



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT  
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

# Board Information

## ● Board of Directors

3/10/2026 Board Meeting

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### Subject

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Public Hearing to receive staff and recognized employee organizations presentations on the status of job vacancies and recruitment/retention efforts, as required by Government Code §3502.3 (Assembly Bill 2561), and to receive public comment

### Executive Summary

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Section 3502.3 (Assembly Bill 2561) of Government Code, Chapter 10, Section 3500 more commonly known and cited as the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act was added last year. It is intended to address the following items:

- (a) Job vacancies in local government are a widespread and significant problem for the public sector affecting occupations across wage levels and educational requirements.
- (b) High job vacancies impact public service delivery and the workers who are forced to handle heavier workloads, with understaffing leading to burnout and increased turnover that further exacerbate staffing challenges.
- (c) There is a statewide interest in ensuring that public agency operations are appropriately staffed and that high vacancy rates do not undermine public employee labor relations.

To address these, this section requires Metropolitan to present the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts in a public hearing before our Board of Directors. If the Board of Directors will be adopting an annual or multiyear budget during the fiscal year, then the presentation must occur prior to the adoption of the final budget. During this public hearing before the Board of Directors, Metropolitan shall identify any necessary changes to policies, procedures, and recruitment activities that may lead to obstacles in the hiring process. Additionally, our recognized bargaining units shall be entitled to make a presentation at the same public hearing before the Board of Directors, where Metropolitan is presenting this information.

### Applicable Policy

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Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 6207: Positions Authorized.

Metropolitan Water District Operating Policy H-10 Recruitment and Selection.

### Details and Background

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#### Background

Assembly Bill 2561 adds Section 3502.3 of the Government Code chapter more commonly cited as the “Meyers-Milias-Brown Act.” This section states:

- (a) (1) A public agency shall present the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts during a public hearing before the governing board at least once per fiscal year.
- (2) If the governing board will be adopting an annual or multiyear budget during the fiscal year, the presentation shall be made prior to the adoption of the final budget.

(3) During the hearing, the public agency shall identify any necessary changes to policies, procedures, and recruitment activities that may lead to obstacles in the hiring process.

(b) The recognized employee organization for a bargaining unit shall be entitled to make a presentation at the public hearing at which the public agency presents the status of vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts for positions within that bargaining unit.

(c) If the number of job vacancies within a single bargaining unit meets or exceeds 20 percent of the total number of authorized full-time positions, the public agency shall, upon request of the recognized employee organization, include all of the following information during the public hearing:

- (1) The total number of job vacancies within the bargaining unit.
- (2) The total number of applicants for vacant positions within the bargaining unit.
- (3) The average number of days to complete the hiring process from when a position is posted.
- (4) Opportunities to improve compensation and other working conditions.

(d) This section shall not prevent the governing board from holding additional public hearings about vacancies.

(e) The provisions of this section are severable. If any provision of this section or its application is held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application.

(f) For purposes of this section, “recognized employee organization” has the same meaning as defined in subdivision (a) of Section 3501. This is defined as either: (1) Any organization that includes employees of a public agency and represents them in their relations with that public agency, or (2) Any organization that seeks to represent employees of a public agency.

**ANALYSIS:**

An analysis of vacancies of regular budgeted positions was conducted on February 9, 2026. The following chart shows the results of that analysis.

<b>Barg Unit</b>	<b>No. of positions</b>	<b>No. filled</b>	<b>No. vacant</b>	<b>% filled</b>	<b>% vacant</b>
AFSCME - 02	1357	1216	141*	90%	10%
SA - 03	98	94	4	96%	4%
MAPA - 04	359	334	25	93%	7%
ACE - 05	144	126	18	88%	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1958</b>	<b>1770</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>10%</b>

\*18 of these are apprentice positions. Offers have been extended.

Metropolitan is below the 20 percent threshold by bargaining unit and overall. For calendar year 2025, 208 full-time equivalent positions were filled.

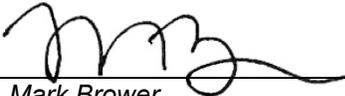
<b>Barg Unit</b>	<b>No. of Pos Filled by External Hire</b>	<b>No. of Pos Filled by Internal Job Bid</b>	<b>No. of Pos Filled by Transfer</b>	<b>Total by BU</b>
Unrep – 00/01	2	6	0	8
AFSCME - 02	85	19	14	118
SA - 03	2	13	2	17
MAPA - 04	13	32	0	45
ACE - 05	13	6	1	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>208</b>

On average, 45 percent of all recruitments completed result in an internal hire. This includes both positions filled by an internal job bid and a transfer. Calendar year 2025 remained consistent with this average with 45 percent of positions being filled internally. This provides internal advancement; however, it does not impact the overall vacancy rate. When a vacancy is filled by an internal applicant, it creates a new vacancy in the area the employee moved from. In most cases, this initiates another recruitment.

On average, Metropolitan has had a 5.19 percent turnover, including both retirements and other separations. Retirements account for 3.94 percent, and other separations account for 1.25 percent. For calendar year 2025, Metropolitan’s turnover was 4.04 percent. Retirements accounted for 2.84 percent, and other separations accounted for 1.20 percent. The relatively low turnover rate can be attributed to our meaningful work, pension plan, competitive wages, and stable benefits.

Recruitment has been making changes to fill vacancies in a reduced timeframe. In October 2022, Metropolitan created revised Recruitment and Selection Procedures as well as updated Operating Policy H-10 Recruitment and Selection. In addition, the new Memorandum of Understanding language has created the opportunity to use eligibility lists. These lists will shorten the time it takes to fill those positions with a high number of vacancies.

Additional measures are being taken to significantly reduce the vacancies and position ourselves to fill future vacancies as they arise. Last year, Human Resources conducted a staffing analysis of the recruitment function to determine what resources are needed to achieve this goal. Based on this analysis, Human Resources ramped up with surge staffing to increase the number of recruiters and support staff, resulting in a positive impact and bringing our vacancy rate down to near zero. There will always be a certain level of vacancies due to the nature of turnover. However, the above proactive measures will position Metropolitan to address vacancies as they occur in a timely manner. As part of the budget process, Human Resources will also be requesting additional full-time regular positions to stabilize the minimum ongoing staffing needs of the recruitment team. The minimum ongoing staff is currently supplemented with temporary employees. The recent staffing analysis of the recruitment function supports the need for these additional full-time regular employees in addition to the surge staffing referenced earlier.

  
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Mark Brower  
Human Resources Group Manager

3/5/2026  
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Date

  
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Shivaji Deshmukh  
General Manager

3/5/2026  
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Date