

# Opportunities

The Hamilton County Human Resources Department's  
Human Resources Development (HRD) Newsletter

3rd  
Quarter  
2020

## HRD Program to Make Temporary Transition to Virtual Instructor-Led Training Classes

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Hamilton County employees in a number of different ways. Since March, many employees have been working remotely. Those who are not working remotely have seen changes to their work environments to abide by social distancing and other public health guidelines. Many meetings have been moved to virtual environments. The Human Resources Development (HRD) Program also had to make the difficult decision to suspend in-person training classes.



While guidelines for in-person meetings and social distancing continue to evolve, the HRD Program has been considering options for when and how to resume training classes. We want to ensure that we are following the appropriate guidelines while also maintaining those aspects of the in-person classes that participants have shared are most important to them, including:

- Interacting and networking with others from different departments
- Sharing challenges, ideas, and solutions
- Working in small groups on real situations
- Watching videos and engaging in small- and large-group discussions

As a result, the HRD Program will soon beginning offering some courses as virtual, instructor-led training (vILT) sessions. This option helps maintain the favorite aspects of in-person classes noted above, while allowing participants to join classes remotely, whether working from their office, their home, or another location. Many of the Civil Treatment and Leadership for Results classes will be offered as vILT sessions, beginning in the upcoming third quarter of 2020 (see calendar for details). These sessions will include the same core content and interactive elements as the in-person sessions. The sessions will be led by the same adjunct instructors who facilitate in-person classes.

Some of the classes that include limited or no small group activity will continue to be offered in person, but classroom sizes will be reduced to abide by social distancing guidelines. As guidelines change, additional seats may be added. The HRD Program will also consider options for converting some of these classes to other formats, if needed.

To sign up for HRD courses, whether vILT or in-person sessions, please continue to follow your department's registration guidelines. Additional information about how to access vILT sessions will be provided to course participants in the coming weeks.

### Skillssoft Offers Free 60-Day e-Learning Trial

Skillssoft, Hamilton County's provider of e-learning courses through the Percipio learning platform, recently announced that they are offering a 60-day free trial of their e-learning programs for all employees. Courses available include business skills, communication skills, computer skills (including Microsoft training courses), customer service skills, and many more. These courses can be accessed via any computer, tablet, or smartphone device. To take advantage of the free trial offer, get your manager's approval, then visit the Skillssoft website at: <http://learn.skillssoft.com/Business-Continuity-Trial.html>.



## Maintaining a Civil and Professional Workplace During the COVID-19 Pandemic



### RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE

The Coronavirus pandemic has impacted every Hamilton County department and employee in unique and unprecedented ways. In a recent Forbes.com article entitled “Reactions to COVID-19 Threaten Gains in Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging” (published March 30, 2020), author Sonia Thompson writes, “In times of crisis and extreme uncertainty, sometimes the knee-jerk reaction is to respond with fear. This causes some to only surround themselves with people who are like them, while intentionally distancing themselves from those who are different.”

That is why it is so important, possibly even more important than ever before, that we consciously strive to reinforce the values that are at the heart of Hamilton County’s Fair Employment Rights and Responsibilities policies and training courses. These policies and training courses are designed to help employees understand what is considered fair and equitable behavior in the workplace and that violations of such behavior, whether regarding a colleague or a member of the public, will not be tolerated. The policies provide important guidelines that every employee should apply to help create and maintain a civil and professional workplace environment.

First and foremost, every employee is expected to engage in appropriate, respectful behavior in every interaction that we have with others. Whether that is an in-person discussion, Zoom call, e-mail, text, or other means, we should avoid any insensitive comments, inappropriate jokes, or unfair treatment based on personal characteristics. In the Forbes article, Ms. Thompson writes: “Translating the values we have into action that support love, diversity, inclusion, and belonging are more important than ever.” We each have a part to play in creating a civil and professional workplace where we can all bring our best selves to work.

That extends into the second guideline to ensure that each member of the team feels included. Ms. Thompson writes, “We all have a role to play in helping us create and grow a culture that is inclusive where everyone feels like they belong.” We can demonstrate our commitment to this guideline by welcoming new ideas, input, and suggestions from co-workers with different backgrounds and experiences, and recognizing that all co-workers contribute to the organization’s well-being. Ultimately, it’s about treating others with respect—both in their presence and in their absence.

