

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Human Resource Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Master of Public Administration in Public Sector Management and Leadership

By

Vanessa De Leon

August 2020

Copyright by Vanessa De Leon 2020

The graduate project of Vanessa De Leon is approved:

Dr. Elizabeth A. Trebow

Date

Dr. Sarmistha R. Majumdar

Date

Dr. Judith A. DeBonis, Chair

Date

California State University, Northridge

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my parents for their support during the course of this long journey as they are my source of encouragement and my #1 fans. I would also like to acknowledge my grandmother who passed away at the beginning of this academic endeavor, but who was my biggest cheerleader and the source of inspiration to finish what I start.

Table of Contents

Copyright Page	ii
Signature Page	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	vii
Introduction	1
Aims and Objectives	2
Background	4
Emergence of COVID-19 and Federal Government Response	4
California Response	5
COVID-19 and the Workplace	6
COVID-19 and Collective Bargaining	8
Literature Review	11
Public Sector Human Resource Management	11
Public Sector Human Resource Management, and Emergencies	12
COVID-19 and Human Resource Management	16
Method	20
Setting	20
Participants	21
Measures and Data Collection	22
Data Analysis Plan	23
Results (Projected)	25
Discussion	26

Major Findings	26
Strengths	26
Limitations	27
Future Studies	27
Implications for Public Administration	28
Conclusion	30
References	32

Abstract

Human Resource Management During the COVID-19 Pandemic

By

Vanessa De Leon

Master of Public Administration in Public Sector Management and Leadership

Purpose: To explore the human resource management issues encountered by local public sector employers during the COVID-19 pandemic. **Research Question or hypothesis (focus of inquiry):** Explore the experiences of Sacramento County human resource management professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic. **Methods:** A qualitative study based on interviews with a purposive sample of Sacramento County human resource management professionals. **Results:** A snapshot of human resource management issues encountered during the COVID-19, with a few common themes expected to emerge from these experiences. **Discussion:** The study will add to the field of human resource management and public administration by exploring an emerging topic, the experiences of local public sector human resource management professionals during a global pandemic. Findings from the interviews will be used to identify practical information to enhance the experiences of public sector employees and improve the delivery of government services to the public by public sector employees during an unprecedented pandemic.

Keywords: local public sector, human resource management, COVID-19 pandemic

Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) is the discipline that focuses on the relationship between the individual and the organization (Berman et al., 2016). HRM professionals are tasked with managing the initial recruitment of individuals, the onboarding of new staff, managing employee performance and discipline, administering payroll functions and employee benefits, developing and revising employee classifications, and negotiating salaries and other terms and conditions of employment with employee unions (Berman et al., 2016). It is a challenging role during “normal” times. However, when a natural disaster or other unexpected event transpires, HRM professionals are tasked with ensuring the safety and well-being of employees and facilitating the availability of staff to provide public services during a turbulent and high stress event (French et al., 2008; Mann & Islam, 2015).

The COVID-19 pandemic, the global pandemic that has consumed public and private life since the beginning of 2020, however, is unlike any other disaster or emergency experienced in decades. The threat of a highly infectious disease, with no cure and no vaccination, is daunting. All three levels of government have taken varying degrees of action to mitigate its impact. Public agencies, nevertheless, have had to continue to provide critical services that citizens rely on during ordinary times and even more so during a crisis. Public sector employees are similarly expected to fulfill their duties as public servants by responding directly to a disaster or providing other much needed government services (Mann, 2014).

Because of the health and safety implications, the COVID-19 pandemic has demanded quick decision making and fluidity from public sector HRM professionals in a bureaucratic and often overly rigid system (Caligiuri et al., 2020). Although the exigent nature of the pandemic allows for some flexibility to take immediate actions in response to emergencies, federal and

state laws including collective bargaining statutes and labor agreements have complicated this endeavor (Yeung, 2020). Further, the novel coronavirus pandemic is just that, a novel crisis that has triggered a series of unprecedented government actions limiting the mobility and activities of government entities, businesses, corporations and individuals for months with no anticipated end date.

HRM professionals, as public administrators, are tasked with guiding their organizations through this uncharted territory of social distancing, remote working, and shelter in place orders while facilitating the delivery of essential public services in a safe and healthy manner. To do so, public administrators need to understand what, if any HRM issues have emerged that can delay or derail such efforts or, alternatively, have forced innovation and affected positive change. Accordingly, examining HRM during this pandemic warrants further attention and this study is a first step at doing so.

Aims and Objectives

This study's purpose is to explore the experiences of HRM professionals in Sacramento County during the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the study is to gain a deeper understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on public sector HRM practices and to gather practical information to improve service delivery. A qualitative design is proposed entailing interviews of a small, non-random group of HRM professionals employed by Sacramento County. This design has been selected because little has been published regarding public sector HRM and the COVID-19 pandemic. The interviews are expected to generate details and information that cannot be gleaned from a survey with a limited range of responses.

The aim of the study is to collect data that can serve as a precursor to a more robust examination of multiple California local public employers and the HRM issues encountered

during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study is important because the pandemic has not ended, the health crisis and its associated challenges continue. If the study reveals problematic HRM practices or success stories, such findings can be addressed, corrected or replicated, as applicable. Additionally, it is expected that the study will reveal the HRM issues encountered during this pandemic are distinguishable from those encountered in other emergencies, crises, and disasters. Thus, the study's findings will represent a distinct area of research regarding disasters and emergencies as well. Lastly, it is anticipated this study will serve as an impetus for further examination by other researchers as the subject matter area is still a novel one and the research is needed by public sector practitioners and scholars alike.

Background

Emergence of COVID-19 and Federal Government Response

In December of 2019, the outbreak of a new virus and disease, COVID-19, began in Wuhan, China (World Health Organization, 2020a). The disease generated the world's attention because of its rapid spread, severe effects, and increasing fatalities, but many, including the World Health Organization, initially failed to deem it a global health emergency and precursor to a world pandemic (Bacon, 2020). However, on January 31, 2020, the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services declared a public health emergency in response to COVID-19 (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2020). On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization assessed that the COVID-19 disease could be characterized as a pandemic noting 118,000 cases of the illness in 114 countries (World Health Organization, 2020b). In this declaration, the World Health Organization's Director-General reminded the world that "this is not just a public health crisis, it is a crisis that will touch every sector – so every sector and every individual must be involved in this fight" (World Health Organization, 2020b, para 30). A national state of emergency followed on March 13, 2020 by President Trump (Trump, 2020).

