



2024 Workplace Survey Results

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February 10, 2025
Item 6a

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Shaw Law Group, PC

- We are a woman-owned employment law firm
- We work extensively with public sector employers throughout the state

Scope of the 2024 Review

Pursuant to Task Order No. 1 (Agreement No. 211157-02):

- Prepare and conduct a workplace cultural assessment survey as a follow up to the one Shaw Law Group, PC conducted in 2021
- Report the findings of the survey to this Board

The Workplace Cultural Assessment Survey Process

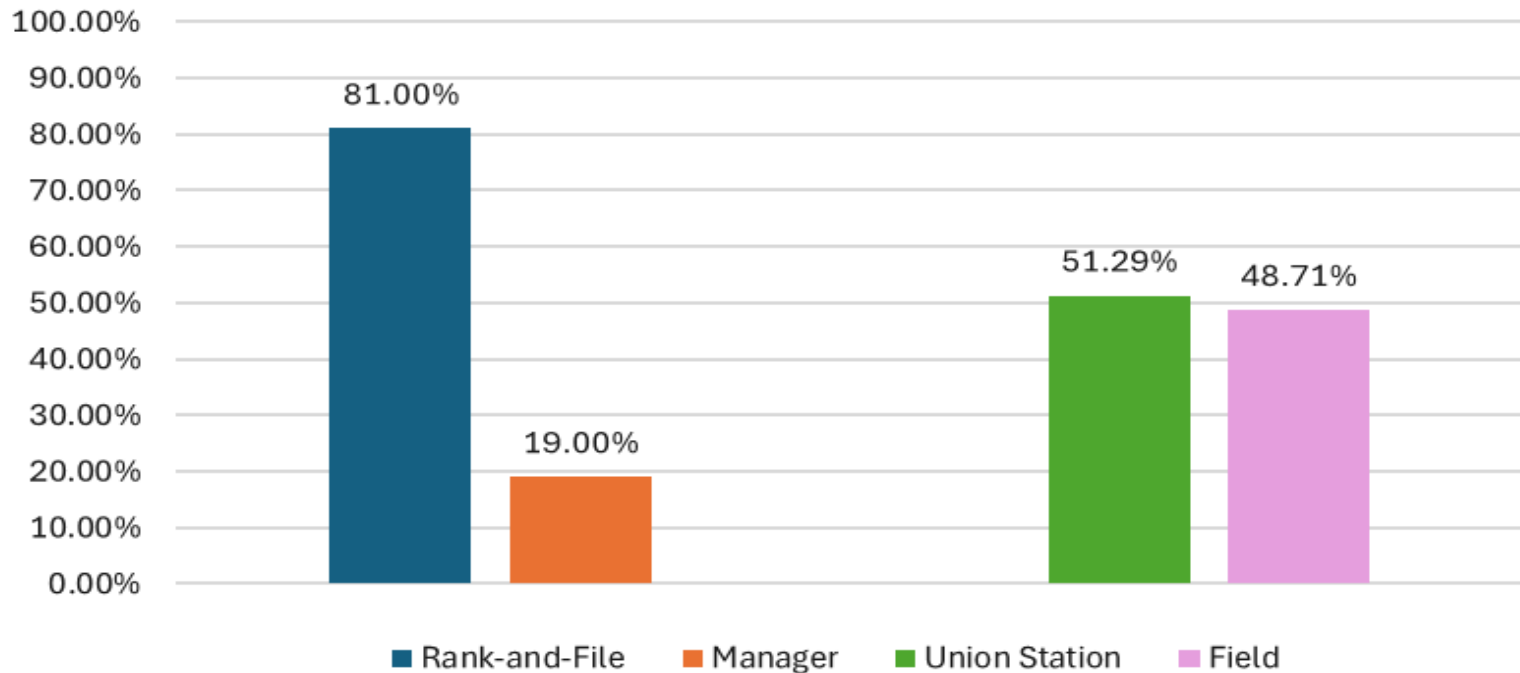
- Prepare and conduct the survey
- Organize and analyze the 2024 survey data and compare the 2021 and 2024 results