The third guideline reminds us that we have an obligation to raise a concern when we see or hear something that doesn’t align with our commitment to create a civil and professional workplace. Ms. Thompson writes, “That means, when we see something that is questionable or unjust, we can’t put our heads in the sand as if it isn’t happening. We have to speak up to create an environment that feels like an oasis for all.” In training, employees are encouraged to raise any concerns to their direct manager, their chain of command, and/or Human Resources to ensure that the inappropriate behavior stops and is addressed appropriately. If they feel comfortable and can maintain their composure, they can also speak directly to the person exhibiting the inappropriate behavior.

Those in supervisory roles have an even greater responsibility in creating and maintaining a civil and professional workplace—especially in the midst of the current crisis. In a recent Law.com article, Joel Stern, CEO of the National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms states, “When crises hit, diversity and inclusion take a back seat if it is not embedded in the DNA of the [organization]. It is an easy thing to not focus on when you have so many other priorities.”

(continued on page 5)



## Hamilton County HRD Course Offerings

**NOTE:** Unless otherwise noted, all Hamilton County HRD courses are held on the 7th Floor of the Todd B. Portune Center for County Government (formerly the County Administration Building [CAB]), at 138 E. Court St.

### To register for a class, please:

- Get your supervisor's approval to attend the class.
- Ask your organization's Training Coordinator to register you for the class.
- Wait to receive a confirmation letter for the class. You should receive it 3-4 weeks before the class begins.
  - **If you receive a confirmation letter**, please plan to attend the class on the dates and times indicated. If you are unable to attend, please notify your Training Coordinator as soon as possible.
  - **If you do not receive a confirmation letter**, please do not attend the class -- it is filled to capacity with other registrants. You will be placed on a wait list and confirmed for the next available class.

### Civil Treatment: Building an Inclusive Workplace—The Managers' Course

One half-day session:

Tuesday, July 28 or  
Thursday, July 30 or  
Tuesday, September 15

8:30 a.m. — 12:30 p.m.

All sessions will be offered  
virtually.

Today's most successful organizations create diverse and inclusive work cultures to help them reach their full potential. In this course, you will learn about unconscious bias and how to mitigate its impact on business decisions, how to create a welcoming and inclusive environment, and the importance of taking action to effectively address non-inclusive behavior.

Mandatory and available for supervisors and managers under the Board of County Commissioners. Also available for supervisors and managers whose organizations participate in the Civil Treatment program.

### Civil Treatment: The Employees' Course

One half-day session:

Thursday, July 16 or  
Tuesday, July 21 or  
Thursday, July 23  
Wednesday, August 5 or  
Thursday, August 20 or  
Tuesday, August 25

8:30 a.m. — 12:30 p.m.

Learn about your rights to fair, equal treatment in the workplace and about your responsibility for treating others fairly at work.

Mandatory and available only for non-supervisory employees of organizations that participate in the Civil Treatment program.

All sessions will be offered virtually.

### Civil Treatment: The Managers' Course

Two half-day sessions:  
Participants attend both sessions.

Tuesday & Wednesday,  
September 1 & 2

8:30 a.m. — 12:30 p.m.

In this intensive course, you'll learn the Prescriptive Rules for managing fairly and legally.

Mandatory and available only for supervisors and managers whose organizations participate in the Civil Treatment program.

All sessions will be offered virtually.

**See Page 5 for information about new online Civil Treatment refresher training that will soon be available for managers.**

## Hamilton County HRD Course Offerings

**NOTE:** Unless otherwise noted, all Hamilton County HRD courses are held on the 7th Floor of the Todd B. Portune Center for County Government (formerly the County Administration Building [CAB]), at 138 E. Court St.

### CPR

One full-day session:  
Thursday, September 24 or  
Tuesday, September 29 or  
Thursday, October 1 or  
Tuesday, October 6  
8:00 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.