On March 18, 2020, the U.S. Senate passed and the President signed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFRCRA, 2020) which provided two emergency leave provisions impacting private and public sector employers. The FFCRA created the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (2020) that establishes emergency job protections under the Family Medical Leave Act (1993) when an employee is unable to work (or telework) due to a need to care for a minor son or daughter if the school or place of care has been closed due to a public health emergency. The second leave provision is the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (2020) that requires employers to provide up to 80 hours of paid sick leave to full-time

employees (pro-rated for part-time employees) if unable to work (or telework) because of a quarantine or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis. Leave can also be granted to employees if they have a need to care for an individual subject to quarantine or to care for a child whose school or care provider is closed due to COVID-19. On March 24, 2020, the Department of Labor (DOL), the department charged with implementing the FFCRA, began issuing guidance for implementation by posting Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). As of July 2020, there were 97 FAQs posted on the DOL website (U.S. Department of Labor, 2020). The federal government followed with the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (2020) on March 27, 2020 which included clarifications regarding the FFCRA, as well as enhanced unemployment insurance benefits.

California Response

On March 4, 2020, California Governor Gavin Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency as a result of the threat of COVID-19 (Newsom, 2020a). On March 19, 2020, the California State Public Health Officer (Angell, 2020) and Governor Newsom mandated all individuals in California to “stay home...except as needed to maintain continuity of operations of the critical infrastructure sectors” (Newsom, 2020b. para 6). The federal government identified 16 critical infrastructure sectors and the California order allowed those sectors to continue their work because of their importance to “California’s health and well-being” (Newsom, 2020b, para 3). The list included the health and public health sector, water and wastewater sector, transportation and logistics sector, and government operations and other community essential functions (Essential Workforce, 2020). The government operations category included a specific list of government functions deemed essential if remote work was not practical. The list included elections personnel, county workers responsible for the determining eligibility for safety net

benefits, and workers that maintain digital systems infrastructure supporting critical government operations. The list also included critical government workers as defined by the employer, granting quite a bit of deference to public sector employers to designate which employees constituted an essential worker according to their specific needs (Essential Workforce, 2020).

On May 6, 2020 California's Governor also issued Executive Order N-62-20 (Newsom, 2020c) which established a temporary presumptive eligibility for workers' compensation benefits to any employee who was directed to report to their place of employment and subsequently contracted COVID-19 during the time period March 19 and July 5, 2020. If employees tested positive or were diagnosed with COVID-19 within 14 days after performing work (and confirmed by a physician), the employee established a rebuttable presumption that they contracted COVID-19 at work (Dungy & Volberding, 2020). The change shifted the burden of proof to the employer to prove the employee did not get sick at work (Luna, 2020).

COVID-19 and the Workplace

However, even before these official declarations from the President and the Governor of California, HRM professionals and community were already in a flurry regarding the practical effects of the virus on the work place. Questions regarding the legality of temperature checks and inquiries regarding employee health conditions began to surface. A top Center of Disease Control (CDC) official's comment that the coronavirus would likely cause a global pandemic at a news briefing on February 25, 2020, prompted the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) to release a statement the following day advising employers to take the necessary precautions to prevent the spread of the virus in the workplace (Belluck & Weinland, 2020; SHRM, 2020a). A proliferation of discussions and inquiries followed regarding the obligations and legalities associated with the pandemic and the workplace, including the release of the

Occupational Health and Safety Agency's Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19 on March 9, 2020 (Occupational Health and Safety Agency, 2020). A webcast with SHRM and the CDC ensued on March 10, 2020 to discuss common questions from HRM professionals and employers. Roughly 40,000 people joined the call and crashed the SHRM website briefly (Green, 2020).

Similarly, on March 19, 2020, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) reissued the Pandemic Preparedness in the Workplace and the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) to incorporate updates regarding the COVID-19 pandemic (U.S. EEOC, 2020a). The EEOC also issued Technical Assistance Questions and Answers as of March 17, 2020 regarding the types of medical questions that can be asked of employees regarding COVID-19 symptoms, taking the body temperature of employees and reasonable accommodations that can be triggered due to COVID-19 and return to work questions about screening employees. The Technical Assistance Questions and Answers have been updated at least six times since March 2020 (U.S. EEOC, 2020b).

Governor Newsom's March 19, 2020 stay at home order (Newsom, 2020b), or what has otherwise been referred to as a "Shelter in Place" order, moved the COVID-19 discussion in California HRM from how to mitigate potential infections at work to the critically urgent task of determining which employees are essential or non-essential to its operation. From there, public employers were tasked with coordinating the release of non-essential employees to their homes and making arrangements for nonessential/essential employees to work from home, where possible. Many employers were ill prepared for the technological and logistical demands to telework on such a grand scale. Further, the question of how to compensate employees deemed non-essential and unable to work remotely because of limited access to systems or because their

duties were incompatible with remote work, created difficult decision making regarding how to designate their leave from the workplace. Sacramento County, for instance, granted paid administrative leave to non-essential employees to remain at home (Yoon-Hendricks, 2020). However, as the pandemic lingered from a few weeks to months, employers struggled with how long their jurisdictions could sustain paying employees on such administrative paid time (Fernandez, 2020).

Meanwhile, employers also struggled with implementation of the FFCRA (2020), requiring system changes to ensure compliance with payment, leave administration, and documentation required for federal reimbursement. While the DOL continued issuing clarifications and updates to the law, Human Resources Management professionals were also attempting to comply with the California shelter in place orders. Similarly, counties in California issued their own shelter in place orders. For instance, the County of Sacramento issued stay-at home public health order on March 19, 2020 (Sacramento County, 2020). Nine subsequent orders followed with the last issued on July 14, 2020 (Kasirye, 2020) mandating once again the closing of indoor operations like restaurants after a spike in COVID-19 cases and deaths in the county.

For those essential employees who were required to work on site, demands for personal protective equipment (PPE) became complicated as the supply for the appropriate PPE like masks were scarce and generally reserved for first responders, like public health and safety (Boseley, 2020).

COVID-19 and Collective Bargaining

Demands from employee unions to meet regarding safety concerns added to the pressures that public employers faced in managing a workforce and providing public services, during an unprecedented pandemic (Castellano, 2020). Reports of California state worker infections

validated public sector employee concerns about the harms faced by those remaining in the workplace and serving the public during a pandemic, even those with administrative jobs like DMV employees (McGreevy, 2020). In one case, Santa Clara County workers filed an unfair labor practice against Santa Clara County for failing to provide employee unions with an opportunity to meet before assigning staff, as disaster workers, to a skilled nursing facility without the appropriate PPE, despite credible complaints of a hazard (Sciacca, 2020). In addition, employee organizations began demanding additional compensation for hazard work or administrative time off for those left behind to continue working (Fernandez, 2020; Venteicher, 2020a). Additional demands to bargain changes to work schedules or assignment changes not contemplated in the labor agreement or class specification were also made, as such changes are subject to negotiation with labor organizations (Morris, 2020; National Law Review, 2020).