The 2024 Survey

- Survey dates
 - Opened December 4, 2024
 - Closed December 31, 2024
- Sent to 1,905 employees; 1,123 responses (59%)
 - Down from 86% in 2021

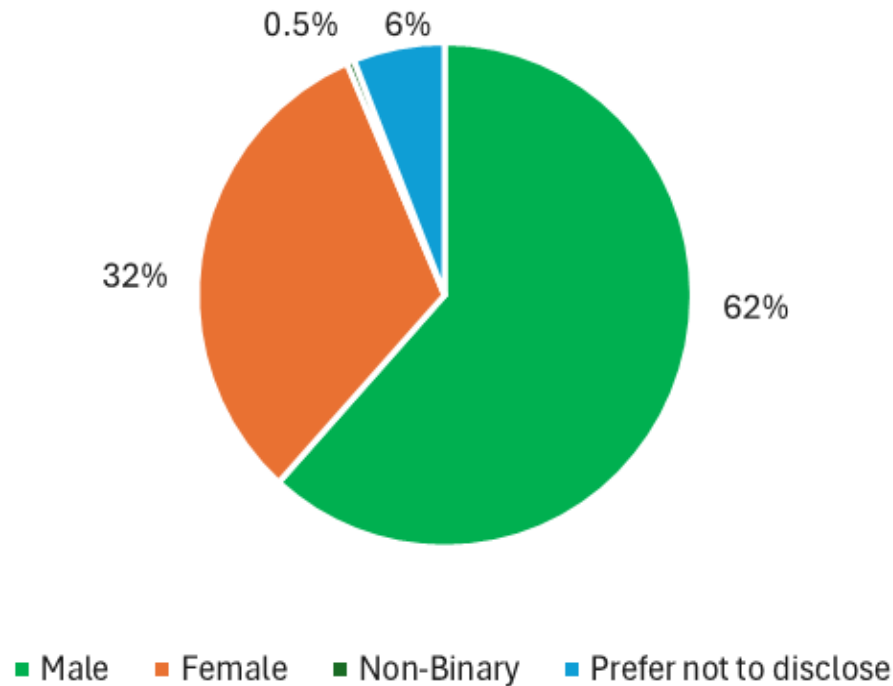
The 2024 Survey (cont.)