Employees who complete and pass the course earn American Heart Association certification in Adult CPR, AED, First Aid, Child CPR & Infant CPR.  
Available only for employees whose jobs require the American Heart Association's CPR certification.  
All sessions will be offered via a blended model: an online course, and in-person skills practice and testing.

### EAP: Supervisory Overview

One half-day session:  
Wednesday, September 9  
8:30 a.m. — 10:00 a.m.  
Offered via Zoom.

This course provides information about the services the EAP program offers. Managers will learn how and when to recommend or refer employees to the EAP.  
Available for all supervisors and managers.

### LFR: Building Trust Under Pressure: The Basic Principles

One half-day session:  
Tuesday, July 14 or  
Thursday, August 13  
8:30 a.m. — 12:30 p.m.  
All sessions will be offered virtually.

In this course, you will be introduced to the Basic Principles, which will help you learn:

- How to build trust with others, even under pressure-packed conditions
- How to establish a wide network of effective relationships
- How to maintain a positive work environment, and
- How to defuse highly charged situations with others.

Available for supervisors and non-supervisory employees whose organizations participate in the Leadership for Results program.

### LFR: Personal Leadership

Three half-day sessions:  
Participants attend all three sessions.  
Tuesdays, August 4, 11, & 18  
8:30 a.m. — 12:30 p.m.  
All sessions will be offered virtually.

Sessions include:

- Listening in a Hectic World
- Providing Constructive Feedback
- Influencing Outcomes Through Others

Available for supervisors and non-supervisory employees who have completed the Leadership for Results "Building Trust Under Pressure: The Basic Principles" course.

## Hamilton County HRD Course Offerings

### Maintaining a Civil and Professional Workplace During the COVID-19 Pandemic (continued from page 1)

To help maintain our focus during difficult experiences, managers should continually apply the following guidelines:

- Communicate the standards and values of the organization on a regular basis;
- Set a consistent example through our own behavior;
- Hold themselves and their teams accountable for maintaining a civil and professional workplace, including addressing inappropriate behavior when it occurs;
- Encourage employees to raise concerns and ideas;
- Follow up on any concerns raised; and
- Reinforce Hamilton County's commitment to a civil and professional workplace.

As Ms. Thompson concludes in the Forbes article, "We all have a role to play under 'normal' circumstances. And that role becomes even more critical, especially in times of crisis and uncertainty. Protect your [reputation] and your culture. Don't let all the good will and progress you spent a ton of time and resources to build get destroyed in an instant by the ugly side of fear during a crisis."

In the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, we can each do our part to create and maintain a civil and professional workplace by honoring the diversity of our co-workers and those we serve, by being inclusive to all, and by treating everyone with respect regardless of our differences. When we do so, we demonstrate that we're truly all in this together, and that together we will get through this unprecedented situation.

### COMING SOON! Civil Treatment refresher training for managers.



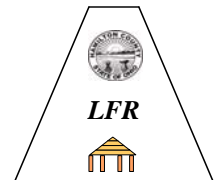
In light of the need to maintain a civil and professional workplace during the COVID-19 pandemic, Hamilton County's HRD Program has been tasked with ensuring that managers and supervisors remain current in their knowledge of fair employment rights and responsibilities. With the pandemic impacting in-person classes, the HRD Program will soon begin offering an interactive, online Civil Treatment refresher course. This new 90-minute course, made available through Employment Learning Innovations, Inc., provides a review of updated Civil Treatment topics, including unlawful harassment and discrimination,

disparate treatment, managers' duty to act, welcoming concerns, retaliation, and more. Managers and supervisors who work in departments under the Board of County Commissioners will be asked to complete the refresher training every two years. More details about the online course will be made available soon. If you have any questions about the new offering, please e-mail HRD Supervisor Ed Demeritt at [ed.demeritt@hamilton-co.org](mailto:ed.demeritt@hamilton-co.org).

### Congratulations!

The following employee completed the Leadership for Results (LFR) Employee Curriculum in March 2020. We commend their commitment to developing the skills essential for effective leadership.

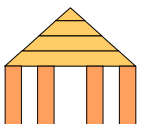
- **Deborah Pittinger—Facilities**



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