by providing authentic insight into DC Water's culture and leadership. The engagement reflected a strong commitment from executive leadership to mentor and inspire the next generation of talent, reinforcing the value of the internship program as a pipeline for future professionals.



III. Talent Acquisition

Chief Information Officer & Executive Vice-President

Hired and onboarded Mr. Jesse Hillman

Chief Legal Officer, and EVP, Government & Legal Affairs

Hired and onboarded Mr. Ernest Tuckett III

Chief Financial Officer and EVP, Finance, Procurement, and Compliance

Interviews in progress

IV. Benefits

Wellness Support:

Employee engagement in the Wellness Program continued to trend upward in June, with participation increasing to 31%, compared to 23% in May. This increase reflects growing interest in both our virtual and in-person wellness offerings and demonstrates the value of providing a variety of activities that meet employees where they are.

During the month, employees had access to a diverse lineup of virtual fitness classes, including Strength Training, Yoga, Pilates, Zumba, and Line Dancing. In recognition of Men's Health Awareness Month, we also hosted an educational webinar focused on men's health topics, encouraging employees to take a proactive approach to their overall well-being.

In addition to our virtual programming, we offered two in-person yoga sessions, both of which were well attended and received positive feedback from participants. These events continue to provide employees with opportunities to focus on physical and mental wellness while connecting with colleagues.

A key highlight for June was the launch of our first-ever Wellness on Wheels event at COF. This initiative brought a menu of wellness offerings directly to employees at their workstations and throughout the facility. The event was extremely well received, with participation from nearly everyone in the building. We were also able to extend services to employees at the CMF building, expanding the reach of our wellness programming. Feedback from employees has been overwhelmingly positive, and based on its success, we plan to bring Wellness on Wheels back next year.

Overall, June was a strong month for employee wellness engagement, with increased participation, successful in-person events, and the introduction of innovative programming that helped make wellness resources more accessible to employees across our operations.

People and Talent Metrics

Metric	Target	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
Vacancies	N/A	175	173	169	170	175
FTEs	N/A	1110	1110	1114	1113	1108

Vacancy Rate	10%	13.61%	13.48%	13.17%	13.25%	13.64%
--------------	-----	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------

*Reflects recommended position eliminations in the approved FY26 Budget.

Metric	Target	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
Temporary Alternative Duty Program (TAD) +	50% of WC claims eligible for TAD program	90%	90%	92%	92%	90%

Metric	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Self-Identified Veterans (Active)	28	29	26	26
Female Workforce (Active)	22.8%	22.9%	22.8%	22.8%

Annual Turnover Metrics

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Involuntary (Dismissal, Medical Disqualification)	1.01%	0.78%	1.97%	1.92%	1.93%
Voluntary (Resignation, Retirement)	4.15%	5.77%	5.55%	5.93%	4.84%
Other (Death)	0.55%	0.10%	0.09%	0.26%	0.35%
Total Turnover Rate	5.71%	6.65%	7.61%	8.11%	7.11%

NOTE: AWWA Turnover Benchmark: 7%

KPI Definition	Business Relevance
+Percentage of Workers' Compensation claims eligible for placement into TAD program	The more claims eligible for TAD program will reduce overall Workers' Compensation costs and claim exposure for the Authority, leading to realized financial savings.

Department/ Function	Metric	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26
Learning & Development	Total cost of tuition assistance/reimbursement	\$33,797.20	\$24,329	\$425	\$23,579.08
	Total # of employees participating in tuition assistance/reimbursement	14	14	1	16
	Total # of employees seeking associate's degree	0	0	0	0
	Total # of employees seeking a bachelor's degree	6	1	0	1
	Total # of employees seeking a master's degree	3	3	0	1
	Total # of employees seeking a doctorate degree	1	0	0	0
	Total # of employees seeking a certification	4	2	1	5
	Total # of employees participating in external training	4	10	1	14
Talent Acquisition	Hires	10 (7 external, 3 internal)	15 (7 external, 8 internal)	9 (5 external, 4 internal)	17 (4 external, 13 internal)
	Positions Under Recruitment	85	88	96	90
Separations	Separations	7	3	7	9
	Term Reasons	• 6 voluntary (6 resignations) • 1 involuntary (1 dismissal)	• 2 voluntary (2 resignations) • 1 involuntary (1 dismissal)	• 4 voluntary (4 resignations) • 3 involuntary (2 retirements & 1 dismissal)	• 8 Voluntary (8 resignations) • 1 Involuntary (1 death)
Benefits – Retirement Plan Participation	457(b) Pre-Tax	866 Employees Participated	867 Employees Participated	866 Employees Participated	860 Employees Participated
	457(b) Roth	142 Employees Participated	145 Employees Participated	143 Employees Participated	146 Employees Participated