As public employers made plans for employees to return to work, the collective bargaining statutes in California triggered obligations to meet with unions, particularly with respect to safety and reductions in force, like layoffs or furloughs in light of budget shortfalls (Atkinson et al., 2020). The contemplation of employee reductions represented a radical shift from the start of the pandemic when demands for hazard pay were made to concessions in contract negotiations as the pandemic lingered. For example, the largest California state union agreed to 2 furlough days due to budget shortfalls and delayed cost of living adjustments (Venteicher, 2020b). A report by Hinkley (2020), of the UC Berkeley Labor Center, suggests the shutdown of government services will accelerate the loss of public jobs and those losses will rapidly escalate once budgets are adopted and contractual notices of layoff have been met. While public sector employers contemplate these reduced budgets and staffing impacts, the number of COVID-19 cases in California has spiked in July and the Governor has issued statewide indoor closures again

indicating the pandemic will continue to have corresponding workplace effects (Gardiner et al., 2020). It is precisely because of this volatility and unpredictability that the pandemic and its impact to public administration, in particular human resource management, warrants scholarly review now.

Literature Review

Human Resource Management and the Public Sector

Human resource management (HRM), as stated earlier, is a discipline that focuses on the relationship between the individual and the organization and includes: the technical functions of managing people day-to-day; policies and practices that advance the development, performance, and well-being of employees; and a strategic perspective and focus on meeting and shaping the organizations' needs (Berman et al., 2016, p. 518). Public sector HRM differs from private sector HRM in a variety of ways. For instance, the public sector's focus on public interest outcomes distinguish it from the for-profit interests of the private sector (Brown, 2004). Additionally, the decisions by governmental entities are subject to intense scrutiny and public visibility (Berman et al., 2016). These factors influence how work is completed, how resources are managed, how decisions are made, and how systems are developed in the public sector (Berman et al., 2016). Further, public sector organizations are more pluralistic than their private sector counterparts and therefore have a larger range of stakeholders to satisfy including elected officials, trade unions, key client groups, and the public (Brunetto & Beattie, 2020). The competing demands from the public for particular actions make the selection of an appropriate HRM action a political one, as well as an administrative one (Perlman, 2016). These demands also dictate two realities faced by public HRM professionals; the unpredictable nature of public organizations and resource scarcity (Perlman, 2016).

The relationship between employee and employer is another distinguishing feature of the public and private HRM spheres. In the private sector, most employees are at will, that is, either party can end the relationship without cause at any time (Berman et al., 2016; French, 2009). The majority of public sector employees, on the other hand, are civil servant employees who have a

property right to their position once they pass probation. Public sector employees cannot be terminated or subject to adverse action without just cause and due process (Berman et al., 2016; French, 2009). This property right provides civil service employees with a significant degree of certainty in their employment and removes them from the whims of political elites and protects them from political influence and patronage (Berman et al., 2016).

Collective bargaining also confers rights on public sector employees, with unions playing an important role in government (Berman et al., 2016). One study confirmed this by concluding the public sector emphasizes domains that involve employee selection and grievance procedures (Harel & Zafirir, 2001). The authors suggested this was probably because of the stricter Equal Employment Opportunities regulations in governmental organizations and the higher level of unionization (Harel & Zafirir, 2001). This is consistent with the assessment offered by Berman et al. (2016) that unions in the public sector function as “protectors, partners, and punishers” (p. 453). Accordingly, the authors noted that unions act as defenders when they defend employee rights and interests, they act as partners with pro-labor stakeholders, and act as punishers against those they perceive to be against labor (Berman, 2016). Katz et al. (2017) noted that public sector bargaining, however, must ultimately be responsive to the demands of the public because governments, although employers, are also providers of public services.

Public Sector Human Resource Management, Local Governments, and Emergencies

Public sector HRM at the local government level is further distinguished from the private sector with respect to emergencies. Local governments are first responders to disasters (Dzigbede et al., 2020; Goodman et al., 2010). They are charged with protecting and serving their citizens and require human capital, or personnel, to provide and maintain service delivery during an emergency event (French et al., 2008; Goodman et al., 2010; Mann, 2011; Mann,

2014; Perry & Lindell, 1997). By incorporating HRM professionals in addressing an emergency or disaster, local governments are able to identify HRM policies and procedures that are relevant to employee management in times of disaster or crisis (Mann & Islam, 2015). HRM departments and professionals are uniquely equipped to identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities of staff, classifications, and job duties to assist departments address the pressing needs of catastrophic events (Goodman et al., 2010; Mann, 2014). They also possess knowledge of the rules, policies, and procedures governing employees and their working conditions, like how to adjust compensation or authorize overtime to address recruitment or retention issues (Goodman et al., 2010).

Scholars have linked local public sector HRM and emergency management by analyzing the HRM activities of local government as supporting a particular phase of an emergency (French, et al., 2008; Goodman, et al., 2010; Goodman & Mann, 2008). By examining these activities through the Emergency Management Framework (EMF), Goodman and Mann (2008) argued the application of the EMF to HRM is essential to practitioners and scholars and provides stakeholders with a more complete understanding of how to manage human resources and mitigate the effects of future disastrous events. Goodman and Mann started this scholarship by applying two phases of the EMF, response and recovery, to local government HRM activities during Hurricane Katrina. The researchers identified HRM's activities as either supporting the jurisdiction's *response* to the hurricane (designating essential employees, contacting staff and payroll) or supporting the jurisdiction's *recovery* of the disaster (managing payroll and benefits, recruitment and retention, employee assistance and stress). In this manner, the authors drew attention to the HRM role and HRM activities triggered by an emergency and the potential HRM challenges. As a qualitative study, the researchers conveyed specific details of the HRM impacts

from the disaster (Goodman & Mann, 2008). For instance, survey respondents shared experiences completing payroll by hand, paying employees in cash, and contacting employees following evacuations while phones and electricity were down for periods at a time. Goodman and Mann (2008) also offered recommendations regarding managing HR after a catastrophic event including: ensuring the availability of an organizational chart; establishing clarity regarding supervisor roles; maintaining an accurate employee contact; and focusing on the emotional well-being of staff.

