

**Workplace Evaluation Summary
Olathe Fire Protection District
March 11, 2022**

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ILG Strategic Services was engaged by the Board of the Olathe Fire Protection District (“Olathe FPD”) to conduct an evaluation of the workplace on January 18, 2022. On February 15, 2022, the scope of the evaluation was expanded to include feedback from prior employees of the district.

Workplace Evaluation Process

The Workplace Evaluation included two surveys and interviews with board members, current and former employees. One survey focused on current employees of the Olathe FPD and another, more abbreviated survey, was sent to current Board Members. Individual survey responses and interviews were confidential, and participants were assured that their specific feedback would be consolidated and shared only in aggregate. The surveys were open between February 9-22, 2022, and we concluded our interviews on March 3, 2022. In total, we conducted 17 interviews as part of the evaluation and 72% of current employees participated in the survey.

The employee survey included 31 statements in 7 categories, while the Board survey included 11 statements. In most cases, a 5-point Likert Scale¹ was used to determine a participant’s agreement or disagreement with a particular statement. A score of 5 is considered high, or strongly agree, whereas a score of 1 is low, or strongly disagree.

Background

ILG was made aware of the Olathe FPD transition from a volunteer to paid staff in 2021 and that there had been concerns raised about leadership, the Board, and the environment since that time. This was an important backdrop we considered when evaluating the data collected in the assessment. However, we were also mindful that the intent of this process was not to conduct an investigation or question decisions and recommendations that were made during the investigation and legal actions that preceded our assessment.

As part of the assessment, we reviewed call metrics for the Olathe FPD to better understand the volume of work and whether or not the district was supporting the needs of the community and

¹ A type of psychometric response scale in which responders specify their level of agreement to a statement typically in five points: (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Agree; (5) Strongly agree.





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upholding the mission and vision.

Mission

To serve and protect our community, to improve the quality of life for our citizens by providing prompt, safe and effective response to emergencies with highly trained professional personnel whom perform Firefighting plus Emergency Medical duties.

Vision

A picture of the future we want to create. As we go toward our vision, we will learn, gain new insights, and adapt to an ever-changing environment.

According to current records, the call volume for medical services has steadily increased year over year and the call volume for fire services fluctuated, with a significant increase in 2021:

Year	Medical	Fire
2021	1221	321
2020	957	95
2019	892	124
2018	584	151
2017	384	174

Summary of Results

The categories average scores from the Employee Survey.

CATEGORY	SCORE
Work Life	3.8
Work Environment	3.9
Communication	4.0
Leadership	4.0
Safety	4.2
Work/Professional Relationships	4.3
COVID Management	4.4

Scores for each statement in the Employee Survey.





STATEMENT	SCORE
Olathe FPD provides me with a competitive benefits package.	2.5
Discipline is applied consistently in my department.	3.5
Employee termination decisions are fair in my department.	3.5
I am paid fairly for the work I do in the community.	3.7
I receive all the information I need to do my job effectively.	3.8
Leadership decisions are open and transparent.	3.9
I feel comfortable reaching out to my supervisor with questions and/or ideas.	4.0
There is open and honest two-way communication here.	4.0
Leadership would take appropriate action on reports of harassment or discrimination.	4.0
My supervisor is responsive to my questions and/or ideas.	4.0
I trust the decisions that Leadership makes.	4.0
Leadership would take appropriate action on reports of harassment or discrimination.	4.0
Those within Olathe FPD have a clear understanding of what is appropriate workplace behavior.	4.0
I see myself working here in two years.	4.0
I would feel comfortable reporting an incident I felt was unethical.	4.1
I feel proud to tell people where I work	4.1
My supervisor treats me with respect.	4.1
Olathe FPD provides a healthy and safe working environment for employees.	4.1
I have the materials, technology and equipment to do my job.	4.1
I have been trained in the emergency procedures at the Olathe FPD.	4.1
My supervisor treats me fairly.	4.1
I feel comfortable going to my supervisor with issues and questions.	4.1
I can talk openly to Leadership without fear of retaliation.	4.1
Leadership treat me with respect.	4.2
The safety training at the Olathe FPD is useful.	4.2
Olathe FPD has a welcoming environment.	4.3
I agree with the decisions management has made during the COVID crisis.	4.3
The Olathe FPD has done a good job communicating during the ongoing COVID crisis.	4.4
I understand the policies on acceptable behavior at the Olathe FPD.	4.4
My coworkers treat me with respect.	4.6
The Olathe FPD is providing adequate PPE [personal protective equipment] during the COVID crisis.	4.6

Evaluation of harassment and discrimination

The survey also provided an opportunity for employees to report discrimination and harassment, either witnessed or experienced, while working for the department.

The survey listed the following categories of discrimination and asked participants if they had witnessed or experienced this conduct:

- Race
- Religion





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- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Age
- Sexual Harassment
- None of the above

One participant said they had experience discrimination based on their race and one participant said they had experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation. Twenty-seven participants indicated that they had not experienced any of the types of discrimination or harassment. Four participants said they witnessed discrimination based on race, four said they witnessed discrimination based on gender, five participants said they witnessed discrimination based on sexual orientation, and one participant said they witnessed sexual harassment. Three of the fourteen who reported witnessing the conduct, said the incident(s) occurred prior to 2020, while the remainder said the incident(s) happened after 2020. Twenty-two participants said they had not witnessed any of the behaviors.

Of those who witnessed the conduct described, 21% reported the issue and 79% did not. Of those who reported the incident(s), 66% were very dissatisfied with the outcome, while 34% were satisfied.

Job description

The assessment also asked questions about participant's understanding of their role and job description. Twenty-four of the twenty-eight participants said they understood their job responsibilities while the remainder said they did not.

Conclusion

ILG is schedule to meet with the Board in Executive Session on March 15, 2022, to review the assessment and our recommendations for the future.