Survey Participants by Role and Location



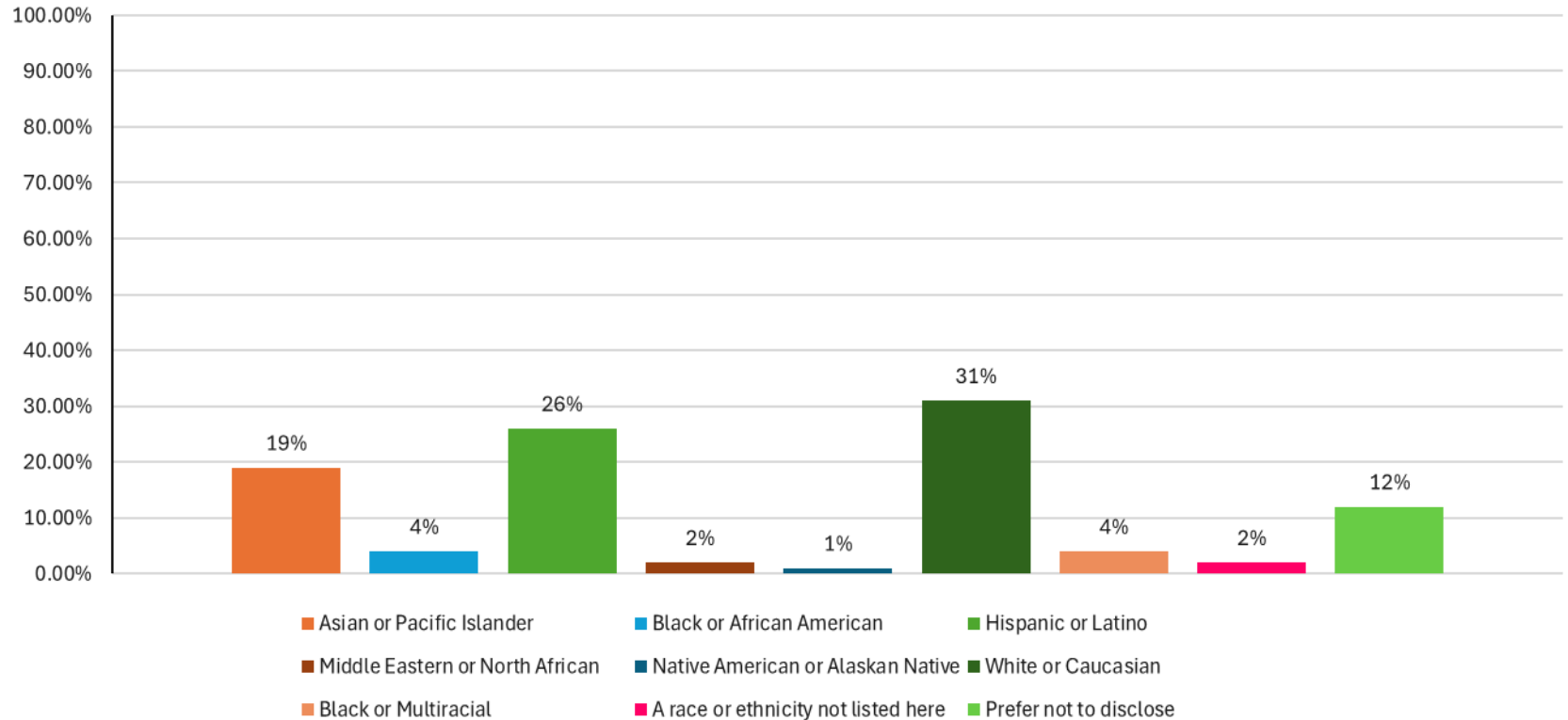
The 2024 Survey (cont.)

Survey Participants by Sex & Gender



The 2024 Survey (cont.)

Survey Participants by Race & Ethnicity



Working Environment: 2024 Survey Data

	Strongly agree		Somewhat agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat disagree		Strongly disagree	
	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024
Executive management (EM) fosters a positive working environment	41%	21%	29%	29%	18%	27%	7%	12%	5%	11%
EM appropriately follows and enforces Metropolitan's policies and procedures	38%	18%	27%	26%	20%	26%	9%	17%	6%	14%
Management at my work location fosters a positive working environment	46%	39%	26%	29%	13%	15%	8%	8%	7%	9%

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Ethics, Organization, & Personnel Committee



Working Environment: 2024 Survey Data

	Strongly agree		Somewhat agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat disagree		Strongly disagree	
	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024	2021	2024
Management at my work location appropriately follows and enforces Metropolitan's policies and procedures	45%	35%	26%	31%	15%	16%	9%	9%	5%	9%
Management at my work location is open to employees' concerns	44%	36%	26%	30%	14%	16%	9%	9%	7%	9%
Management at my work location takes appropriate action to address employees' concerns	37%	30%	24%	26%	20%	21%	9%	12%	8%	11%