D C W a t e r

Vacancy Mitigation & Workforce Evolution Strategy

A Strategic Framework for the Future Workforce of DC Water

2026

Reimagine • Reskill • Recruit • Retain

AGENDA

01

Executive Summary

High-level strategic overview for leadership

02

Strategic Context & Burning Platform

Why this, why now

03

Vacancy Management Policy Framework

The 90-Day Rule & core tenets

04

Data Assessment & Backlog Identification

Methodology for analyzing the position inventory

05

The AI Reimagining Lens

Automate · Augment · Reskill framework

06

Apprenticeship Expansion Strategy

Earmarking roles for grow-your-own talent

07

30/60/90-Day Roadmap

Actionable steps to reduce vacancy rate

08

01 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Challenge

DC Water is carrying a persistent vacancy burden that strains operational capacity, inflates overtime costs, and creates single-points-of-failure risk as experienced staff retire. Traditional recruitment alone cannot solve a structural workforce problem.

The Strategy

A four-pillar approach: (1) Policy governance via a Vacancy Management Policy with a '90-Day Rule,' (2) Data-driven backlog triage, (3) AI/tech reimagining of repetitive roles, and (4) Apprenticeship pipeline expansion for trade & entry-level roles.

The Outcome

Target a 25–35% reduction in aged vacancies (90+ days) within 12 months. Build a future-ready workforce through reskilling, automation, and grow-your-own talent — reducing dependency on scarce external labor markets.

This strategy is designed to flex once the Position Inventory Report is loaded — data placeholders are clearly flagged throughout.

02 | STRATEGIC CONTEXT: WHY THIS, WHY NOW

01

Aging Workforce

25–40% of water utility workers nationally are eligible to retire within 5 years (AWWA). Institutional knowledge loss is irreversible without structured action.

02

Recruitment Market Pressure

Trade and technical roles face a national supply gap. Traditional 'post-and-pray' strategies yield longer time-to-fill and lower-quality candidate pools.

03

Operational Risk

Vacancies in critical infrastructure roles (treatment ops, maintenance, engineering) directly increase safety risk, regulatory exposure, and OT costs.

