



## COUNTY OF LAKE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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### MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Brad Rasmussen, Chair, Lake County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Susan Parker, County Administrative Officer  
Pam Z. Samac, Human Resources Director

SUBJECT: Supplemental Response to 2024-25 Lake County Civil Grand Jury Report

DATE: January 13, 2026

The County Administrative Office and its Human Resources Division together submit the below Supplemental Response to the Lake County Civil Grand Jury's 2024-25 Final Report, "Lake County's Director-Level Hiring Practices," addressing specified Findings documented in the Report. We sincerely appreciate the dedicated work of all who contributed to this Report.

Findings from the Grand Jury's report are addressed in the order presented.

#### **"Lake County's Director-Level Hiring Practices"**

F1. Interviews of Board-appointed County of Lake Department heads may be conducted in-person or remotely via Zoom. The Animal Control Director was hired on October 22, 2024, with no in-person interview.

AGREE with Finding. Multiple interviews were conducted via teleconference, and the Board had sufficient confidence to make the appointment.

F2. Lake County does not have temporary housing to offer relocating new-hires.

AGREE with Finding.

F3. A relocation fund of \$3,500 is not enough for relocating new-hires to afford temporary rental housing.

AGREE with Finding. However, funds provided are intended to support demonstrated moving expenses in accordance with IRS guidelines, not encompass all housing-related costs.

F4. Whether the realtors and rental agencies included in the Employee Moving Resource Guide are screened by members of the Lake County Association of Realtors or the Chamber of Commerce was not determined.

DISAGREE partially with Finding. Explanation: This content does not include a specific Finding. However, the Lake County Association of Realtors and Chamber of Commerce did not directly contribute to the Employee Moving Resource Guide.

F5. The Animal Control Director did not live in Lake County, often worked remotely, and was not readily available to respond to emergencies.

DISAGREE partially with Finding. Explanation: While the referenced Animal Control Director did not permanently reside in Lake County and often worked remotely, he was never inaccessible during any emergency event.

F6. On May 20, 2025, the Board of Supervisors approved extending the effective resignation date of the Animal Care and Control Director to June 30, 2025.

AGREE with Finding.

F7. Human Resources does not routinely conduct interviews with departing employees.

AGREE with Finding. While not mandatory, the option is given, and the responsible Department would most typically conduct an "Exit Interview," if one takes place. In some cases, the Human Resources Division may be notified after an employee has already departed County service.

F8. The Employee Moving Resource Guide does not provide demographic data to help new hires from out-of-state better understand the composition of Lake County residents.

AGREE with Finding. Please additionally see Recommendation Response (included below, for ease of reference).

*Recommendation Responses (previously submitted and unedited here).*

R1. (F1.) That the County's hiring process for director-level positions include a final interview in-person that also includes department staff introduction.

DISAGREE, will not be implemented.

Explanation: The intent of the Grand Jury's Recommendation is well appreciated. Existing County policy allows needed flexibility in the hiring process. Retaining the ability to use remote interviews geographically broadens candidate pools, helping to attract qualified professionals who may not yet be local. Candidates are likewise not introduced to staff until successful completion of background checks, at which point a final offer is made; these existing practices protect the privacy of all involved and the integrity of the recruiting process.

R2. (F2.) That the Board of Supervisors consider providing newly-hired department heads with a property it owns for temporary use or contract with area rentals for interim housing.

DISAGREE, will not be implemented.

Explanation: At present, the County does not own residential housing units, and budgetary constraints prohibit implementation the Grand Jury's Recommendation at this time.

R3. (F3.) That the Board of Supervisors increase the relocation assistance to at least \$7,000.

DISAGREE, will not be implemented.

Explanation: Budgetary limitations preclude implementation the Grand Jury's Recommendation at this time. The existing \$3,500 relocation reimbursement is intended to offset moving-related costs in accordance with IRS guidelines, and does not cover temporary housing or rental expenses.

R4. (F4.) That the Board of Supervisors require the Human Resources to assemble a list of "approved" local realtors for new hires from out of the area who are seeking housing.

DISAGREE, will not be implemented.

Explanation: Administration and Human Resources have no regulatory authority over local realtors. Vetting required to assemble an "approved" list, as contemplated by the Grand Jury, would therefore be outside of the scope of Departmental responsibility. Further, resource limitations preclude implementation of this Recommendation.

R5. (F1.) That the Board of Supervisors conduct an exit interview with any departing department director.

DISAGREE, will not be implemented.

Explanation: Staff have found exit interviews often fail to produce meaningful or actionable insights; the existing voluntary process likewise reflects existing staffing and resource constraints.

R6. (F7.) That the Board of Supervisors direct Human Resources to conduct an exit interview with all terminating employees.

DISAGREE, will not be implemented.

Explanation: See response to R5.

R7. (F7.) That the Board of Supervisors direct Human Resources to include demographic data for new hires from out-of-state in its Employee Moving Resource Guide.

DISAGREE, will not be implemented.

Explanation: The Employee Moving Resource Guide is intended to serve solely as a general resource to assist new County employees. The Civil Grand Jury's own report references highly accessible US Census Bureau data.