Working Environment: 2024 Survey Data

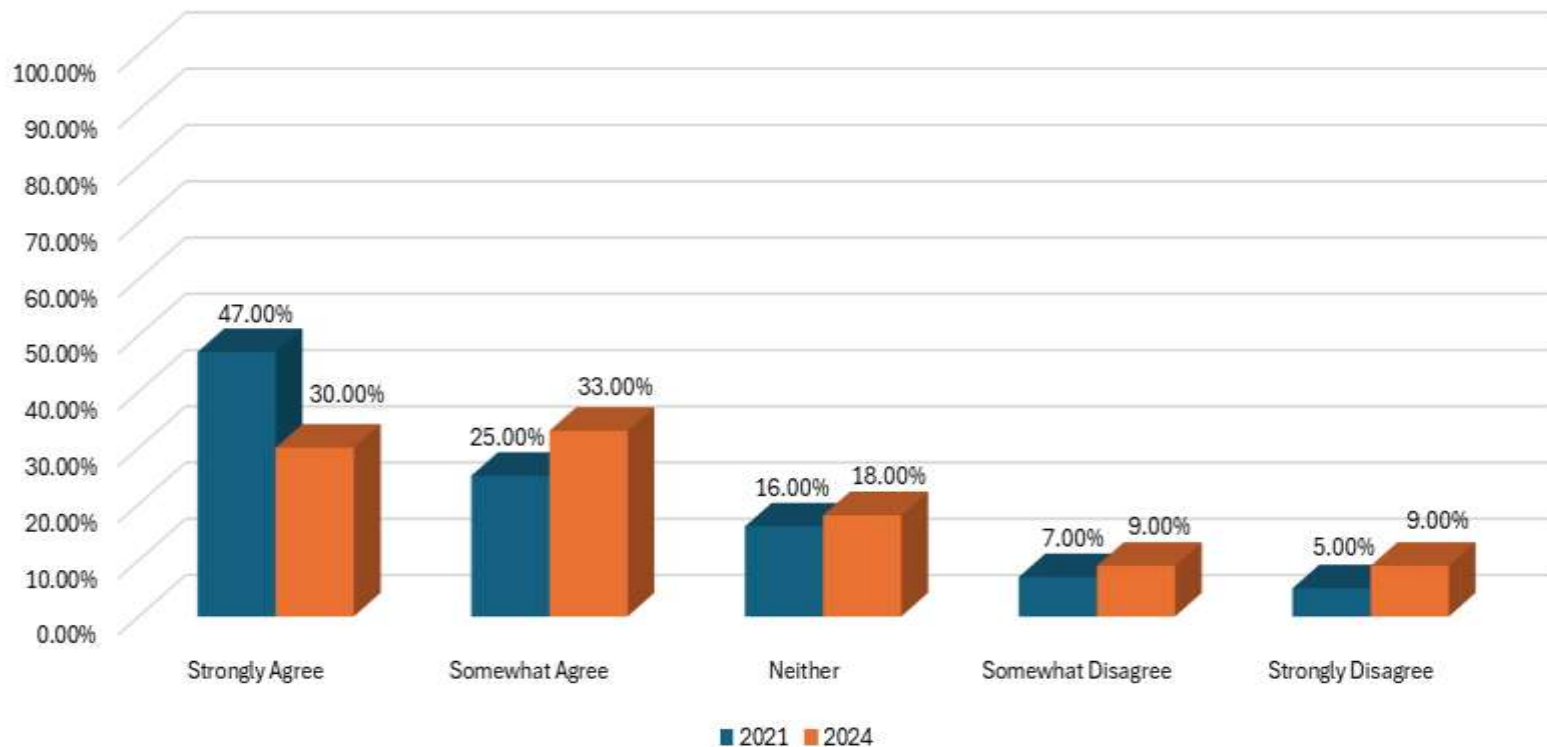
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Co-workers at my work location foster a positive working environment	39%	33%	15%	7%	6%
Co-workers at my work location appropriately follow Metropolitan's policies and procedures	36%	36%	16%	7%	5%