Goodman et al. (2010) offered further examination of the Emergency Management Framework and HRM by identifying a number of HRM activities associated with the mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery phases of an emergency. The review identified communicating with employees and anticipating staffing and training needs as activities that support the mitigation phase of an emergency. Updating organization plans, contacting employees, and developing an evacuation plan supported the preparation phase of an emergency. Assisting in the designation of essential and non-essential employees, managing payroll and developing reporting procedures were characterized as response activities. Assisting in managing compensation and the recruitment and retention of staff were designated as recovery activities, in addition to employee assistance. Goodman et al. also recommended plans for counseling and debriefing during the recovery phase. Other scholars have suggested that emergencies, disasters, and other crises routinely generate HRM challenges related to mental health (Mankin & Perry, 2004; Perry & Mankin, 2005). In a literature review regarding the effects of terrorism, researchers noted victims of terrorism and other disasters often experience psychological harm (Mankin & Perry, 2004) The authors suggested the victims of such events expect assistance, particularly when the event transpires in the workplace (Mankin & Perry, 2004). The authors

recommended employers rely on Employee Assistance Program to address the psychological needs of employees following a disaster. Perry and Mankin (2005) also recommended deploying psychological counselors to work with staff and management in managing stress associated with disasters.

To assist public employers in an emergency, Goodman et al. (2010) shared a disaster planning checklist identifying the core HR areas and suggested actions to take to support them in an emergency. The checklist included addressing flexible work arrangements; being flexible with work hours; preparing for possible worker shortages; and adjusting overtime and other pay policies. The authors also contemplated a pandemic and recommended that HRM develop significant contingency plans in anticipation of staff reductions due to employee (or family) illness. Consideration of flexible leave policies granting employees the ability to manage family and work responsibilities, staggered shifts, telework, and the adoption of other strategies to reduce the impact of workplace absenteeism were also recommended (Goodman et al., 2010). Gorney (2009) similarly predicted an increased degree of absenteeism from the H1N1 pandemic and anticipated the need for employees to care for ill family members, employees supervising children at home due to school closures, and complying with quarantines and social distancing requirements imposed by governments. Establishing alternative work arrangements, like working from home, staggered work hours, and the use of teleconferencing, instead of face to face meetings were also recommended (Gorney, 2009).

Lastly, Mann (2011) offered specific recommendations in preparation for a disaster. Mann noted that payroll, recruitment and retention, volunteer management, and communication should all be addressed prior to an emergency. The study's survey also provided further insight into the HRM areas and potential HRM challenges encountered in a disaster. The survey

included questions regarding the degree to which HRM policies had been incorporated into the agency's emergency plans. These Human Resources Disaster policies included hiring practices, pay differentials, furloughs, retention, discipline, cross-training and counseling. A later study by Mann and Islam (2015), that examined local government human resource professionals responding to an emergency, used a similar survey tool to describe the pre-disaster and post-disaster HRM activities some jurisdictions have adopted as part of their emergency plans.

COVID - 19 and Human Resource Management

Only a few academic articles have addressed COVID-19 and HRM, but some reoccurring topics have emerged. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced employees to work from home (Caligiuri et al., 2020). Employees who once worked inside the confines of their employer's physical space are now required to adjust to working remotely without the option of other alternative work places (Carnevale et al., 2020). School and day care closures have forced entire households to be housebound for lengthy periods of time resulting in the blurring of lines between the work and family spheres (Caligiuri et al., 2020; Carnevale et al., 2020). Researchers suggest this has led to greater difficulties for employees to unplug from work demands and increased work hours (Caligiuri et al., 2020; Carnevale et al., 2020). Employers are also reporting concerns regarding telework (Risher & Abell; 2020; Schuster et al., 2020; Society for Human Resource Management; 2020b). For instance, 71% of employer surveyed by SHRM reported they were not comfortable with telework (2020b). The SHRM survey also indicated that a third of employers surveyed were dealing with issues surrounding employees who are unable to telework (SHRM, 2020b). Telework has also presented monitoring and supervising challenges. Public sector managers are confronting monitoring and supervision issues because telework prohibits close, over-the-shoulder supervision (Risher & Abell, 2020; Schuster et al., 2020).

With remote work, communications with staff are more intermittent and managers are faced with communicating, leading, and motivating remotely (Schuster et al., 2020; SHRM, 2020b).

Remote work has also created workload issues as much of the work of public sector workers has moved online requiring remote interactions (Schuster et al., 2020). Employees may need to learn new tasks with less direct supervision. These factors can create issues regarding expectations (Schuster et al., 2020). Further, questions regarding how managers will translate existing work rules, communications, and even meetings to the new reality of remote work have become a challenge (McElgunn, 2020).

Social isolation has also been discussed in the literature (Carnevale et al., 2020; Schuster et al., 2020). Researchers suggest one of the most salient HRM challenges that comes from the pandemic is the adjustment to altered working conditions such as remote work environment and new workplace policies and procedures that limit human contact (Caligiuri et al., 2020). This social isolation as well as uncertainty about employment, health, and the future are likely to have negative impacts on employees' mental health (Caligiuri et al., 2020). Additionally, the crisis has significantly affected the manner in which people interact and communicate because the lockdowns have created a shift to communicating online (Bailey & Breslin, 2020). The SHRM (2020b) survey indicates 65% of the employers surveyed reported challenges with employee morale and a third reported challenges with employee productivity.

Researchers have also identified health and safety as priority during the pandemic, with the employer charged with minimizing risk and maximizing safe work practices (Bailey & Breslin, 2020; Caligiuri et al., 2020). Communication regarding health risks, available resources and support for health and safety have been identified by researchers as key concerns for HRM professionals as well (Caligiuri et al., 2020). Lastly, compliance with new federal laws and

existing ones has been identified as a concern for employers. The SHRM (2020b) survey regarding the COVID-19 pandemic revealed that more than a third of employers were facing challenges with time lines for implementing and complying with leave requirements and managing employee leave requests.

Any issues or challenges that affect a government's ability to provide services merits further examination. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented public employers with an unprecedented set of challenges to protect the health and safety of staff and provide public services. While public sector HRM is critical during normal times, it is even more so during emergencies. A few academics have examined the role of public sector HRM professionals during an emergency and the kinds of activities triggered by a natural disaster (French et al., 2008; Goodman et al., 2010; Goodman & Mann, 2008; Mann, 2011; Mann, 2014; Mann & Islam, 2015). These studies, though insightful, do not explore the HRM challenges encountered during a pandemic which is continuous, with no geographical boundaries or end date. The few academic articles regarding COVID-19 and HRM provide some information regarding the pandemic and how it has changed where and how employees work (Bailey & Breslin, 2020; Caligiuri et al., 2020; Carnevale et al., 2020; McElgunn, 2020; Risher & Abell, 2020; Schuster et al., 2020). These studies suggest working remotely from home has blurred the lines between the work and family spheres and has caused concerns regarding work expectations, particularly with supervisors who must now supervise remotely (Caligiuri et al., 2020; Carnevale et al., 2020; McElgunn, 2020; Risher & Abell, 2020; Schuster et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has also reportedly resulted in social isolation causing mental health concerns, as well as morale issues (Caligiuri et al., 2020; Carnevale et al., 2020; Schuster et al., 2020; SHRM, 2020b). The pandemic has required employers to implement strategies to protect the health and safety of

employees to a degree not experienced before, which includes compliance with an array of new leave laws and protections (Bailey & Breslin, 2020; Caligiuri et al., 2020). However, in the absence of details about the specific experiences and challenges encountered by public sector employers due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is difficult to fully appreciate the impact of managing human resources during these unprecedented times. Therefore, this study proposes to explore the experiences of a specific jurisdiction, Sacramento County, to obtain the rich details and narrative from front line HRM practitioners who can recount their experiences, challenges, and obstacles that have emerged during the pandemic and their impact on HRM at the local government public sector level. From these experiences, public sector employers and scholars can learn how to prepare and mitigate the adverse effects of the next wave of the pandemic or the next looming crisis and fully appreciate a catastrophic event that appears to have changed work life permanently.