04

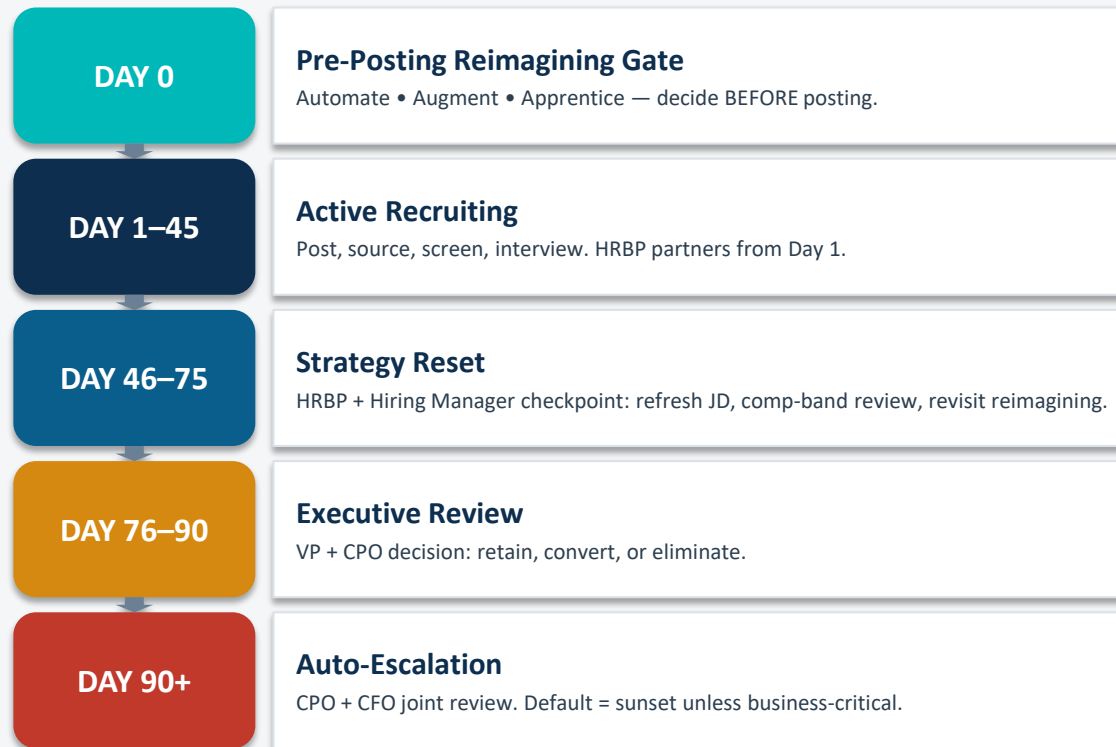
AI & Automation Disruption

Peer utilities and adjacent industries are redesigning roles around AI tools. DC Water must act now to stay ahead — or risk falling further behind on hiring while competitors require fewer people to do the same work.

Data point: AWWA 2023 Workforce Survey estimates ~1M water sector jobs will need to be filled over the next decade.

03 | VACANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY: CORE TENETS

THE 90-DAY RULE



SUPPORTING TENETS

- **Position Classification Rigor** — Approved JD ≤3 years old required before posting.
- **Approval Gate** — HRBP sign-off at Day 45; VP approval required at Day 75.
- **Compensation Banding Review** — Market pricing triggered at Day 45; CPO fast-track authority preserved.
- **Position Conversion Pathway** — Documented FTE → apprenticeship / part-time / contract, with union notification.
- **Elimination Protocol** — Positions vacant >90 days without approved backfill strategy flagged for elimination or consolidation in next budget cycle.

04 | DATA ASSESSMENT & BACKLOG IDENTIFICATION

Analysis Methodology (Position Inventory)

1

Ingest & Clean

Import Position Inventory Report. Normalize department names, title codes, and hire date fields. Flag duplicates and positions with missing data.

2

Age Band Analysis

Segment vacancies: <45 days, 45-90 days >90 days. Calculate weighted average days open per department.

3

Hot Spot Mapping

Rank departments by (a) total vacancy count, (b) % vacancies >90 days, and (c) criticality tier (Safety-Critical / Operational / Administrative).

4

Funnel Stall Detection

Map each open position against ATS stage: Posted → Applied → Screened → Interviewed → Offered → Declined/Withdrawn. Identify where volume drops sharply.

5

Root Cause Tagging

Assign each >90-day vacancy a primary stall reason: Compensation, JD quality, Sourcing gap, Manager delay, or Structural/unrealistic requirement.

KEY OUTPUTS

Vacancy Hot Spot Heat Map
(department × age band matrix)

Funnel Drop-Off Dashboard
(stage-by-stage conversion rates)

Criticality × Urgency Priority Grid
(2×2 for executive triage)

Root Cause Distribution
(% by stall reason, actionable by owner)

AI Reimagining Candidate List
(feeds directly into Slide 05 framework)

**[PENDING: Position Inventory Upload
to populate with live data]**

05 | THE AI REIMAGINING LENS

Every vacant role should pass through a 3-question reimagining gate before being posted.

AUTOMATE

Can AI fully replace this work?

CRITERIA

- High-volume, rule-based tasks
- Data entry, form processing, scheduling
- Routine report generation
- Monitoring & alerting with clear thresholds

DC WATER EXAMPLES

- Meter data validation
- Invoice processing
- HR transaction processing
- Compliance log compilation

Eliminate the vacancy. Redirect budget to reskilling fund.