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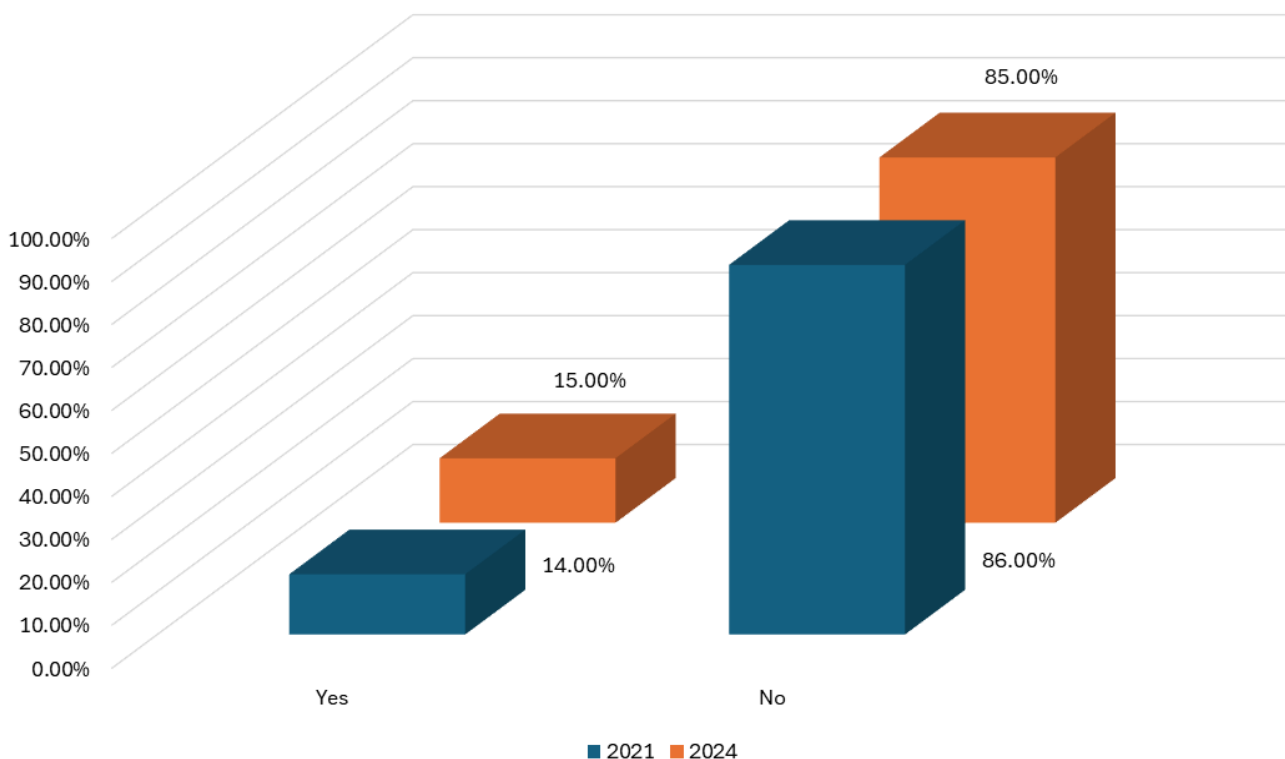
Working Environment: 2024 Survey Data

"Metropolitan provides a safe and respectful working environment for all employees."