Method

Setting

Sacramento County employs over 11,000 employees in over 900 job classifications in 38 departments that are charged with a range of services like animal care, water quality, waste management, transportation, and social services. Sacramento County is unique in that it also operates an airport and its employees support two independent sanitation districts that handle wastewater for the community. Thus, the job classifications utilized by the County include peace officers, social workers, public health workers, attorneys, engineers, building inspectors, water treatment operators, and office technical and administrative staff. Sacramento County employees are represented by 29 bargaining units. The County has 26 labor agreements with these various labor organizations the majority of which are in contract until June 30, 2021. One unit, the fire fighter unit, is currently out of contract, but contract negotiations are ongoing.

The Department of Personnel Service (DPS) is the central HRM department, with the vast majority of departments receiving direct HRM support from DPS, with a few exceptions. Some of the elected officials have opted to hire their own HRM support and these employees report to the elected official rather than the Director of Personnel Services. The Sacramento Sheriff's Department for instance has its own HRM manager and support staff, but these employees are still County employees. DPS is organized into 10 functional work units and divisions including Benefits, Risk Management & Safety, Labor Relations, Department Services, Workers Compensation, Employment Services and Training and Development. The Department of Personnel Services has over two hundred positions, 189 of which are currently filled. Most of these employees are unrepresented, that is, their classifications are unrepresented by a union or association.

Participants

This project proposes to interview 30 Sacramento County HRM professionals. Participants will be purposively selected from the ten DPS functional work areas, as well as a few HRM staff supporting elected officials. At least one HRM professional will be selected to participate from each functional area, but it is expected that at least half will come from the Department Services Division that is made up of five teams assigned to support departments on the day-to-day issues regarding discipline, leave usage, accommodations, and performance management. It is anticipated these teams have been more heavily involved in answering questions directly from departments and employees as they are the contacts for the day-to day HRM issues. Further, many of the team's managers served on the DPS COVID-19 team formed to assist DPS in crafting documents and responding to questions regarding COVID-19 related inquiries from staff, departments and the unions. Many of these managers also met with the unions regarding return to work protocols and are expected to have experiences and knowledge regarding frequent issues that have been raised during the pandemic.

Participants will be selected based on their specific scope of authority with preference given to HRM managers, supervisors, and leads who have some decision-making authority and charged with the supervision of other HRM staff. This is because they are more likely to have made decisions about the applications of rules, policies, laws, and labor agreements during the pandemic and those kinds of experiences are of interest to this study. Harel and Zafrir (2001) commented in their study that they collected data from HRM managers because they were typically more aware of the overall activities of an organization, but did express concern regarding the responses of those who had direct responsibilities for implementation of activities because they would be responding to questions about decisions they personally made. Thus,

including leads and supervisors and other lower level employees, as well as adding clarifying questions regarding the decision-making role of participants will likely address the concerns regarding bias raised by earlier researchers or at least provide a frame of reference for comments. Participants must also have been working during the pandemic in order to provide information regarding the HRM issues they encountered performing their official duties. Many employees have been excluded from working during this period because of the availability of various leave programs offered.

Participants will be invited to participate in the study by letter. All invitees will be advised of the nature of the study, its purpose and the confidentiality of responses. All invited individuals will be advised that their participation and responses will not affect their employment and that the study is completely voluntary. Additionally, all invited individuals will be told their responses will be confidential. Further, participants will be told that any identifying information about their specific department assignment will be removed from the summary of data to assist in such confidentiality. If individuals elect not to participate, they will be sent a follow-up correspondence thanking them for their response. Additional individuals will be invited to participate to ensure there are 30 participants.

Measures and Data Collection

The interviews will be scheduled for an hour and a half, although the duration is expected to vary from 35 minutes to an hour given the range of functions and roles played by each participant. In recognition of social distancing recommendations, the interviews will occur over Skype or Zoom simply to allow a face to face interaction to ensure the full attention of the participant and interviewer. Participants will be offered interview times that are convenient for

the participant. It is expected that interviews will occur after regular business hours or during the lunch period because of the HRM demands during the ongoing pandemic.

Using an interview guide written by the researcher and based on the limited literature that has emerged, subjects will be asked about the HRM activities that they engaged in during the COVID-19 pandemic, the purpose of those activities, and if any issues emerged in the course of those activities. Participants will be asked if the issue was addressed and how it was addressed, and if there were any obstacles and their recommended solutions. Specific questions will include: (1) What HRM activities changed or what modifications are you aware of that were made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?; (2) What HRM questions or issues emerged from your departments and employees regarding the COVID-19 pandemic?; (3) What are (were) the biggest HRM challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic?; (4) What has been the greatest impact COVID-19 has had on HRM activities?; (5) What would you have changed about the HRM response or what recommendations do you have to improve the HRM response?; and (6) What HRM challenges do you anticipate, if any, in the future as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Data Analysis Plan

The interviews will be recorded and later transcribed into written text for analysis. It is expected that themes will emerge from these responses and they will be sorted accordingly. For instance, it is expected that a vast majority of the data will reflect the administrative tasks that HRM professionals engaged in during the pandemic like changing the payroll systems, updating FAQs, and answering questions regarding the new leave laws and existing laws like the American with Disabilities Act (1990).

The data will be sorted by functional area like recruitment and retention impacts, training impacts, and compensation impacts. Further, the data will be examined to determine if the information suggests HRM activities appear to support the four phases of the emergency management framework addressed in the literature linking HRM and emergency management. Data will be examined to determine if there were particular activities or efforts that appear to support the recovery and response phases and whether the County engaged in any HRM activities supporting a preparedness and/or mitigation phase for future waves of the COVID-19 or other emergencies in the future, like developing an emergency plan. In this vein, data can also be sorted, to the extent possible, according to the various phases of the pandemic, such as the early stages of the pandemic when the shelter in place mandate was made by Governor Newsom (2020b) up through the period when employees returned back to the work site and any subsequent phases or mandates that follow. Ultimately, the data will drive how the information is sorted in the most logical and informative fashion.

