



October 10, 2023

To the Honorable City Council President, Nick Mosby
and Members of the Baltimore City Council
City Hall, 100 N. Holliday Street, Room 409
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: CC Bill 22-0137R – Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers

The Department of Human Resources (“DHR”) has reviewed City Council Bill 22-0137R Informational Hearing – Hiring Initiatives – Spanish Speakers. For the purpose of inviting representatives from the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development, the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Department of Transportation, the Department of General Services, the Office of Equity and Civil Rights, and the Baltimore City Public School System to discuss the hiring of Spanish speakers for employment in City government.

DHR has reviewed the above-referenced bill and acknowledges that while we are making strides in our attempts to reach Spanish speakers, there are opportunities for further outreach to this population. While the Spanish-speaking population within the City of Baltimore continues to grow, this is in line with that of the United States as a whole, where it is estimated that 13% of Americans are Spanish speakers, second only to Mexico. It is anticipated that by 2050, the United States is expected to exceed Mexico in the percentage of Spanish-speaking citizens.¹ Therefore, it is paramount to find ways to recruit this population into the workplace.

Currently, DHR’s Office of Recruitment adds information to postings to indicate that a Spanish speaker is required if the position is geared toward Spanish speakers. Also, when DHR’s Office of Recruitment goes to hiring events, they specifically seek Spanish speakers as well. The Department of Recreation and Parks had an event last year, that was geared towards recruiting Spanish-speaking candidates. DHR’s Office of Recruitment works with agencies that want to participate in organizing quarterly hiring events. The Office of Recruitment conducted an annual city-wide career fair in May 2023. Sixteen (16) agencies participated, and five (5) agencies had interviews on the spot. The Office of Recruitment also facilitates quarterly career fairs.

¹ Lugo, S. (2022, May 27). *How to recruit Hispanic employees - tips to find Spanish speaking job applicants*. CareerPlug. Retrieved October 19, 2022, from <https://www.careerplug.com/blog/recruiting-spanish-speaking-job-applicants/>

Communication for these events is written in English and Spanish. Moreover, guidance for completing applications in Workday is provided in English and Spanish.

There is currently a bilingual analyst on the DHR's Office of Recruitment team. DHR's Office of Learning and Development also has a Spanish-speaking employee. Additionally, when the recruitment team conducts hiring events, there are video demonstrations in Spanish on how to apply for the positions. This video is on the City of Baltimore's recruitment page; and is used when the recruitment team goes to hiring events. DHR's Office of Recruitment has also recommended that agencies hire additional staff who are Spanish speakers.

Diverse and non-traditional recruitment methods must be employed to recruit Spanish speakers. According to the Society for Human Resource Management, traditional recruitment strategies do not effectively reach Hispanic candidates, because they often don't believe that such traditional methods will help them get a job.² Instead of traditional recruitment methods, Hispanic candidates often find jobs through networks of friends and family. Therefore, the City should organize to leverage existing employee networks because applicants sourced through a referral are more likely to be hired than an applicant from a job board. With that in mind, it may be helpful to offer a City-wide incentive for employee referrals for Spanish-speaking candidates. There are currently referral programs in the Baltimore City Health Department for Nurses, and Baltimore City Police Department for Police Officers.

Additionally, electronic methods are extremely effective as a recruitment tool for Spanish speakers, as 72% of the Spanish speakers in the United States own at least one smart device, with 64% of Hispanics aged 35-49 using tablet devices daily.³ Therefore, it would be easier for them to apply for jobs via online job boards, to participate in virtual forums, and to access social media sites on which jobs requiring Spanish speakers would be available. DHR's Office of Recruitment currently utilizes the Baltimore City Job website - <https://humanresources.baltimorecity.gov/employment>, LinkedIn, and Indeed as electronic recruitment methods.

Another tool that could be effective in the outreach to Spanish-speaking candidates would be to utilize organizations that serve the Spanish-speaking population, such as:

- Accesolatino.org – an online site with information, guidance, and tools for Latin immigrants, whatever their immigrant status, inside the United States and Mexican territory.

² Rodriguez, R. (2018, April 11). *Tapping the hispanic labor pool*. SHRM. Retrieved October 19, 2022, from <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/pages/0404rodriguez.aspx>

³ Minton-Eversole, T. (2018, April 11). *Hiring hispanics requires awareness of differences*. SHRM. Retrieved October 19, 2022, from <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/hiring-hispanics-requires-awareness-of-differences.aspx>

- iHispano.com – a site owned by the Professional Diversity Network that connects diverse talent with great opportunities.
- LatPro.com – a job board that serves as a conduit between the career-focused professional and potential employers. The site is dedicated to bringing diversity to the American workforce.
- AllBilingualJobs.com – the very first job board connecting Hispanic bilingual job seekers with recruiters searching for multilingual and multicultural professionals.
- BilingualCrossing.com – another website that services bilingual candidates that locates and classifies jobs on every source it can find and provides its highly specialized research to job seekers, recruiters, and other job sites throughout North America.
- Getbilingualjobs.net – a one-stop resource for finding and filling Bilingual positions for the growing community of Bilingual job seekers and employers.
- Hispanic-jobs.com – a career site founded in 2004 for employers who want to reach bilingual/Spanish-speaking professionals nationwide.
- Saludos.com – another site that specializes in joining the Hispanic bilingual professional with companies looking for diversity in the workplace.

Establishing relationships with these and similar organizations can only extend our reach into the Spanish-speaking community and increase our ability to find qualified Spanish speakers to fill City positions. However, DHR's Office of Recruitment sends specialized messages in Spanish to the Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Immigrants Affairs to send to their distribution list.

The Department of Human Resources supports best practices that attract and retain quality candidates for employment within the City of Baltimore. To that end, implementing a City-wide employee referral bonus program, leveraging and expanding professional connections with the Spanish-speaking community, and continuing to utilize the technological recruitment efforts geared toward Spanish speakers, may be helpful in building a better pipeline of candidates.

For additional questions or concerns, contact me at Quinton.Herbert@baltimorecity.gov or by phone at 410-396-1563.

Sincerely,

Quinton Herbert, JD