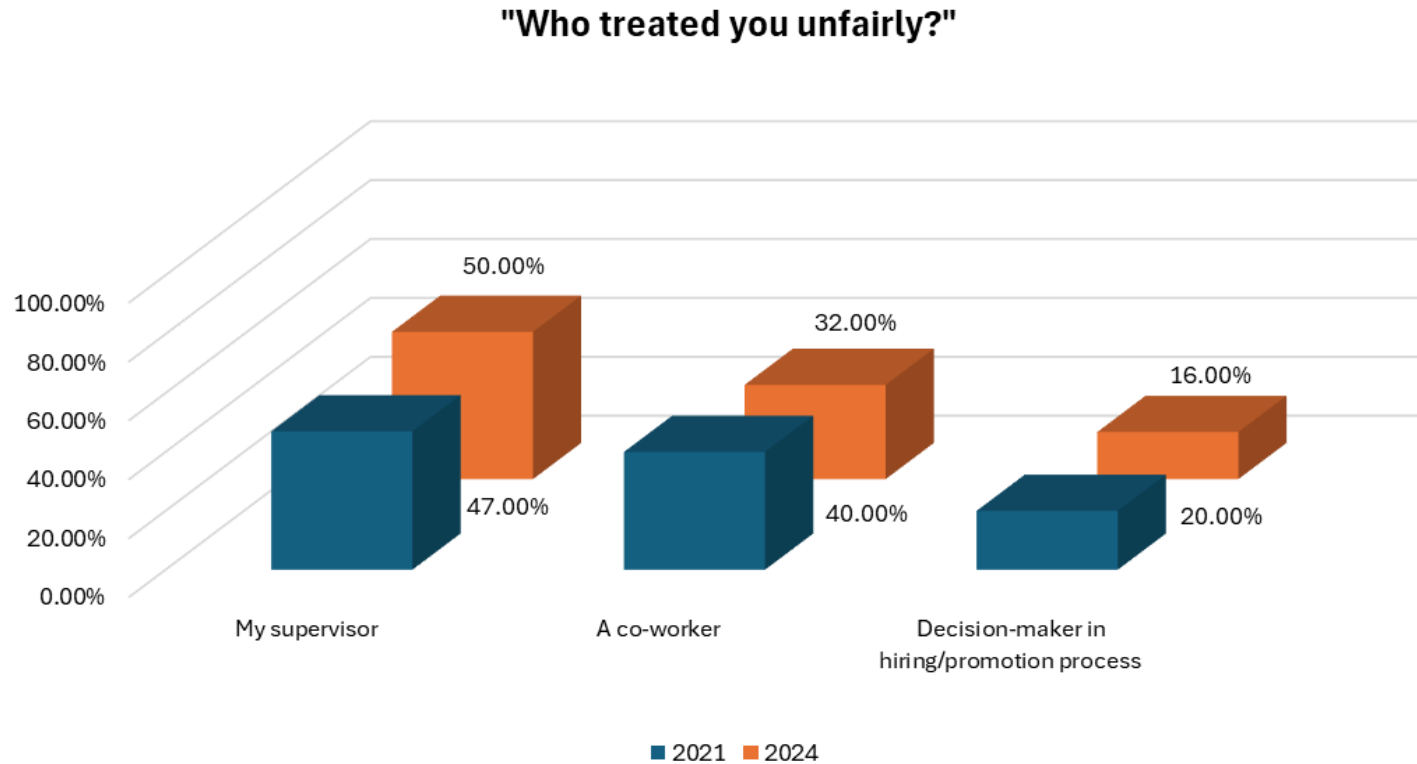


Experience with EEO Issues: 2024 Survey Data

"In the last 3 years, have you had any experiences at the District during which someone at work treated you unfairly because of your race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, and/or any other characteristic protected by law?"



Experience with EEO Issues: 2024 Survey Data (cont.)