Lastly, the data will be examined to determine if there are any common issues raised by the data and the literature regarding natural disasters. And, the data will be examined to determine if the pandemic clearly generated entirely different issues than Hurricane Katrina and those identified in the academic articles.

Results

It is anticipated that the responses from participants will indicate, at the very least, that the workplace has been disrupted and it is certainly no longer “business as usual.” For those participants who have actively responded to questions from staff, developed policies, and engaged in meetings with unions and employees, it is likely they will easily identify HRM issues impacted by the pandemic and will provide details regarding their experiences. It is also expected that some of the participants will provide stories of particular obstacles encountered during the pandemic and provide examples of innovation and business process improvements forced by the pandemic’s adverse circumstances. Similarly, it is expected that the data will show that there were some HRM missteps and areas that can be vastly improved in response to the pandemic that may have otherwise been overlooked if not for the interviews and the opportunity to reflect on these HRM experiences.

It is also anticipated that the interviews will produce data regarding impacts of telework and social isolation and details about the struggles by employees and supervisors in adjusting to new working conditions. The literature review generated significant references to these issues. Ultimately, however, it is expected that the interviews will provide a detailed and rich narrative of the experiences of Sacramento County in managing human resources during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. Whereas surveys may represent a more effective and efficient way of gathering a lot of information regarding HRM issues triggered by the pandemic, the stories and rich details expected from this study are what ultimately drive this initial look at the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on public sector HRM at the local government level.

Discussion

Major Findings

It is expected that the data will confirm several HRM issues emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic in Sacramento County. It is unclear, however, whether the data will only address the particulars that impacted the HRM professionals or those that impacted employees or both. The scant COVID-19 HRM academic literature available seems to focus on the effects of removing employees from the worksite and remote working, such as the negative effects of social isolation, work-life balance, and difficulties with adjusting to online work and communications. These HRM impacts reported in the literature seem to focus on employees and their experiences rather than narratives about the administrative day-to-day functions of HRM and the role of the HRM professional during emergencies. The impacts of both are important and it is hoped the survey will reveal elements from both perspectives. However, this may not be the case given the selected participants and the inclusion of HRM professionals only.

Strengths

The biggest strength of the proposed study is that it will provide the kinds of details needed to paint a compelling narrative of the COVID-19 pandemic and the HRM issues confronted by HRM professionals. Although they are likely to be quite different from those encountered in a hurricane, the subject of several earlier studies, the narratives from this study's participants are expected to reveal an equally compelling account of the HRM experiences and challenges during an unprecedented pandemic. Another strength is that the study is a first in examining public sector HRM and the COVID-19 pandemic and the data gathered is likely to generate similar studies such as the surveying of multiple public jurisdictions and common HRM challenges encountered statewide.

Limitations

The weakness of the study is that it is a small non-generalizable sample, selected on a non-random basis with all participants from the same employer. This, of course, means its applicability is very limited. The study relies on HRM professionals only, this will offer a necessary, but incomplete narrative of HMR challenges if employees, unions, and other managers are not consulted. Ideas regarding future studies involving these stakeholders is discussed below.

The study also relies on human recollection which can be challenging in that people can simply forget details and overestimate or underestimate the extent of a problem or issue. A review of data may be needed like the County's administrative records regarding grievances filed, policies and procedures issued, and other internal documentation regarding COVID-19 to augment the narratives of staff.

Future Studies

Two studies regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and HRM suggest that other voices need to be heard during the pandemic. One study recommended a survey of public servants would help identify the challenges public servants confront during the pandemic and can help inform employers how to support employees and enable them to operate effectively during this crisis (Schuster et al., 2020). The authors suggest that surveys are effective at capturing and benchmarking the experiences of public servants and their attitudes, behaviors, and even perceptions of practices adopted by management in response to the pandemic (Schuster et al., 2020). Another study addressed collective bargaining during the COVID-19 pandemic and offers public sector unions ideas on how to negotiate during this time of crisis (Fay & Ghadimi, 2020). Both articles reinforce a point made earlier about the distinction between the public and private

HRM and the variety of stakeholders public HRM must address. Accordingly, future studies should involve interviews and surveys of public sector employees, unions, and managers who are also key HRM partners. Because of collective bargaining, it will be particularly interesting to learn via this study or others the impacts union and collective bargaining had in managing human resources during the pandemic.

Another study suggested the attorneys employed by government organizations who assist in determining whether HMR policies and actions pass legal muster are also key HRM partners and any future studies should also include interviewing and surveying them regarding their experiences addressing the COVID-19 pandemic (McDowell & Leavitt, 2011). At least one unfair labor practice has resulted from the pandemic in Santa Clara County (Sciacca, 2020) and it will be interesting to learn about other legal administrative proceeding and remedies sought by employees and unions to pursue protections for employees during the pandemic. Lastly, it is anticipated that future studies will follow and will expand the examination of HMR impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic to include the fiscal and operational impacts from the various government actions like paid administrative leave and the new federal leave entitlements, as well as the long-term legal impacts.

Implications for Public Administration

The anticipated value of this particular study is the accompanying narrative that tells the story of how the COVID-19 disrupted operations in Sacramento County, but also afforded HRM professionals and others to collaborate and innovate and come up with solutions to an evolving new reality or “new normal.” The study should add to the understanding of how distinct public HRM is from the private sector and why public sector employees and public administration are essential to the well-being and safety of our communities during ordinary times, and even more

so, during emergencies and disasters. It is also anticipated that any successes shared or lessons identified by participants will be used to enhance the delivery of public services by public sector employees as well as the work and life experiences of public sector employees during an unprecedented pandemic

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has been and is a moving target and has forced governments to attempt to mitigate its harms by enacting changes on almost a daily basis. Just recently, the California governor ordered roll backs on reopening phases statewide with further restrictions for certain counties, like Sacramento County, and a recent statewide mandate to wear masks by Governor Newsom on June 18, 2020 (California Department of Public Health, 2020; Gutierrez, 2020). These government actions complicate how public employers are to address the COVID-19 in the workplace and how to continue to provide public services. Questions remain as to whether employees will comply with such orders, the consequences if they don't, or even whether they continue to report to work if deaths continue to peak and the spread of the virus becomes less and less contained. There are a number of lingering questions the pandemic presents for everyone, including the HRM professionals who must ensure public services continue, but also ensure the safety and well-being of those who are charged with providing those services.

