

Performance Evaluation of
Human Resources Department Director

Ernesto Guajardo

Mr. Ernesto Guajardo oversees one of the most important county departments as it relates to the county services it provides. Classified under Employee Services Department the Human Resources department is vital to serving elected officials, department heads and all employees under the Human Resources umbrella of services.

The department is responsible for handling any people-related concerns and needs that arise within the Webb County organization. They manage recruiting, hiring and firing, as well as onboarding new hires and managing the orientation process to get employees set up in their new county roles.

County departments and officials rely heavily on HR for all their personnel needs. The office helps define the different job description criteria and pay range for each position in the county while updating new hires, transfers, promotions or terminations, making sure that personnel worksheets and general orders are updated for other departments (Budget office & Treasurer) to process.

HR is responsible for updating and revising all current county policies in place including civil service rules and regulations to ensure compliance.

The department is essential in overseeing employer-employee relations. It is the department where an employee, director or official can go with personnel questions within their respective county department, to address concerns, and to air initial grievances.

HR works directly with the Civil Service Commission to facilitate their meetings, hearings and workshops as it pertains to implementing and adhering to the county civil service system that covers a majority of county employees and departments who submit appeals and grievances for their review.

Additionally, HR also handles the county payroll process; they review and approve submitted hours, approve employee timecards and export hours for payroll processing at the close of the pay period.

The mission of the Webb County Human Resources Department is to encourage a stable work environment for employees, department heads, managers, and elected officials that fosters a conducive, efficiency environment.

To that end I have received several complaints from elected officials and department heads regarding Mr. Guajardo's handling of certain employee matters which I have documented with him and the Commissioners Court. The most recent complaints were in January and February of 2023 from the Sheriff and Tax Assessor's Office. (documentation is attached for your review) One of the most shocking revelations was how Mr. Guajardo admitted to speaking to certain female supervisory staff members with no regard to their position or status. His actions go against his own core values of the department- encouraging positive communication, teamwork, trust and integrity.

In addition to that, department heads and officials have discussed their consistent frustrations over Mr. Guajardo's handling of certain employee issues ranging from siding with or advising employee's contrary to the departments policies, being overly critical of applicant qualification criteria, recommending his own personal applicants for department heads to hire, having a department head

do certain personnel work they feel should be an HR responsibility and failing to properly address a personnel matter with an elected official regarding a disqualified employee.

Some of these personnel matter frustrations go back to the previous fiscal year and although I do maintain good communication with Mr. Guajardo, sometimes on a daily basis, he seems to be set in some of the ways he handles certain personnel matters as they are presented to him by directors and/or officials.

Last year I circulated county department evaluation forms to the members of Commissioners Court seeking your feedback and concerns. Although I only received Three (3) evaluation packets, it appeared that there were genuine concerns from some members of the court regarding Mr. Guajardo's job performance.

I recommend Mr. Guajardo be formally evaluated by the members of the Commissioners Court in an effort to discuss these abovementioned issues and concerns.