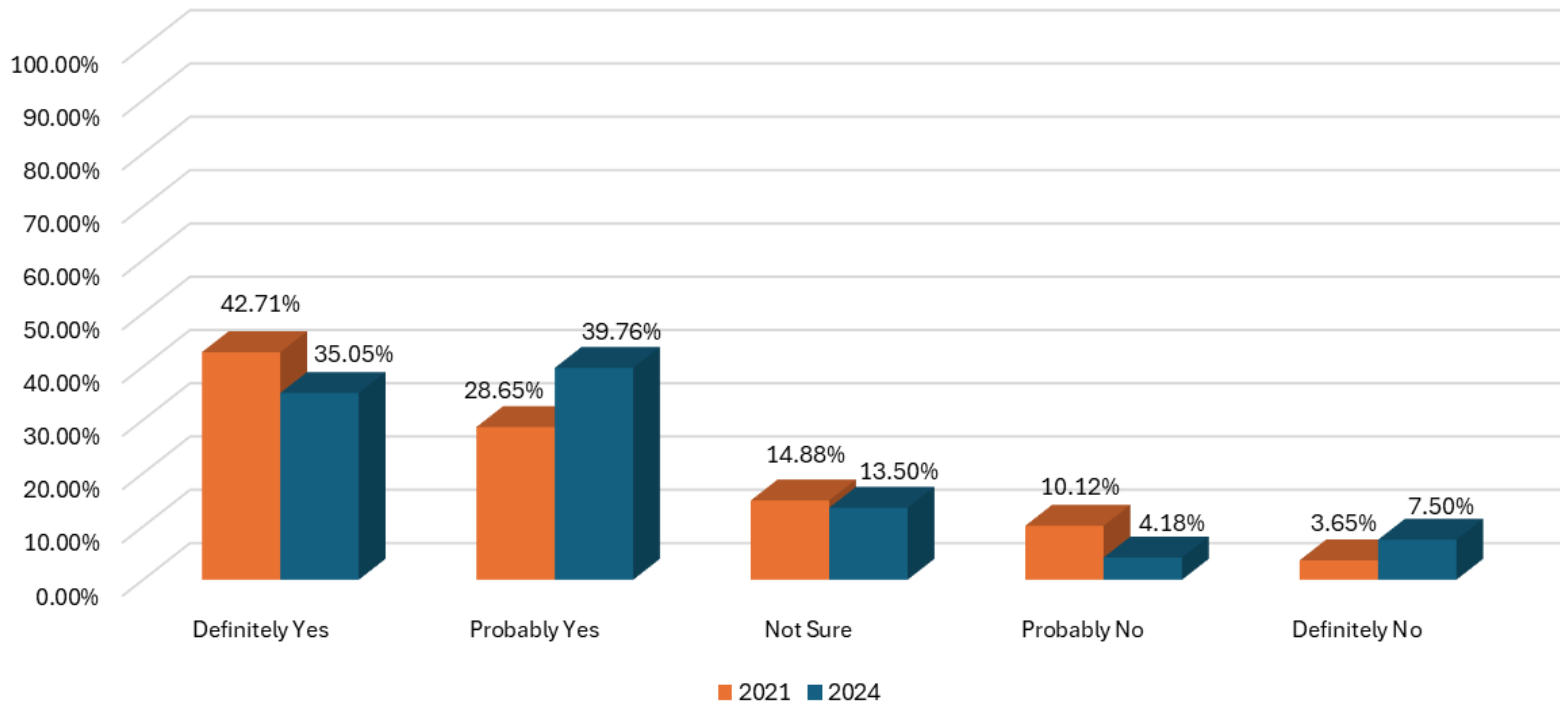


Concerns About Reporting EEO Issues

- 49% of respondents (84 individuals) stated they had EEO concerns, but did not report them
 - 2021: 51% (117 individuals) did not report
- 18% of respondents (165 individuals) stated they would not report EEO concerns if they had them
 - 2021: 14% (185 individuals) would not report

Fear of Retaliation Related to Reporting EEO Issues: 2024 Survey Data

"Would you feel comfortable reporting unfair treatment at work?"



Top Five Reasons Given for Not Reporting EEO Issues

2021

- Fear of retaliation
- No one cares
- Ineffective process
- Management cover-up
- Previous bad experience

2024

- Fear of retaliation
- No one cares
- Ineffective process
- Management cover-up
- No confidentiality

Common Themes in Survey Comments (2024)

- The new interim GM is moving in the right direction
- MWD must improve communication and transparency
- The DEI program operates in reality as “reverse discrimination”
- Executives and senior leadership should receive the same training as everyone else and held accountable to the same standards
- The unions have too much power and influence
- The survey process should be more specific in the use of terms (e.g., “Executive Management”), and include post-survey communications about next steps

2021 Recommendations

- Update current EEO-related policies to reflect best practices
- Implement a policy to address abusive conduct, even if not EEO-related
- Continue promoting and hiring individuals for management positions who demonstrate emotional intelligence and the commitment to creating and maintaining a positive and respectful work environment

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Hold managers accountable for modeling professional and respectful behavior, and demanding the same of their teams
- Require District Leadership to visit field locations on a regular basis, and facilitate town-hall-like events to solicit feedback and input from employees
- Continue to enhance the District's current EEO training program