The pandemic, even absent an academic study indicating so, has clearly transformed the workplace, working conditions, and the way in which employees and employers interface. Challenges can often present opportunities and obtaining a deep understanding of the HRM issues encountered during the pandemic will not only contribute to the scholarship regarding this pandemic and HRM, but to the practice of HRM in general. In the end, it is the practitioner who likely stands to benefit most, either to enhance service delivery for this pandemic or to prepare for the next crisis. And, in so doing, HRM practitioners will advance government's ability to serve the public more effectively by enhancing social services, public health and public safety, all sectors supported by the efforts of public sector employees. It is anticipated that this study

will draw attention to public sector workers and their critical role in the pandemic and energize further research endeavors to explore how to manage these invaluable human resources during such trying times.

References

- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC § 12101, et seq. (1990).
<https://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm>
- Angell, S. (2020). *Order of the state public health officer*. California Department of Health.
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Health%20Order%203.19.2020.pdf>
- Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo. (2020, March 27). *Considerations for public agencies before implementing furloughs and layoffs*. <https://www.aalrr.com/newsroom-alerts-3647>
- Bacon, J. (2020, January 23). Coronavirus not a global health crisis, WHO says; China reports 8 more deaths, restricts 18M people. *USA Today*.
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/01/23/coronavirus-wuhan-china-quarantine-vaccine/4551112002/>
- Bailey, K. & Breslin, D. (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic: What can we learn from past research in organizations and management? *International Journal of Management Reviews*. Virtual Issue: The COVID-19 Pandemic. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12237>
- Belluck, P. & Weinland, N. (2020, February 25). C.D.C. officials warn of coronavirus outbreaks in U.S. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/25/health/coronavirus-us.html>
- Berman, E., Bowman, J.S., West, J.P., & Van Wart, M. R. (2016). *Human resource management in public service: paradoxes, processes, and problems* (5th ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.
- Boseley, S. (2020, February 7). WHO warns of global shortage of face masks and protective suits. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/07/who-warns-global-shortage-face-masks-protective-suits-coronavirus>

- Brown, K. (2004). Human resource management in the public sector. *Public Management Review*, 6 (3), 303-309. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1471903042000256501>
- Brunetto, Y., & Beattie, R. (2020). Changing role of HRM in the public sector. *Public Management Review*, 22 (1), 1-5. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2019.1645876>
- California Department of Public Health (2020, June 18). *Guidance for use of face coverings*. https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/COVID-19/Guidance-for-Face-Coverings_06-18-2020.pdf
- Carnevale, J.B. & Hatak, I. (2020). Employee adjustment and well-being in the era of COVID-19: Implications for human resource management. *Journal of Business Research*, 116, 183-187. <https://doi-org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.05.037>
- Caligiuri, P., De Cieri, H., Minbaeva, D., Verbeke, A., & Zimmerman, A. (2020). International HRM insights for navigating the COVID-10 pandemic: Implications for future research and practice. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 51(5), 697-713. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/s41267-020-00335-9>
- Castellano, J. (2020, May 4). San Diego County workers demand hazard pay and safety protections during pandemic. *Inewssource*. <https://inewssource.org/2020/05/04/san-diego-county-workers-hazard-pay-safety-protections/>
- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act of 2020, Pub. L. No. 116-136, 85 FR 21508 (2020). <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/04/17/2020-08108/coronavirus-relief-fund-for-states-tribal-governments-and-certain-eligible-local-governments>
- Dungy, G. & Volberding, A. (2020, May 7). Governor Newsom issues executive order establishing worker's compensation presumption regarding contraction of COVID-19. *Liebert, Cassidy, Whitmore*. <https://www.lcwlegal.com/news/governor-newsom-issues->

executive-order-establishing-workers-compensation-presumption-regarding-contraction-of-covid-19

Dzigbede, K., Gehl, S. B., & Willoughby, K. (2020). Disaster resiliency of U.S. local governments: Insights to strengthen local response and recovery from COVID-19 pandemic. *Public Administration Review*, 80 (4), 634-643.
<https://doi-org/10.1111/puar.13249>

Emergency Family Leave Expansion Act of 2020, Pub. L. No. 116-127, 85 FR 19326 (2020).
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/04/06/2020-07237/paid-leave-under-the-families-first-coronavirus-response-act>

Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act of 2020, Pub. L. No. 116-127, 85 FR 19326 (2020).
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/04/06/2020-07237/paid-leave-under-the-families-first-coronavirus-response-act>

Essential Workforce (2020). *Essential workforce*. California Department of Public Health.
<https://covid19.ca.gov/essential-workforce/>

Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020, Pub. L. No. 116-127, 85 FR 19326 (2020).
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/04/06/2020-07237/paid-leave-under-the-families-first-coronavirus-response-act>

Family Medical Leave Act of 1993, 29 U.S.C. §§ 2601-2654 (2006).
<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/laws-and-regulations/laws/fmla>

Fay, D.L. and Ghadimi, A. (2020). Collective bargaining during times of crisis: Recommendations from the COVID-19 pandemic. *Public Administration Review*.
<https://doi-org/10.1111/puar.13233>

- French, E. (2009). Employment laws and the public sector employer: Lessons to be learned from a review of lawsuits filed against local governments. *Public Administration Review*, 69(1), 92-103.
- French, E., Goodman, D., & Rodney, S. (2008). Two years later: Hurricane Katrina still poses significant human resource problems for local governments. *Public Personnel Management*, 37(1), 67-75.
- Fernandez, L. (2020, March 23). Unions asking for 15% COVID-19 hazard pay; some call that ‘ridiculous’. *KTVU*. <https://www.ktvu.com/news/unions-asking-for-15-covid-19-hazard-pay-some-call-that-ridiculous>
- Gardiner, D., Allday, E., & Sanchez, T. (2020, July 13). Newsome orders all California counties to close indoor restaurants, bars. *San Francisco Chronicle*.
<https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/Newsom-orders-all-California-counties-to-close-15405030.php>
- Goodman, D., French, P.E., & Mann, S. M. (2010). *Managing local government human resources around catastrophic events*. In Condrey, S.E., and Murphy, B. (Ed.), *Handbook of human resource management in government* (3rd ed., pp403-418). John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.
- Gorney, C. (2009) Are you ready for H1N1? The unique challenges of pandemic preparedness planning. *Public Relations Tactics*, 16(9), 10.
- Green, J. (2020, March 10). Don’t ask employees if they have COVID-19, and other HR tips. *Bloomberg News*. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-11/don-t-ask-employees-if-they-have-covid-19-and-other-hr-tips>