AUGMENT

Can AI make fewer people more effective?

CRITERIA

- Tasks with judgment components
- Analysis + human decision layer
- Field work + digital documentation
- Customer-facing with knowledge lookup

DC WATER EXAMPLES

- Customer service with AI assist
- Engineer with AI modeling tools
- Inspector with AI image analysis
- Financial analyst with AI modeling

Redesign the job.

RESKILL

Should this be a new, higher-value role?

CRITERIA

- Old title no longer reflects work
- Technology has shifted the skills required
- Role can absorb neighboring tasks if upgraded
- Strong internal candidates exist with potential

DC WATER EXAMPLES

- GIS Tech → Spatial Data Analyst
- Lab Tech → Water Quality Data Scientist
- Call Center → Digital CX Specialist
- Meter Reader → Smart Meter Analyst

Redesign the position. Prioritize internal mobility + reskilling investment.

06 | APPRENTICESHIP EXPANSION STRATEGY

EARMARKED ROLE CATEGORIES

Water/Wastewater Operations

Plant Operator Trainee, Distribution Crew Member, Laboratory Tech I

Electrical & Instrumentation

Instrumentation Technician Apprentice, Electrician Apprentice

Mechanical & Maintenance

Pump Mechanic Apprentice, HVAC Tech Apprentice, Fleet Technician

IT & Data Technology

IT Support Technician, Data Analyst Apprentice, Cybersecurity Tech

Administrative Support

Administrative Specialist I, Finance Clerk, HR Coordinator Trainee

Engineering Support

Engineering Technician I, GIS Technician, CAD Drafting Tech

PROGRAM DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Vacancy-First Earmarking

Any role vacant >120 days and classified as entry/trade level is automatically routed to apprenticeship decision gate.

Defined Pathways

Each apprenticeship track maps to a full career ladder. Participants see a 3-5 year progression before day one.

Community Pipeline Partners

Partner with DCPS, UDC, and workforce intermediaries to source diverse candidates, especially from Wards 7 & 8.

Registered Apprenticeship

Leverage DOL Registered Apprenticeship status for wage subsidies, tax credits, and grant eligibility (WIOA, IRA funding).

Mentor Assignment

Every apprentice assigned a journeyman mentor. Structured knowledge-transfer for retiring engineers embedded here.

Union Coordination

Coordinate with bargaining units (AFSCME, IUOE) on apprenticeship ratio, wage progression, and classification rules.

07 | 30/60/90-DAY ACTIONABLE ROADMAP

DAYS 1 – 30

Diagnose & Govern

- Upload Position Inventory Report; run hot spot analysis
- Convene Vacancy War Room: CPO + VPs + HRBPs
- Identify top 20 'priority vacancies' by criticality + age
- Audit all JDs for positions vacant >90 days
- Draft Vacancy Management Policy (first review by legal/labor)
- Map current ATS funnel data; identify top 3 drop-off points
- Brief CEO and Board on vacancy risk landscape

DAYS 31 – 60

Triage & Reimagine

- Apply AI Reimagining Lens to all 90+ day vacancies
- Launch compensation band reviews for market-lagging roles
- Identify 10–15 apprenticeship-earmarked vacancies
- Launch targeted sourcing campaigns for priority roles
- Brief union reps on apprenticeship expansion and policy
- Initiate JD rewrites for reskilled positions
- Establish vacancy KPI dashboard (reported bi-weekly to CPO)

DAYS 61 – 90

Execute & Measure

- Finalize and publish Vacancy Management Policy
- Post first cohort of apprenticeship opportunities
- Begin AI tool pilots for 2–3 augmented roles
- Complete elimination review for positions marked for deletion
- Run first 30-day progress report vs. baseline vacancy rate
- Announce reskilling program for internal candidates
- Set 6-month and 12-month vacancy rate reduction targets

P a t h F o r w a r d

**The workforce that will run
DC Water in 2030 is
being hired — or built — today.**

R e i m a g i n e • R e s k i l l • R e c r u i t • R e t a i n