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Require managers to follow and enforce District policies and procedures
- Require managers to promptly and consistently address EEO Issues and other employee concerns
- Evaluate the performance of managers and compensate them based on their ability to drive positive interactions on their team, hold employees accountable, demonstrate an appropriate “tone at the top,” and further the District’s DE&I initiatives

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Require managers to provide written, position-specific training and advancement plans to all employees to prepare them for internal promotional opportunities
- Continue management forums and leadership breakfasts, with a focus on providing opportunities for managers to learn from one other

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Create additional positions in the Training Unit and Employee Relations to ensure both areas are properly staffed and resourced
- Provide in-depth and regular training to relevant HR personnel regarding laws, regulations, and best practices regarding responding to accommodation requests and handling confidential medical documentation

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Elevate the EEO Office to an independent department, and eliminate Legal's direct involvement in most EEO investigations*
- Create additional internal EEO investigator positions

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Regularly communicate with all employees regarding the separate components of the EEO Office and the Ethics Office, including direct messaging from the General Manager, the CAO, and the Ethics Officer
- Implement a hotline program to allow for anonymous reporting of EEO Issues
- Update the District’s “EEO Discrimination Complaint Procedures,” and provide copies to complainant(s) and respondent(s) in each investigation

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Create a process for investigating and resolving complaints against department heads and Directors
- Initiate and complete investigations of EEO Issues in a timely manner
- Immediately identify during investigations of EEO Issues whether interim measures are appropriate
- Prioritize investigations if any employee is placed on PAL pending completion of the investigation

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Take appropriate steps to prevent any form of retaliation against individuals involved in the complaint process
- Provide in-depth and regular training to all EEO Office personnel regarding complaint intake and investigation best practices, and ensure internal EEO investigators are trained in trauma-informed practices, including interview techniques and credibility assessments
- Make only factual findings during investigations, not policy and/or legal findings, and use the appropriate evidentiary standard

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Adopt restorative practices, including creating a conflict resolution team, requiring transparency about the District's remedial actions to the extent consistent with employee rights, and ensuring appropriate follow-up after an investigation is complete
- Implement a process for Employee Relations and/or the EEO Office to inform internal recruiters about information relevant to transfer requests, such as an employee's prior complaint against an employee working at the potential new location

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Consider eliminating confidentiality/non-disclosure provisions in settlement agreements with employees who will remain employed with the District after the investigation is completed

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Create a DE&I Manager position to be filled by an individual with prior DE&I experience to create a DE&I Office, lead the DE&I Council, and guide Council members and District Leadership to identify and implement best practices
- Take steps to further develop the DE&I Council
- Only permit Executive Management to attend DE&I Council meetings when invited by the Council
- Ensure that participation on the DE&I Council is voluntary

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Continue to support DE&I Council participation by releasing Council members from their regular work assignments to attend Council meetings and perform Council work
- Include the DE&I Council in the implementation of the recommendations from the review as appropriate

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Implement a District-wide communication program regarding what conduct may constitute retaliation under the District's policy, and the District's commitment to protecting employees from retaliation
- Strictly limit the dissemination of information regarding internal complaints of potential EEO Issues
- Establish a system to ensure that the EEO Office maintains ongoing communication with the complainant(s) and the respondent(s) during an investigation

2021 Recommendations (cont.)

- Inform every employee interviewed during an investigation that District policy prohibits retaliation against any employee who submits a complaint, and against any witness who participates in the investigation, including the respondent

What Now?

- Continue Board oversight to ensure the development of consistent investigation processes and procedures
- Develop an effective annual survey strategy to assess the workplace culture and identify applicable action items, including post-survey follow up
- Continue Board leadership to drive collaboration among internal departments without comprising their independence
- Continue organization-wide listening and feedback sessions and town halls
- Facilitate training for the Board, Executive Management, and other leaders on investigation best practices and modeling MWD's values
- Consistently apply MWD's policies and standards to leaders at all levels and limit discretion as appropriate

Questions/Comments



Thank you!

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