- Gutierrez, M. (2020, July 13). Newsom orders statewide reclosure of indoor dining, limits on church services, salons. *Los Angeles Times*.
<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-07-13/newsom-california-county-rollback-reopening-coronavirus>
- Harel, G. & Tzafrir, S. (2001). HRM practices in the public and private sectors: Differences and similarities. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 25 (3), 316-255.
<http://www.jstor.com/stable/40861844>
- Hinkley, S. (2020). *Public sector impacts of recession and COVID-19*. UC Berkeley Labor Center. <http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/public-sector-impacts-great-recession-and-covid-19/>
- Kasiyre, O. (2020). *Order of the health officer of the County of Sacramento directing all individuals living in the County of Sacramento to continue to stay at home or at their place of residence and directing closure of certain indoor operations*. County of Sacramento. https://www.saccounty.net/COVID-19/Documents/2020-07-14_StayatHomeOrder.pdf
- Katz, H.C., Kochan, T.A., & Colvin, A. J. S. (2017). *An introduction to U.S. collective bargaining and labor relations*. Fifth Edition. Cornell University.
- Luna, T. (2020, May 6). California makes it easier to receive workers' comp for coronavirus claims. *Los Angeles Times*. <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-05-06/newsom-workers-compensation-coronavirus-claims-covid19-presumption-california>
- Mankin, L.D. & Perry, R.W. (2004). Commentary: Terrorism challenges for human resource management. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24 (1), 3-17.
<https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0734371X03259285>

- Mann, S. (2014). Human resources and emergency planning: Preparing local governments for times of crisis. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 38 (2), 163-205.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/24372052?seq=1>
- Mann, S.C. (2011). *Creating resilient, sustainable local governments: Merging human resources management and emergency management*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation].
Mississippi State University.
- Mann, S. C. & Islam, T. (2015). The roles and involvement of local government human resources professionals in coastal cities emergency planning. *Homeland Security & Emergency Management*, 12 (1), 145-168. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jhsem-2013-0087>
- McDowell, A.M. & Leavitt, W.M. (2011). Human resources issues in local government: Yesterday's headlines remain today's "Hot Topics". *Public Personnel Management*, 40 (3), 239-249.
- McElgunn, T. (2020, March 24). 5 ways the COVID-19 crisis will transform HR's role. *HR Morning*. <https://www.hrmorning.com/articles/covid-will-transform-hr/>
- McGreevy, P. (2020, April 18). State workers afraid, angry; Employees say California agencies left them in harm's way for too long. *Los Angeles Times*.
<http://libproxy.csun.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.csun.edu/docview/2391138904?accountid=7285>
- Morris, K. (2020). Labor issues concerning COVID-19 and government "stay at home" orders. <https://www.laboremploymentlawblog.com/2020/03/articles/national-labor-relations-board/labor-covid-19-government-stay-at-home/>

- National Law Review. (2020, March 19). *Do you have to bargain with your union over Coronavirus response measures?* <https://www.natlawreview.com/article/do-you-have-to-bargain-your-union-over-your-coronavirus-response-measures>
- Newsom, G. (2020a). *Proclamation of a State Emergency*. Office of the Governor of California. <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/3.4.20-Coronavirus-SOE-Proclamation.pdf>
- Newsom, G. (2020b). *Executive Order N-33-20*; Office of the Governor of California. <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/EO-N-33-20-COVID-19-HEALTH-ORDER-03.19.2020-002.pdf>
- Newsom, G. (2020c). *Executive Order N-62-20*; Office of the Governor of California. <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/5.6.20-EO-N-62-20-text.pdf>
- Occupational Health and Safety Agency (2020). *Guidance on preparing workplaces for COVID-19*. <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>
- Perlman, B. (2016). Human resource management at the local level: Strategic thinking and tactical action. *State & Local Government Review*, 48 (2), 114-120. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0160323X16659115>
- Perry, R. and Lindell, M. (1997). Earthquake planning for government continuity. *Environmental Management*, 21, 89–96. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s002679900008>
- Perry, R. & Mankin, L.D. (2005). Preparing for the unthinkable: Managers, terrorism and the HRM function. *Public Personnel Management*, 34(2), 175-193. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F009102600503400204>
- Risher, H. & Abell, O. (2002, June 1). COVID-19 rewrote HR's job description. *HR News Magazine*.

<https://content.ebscohost.com/ContentServer.asp?T=P&P=AN&K=143516799&S=R&D=bsu&EbscoContent=dGJyMMv17ESep7M4yOvsOLCmsEiep7VSsqi4S7SWxWXS&ContentCustomer=dGJyMPGtsk2vp7NJuePfgex44Dt6fIA>

Sacramento County. (2020). *SacCounty health officer issues COVID-19 order*.

<https://www.saccounty.net/news/latest-news/Pages/SacCountyHealthOfficerIssuesCOVID-19Order.aspx>

Schuster, C., Weitzman, L., Mikkelsen, K.S., Meyer-Sahling, J., Bersch, K., Fukuyama, F.,

Paskov, P., Rogger, D., Mistree, D., & Kay, K. (2020). Responding to COVID-19 through surveys of public servants. *Public Administration Review*.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13246>

Sciacca, A. (2020, May 13). Coronavirus: Nurses say Santa Clara County failed to keep them safe at nursing homes with severe outbreaks. *The Mercury News*.

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/05/13/nurses-say-santa-clara-county-failed-to-keep-them-safe-from-bad-conditions-at-nursing-homes-with-covid-19-outbreaks/>

Society for Human Resource Management. (2020a). *Statement on Coronavirus*.

<https://www.shrm.org/about-shrm/press-room/press-releases/pages/shrm-statement-on-coronavirus.aspx>.

Society for Human Resources Management (2020b). *COVID-19 research: How the pandemic is challenging and changing employers*. [https://shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-](https://shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/research-and-surveys/Documents/SHRM%20CV19%20Research%20Presentation%20Release%202.pdf?_ga=2.131106447.1483468940.1595299086-1744395606.1591677416)

[forecasting/research-and-](https://shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/research-and-surveys/Documents/SHRM%20CV19%20Research%20Presentation%20Release%202.pdf?_ga=2.131106447.1483468940.1595299086-1744395606.1591677416)

[surveys/Documents/SHRM%20CV19%20Research%20Presentation%20Release%202.p](https://shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/research-and-surveys/Documents/SHRM%20CV19%20Research%20Presentation%20Release%202.pdf?_ga=2.131106447.1483468940.1595299086-1744395606.1591677416)

[df?_ga=2.131106447.1483468940.1595299086-1744395606.1591677416](https://shrm.org/hr-today/trends-and-forecasting/research-and-surveys/Documents/SHRM%20CV19%20Research%20Presentation%20Release%202.pdf?_ga=2.131106447.1483468940.1595299086-1744395606.1591677416)

- Trump, D. J. (2020). *Proclamation on declaring a national emergency concerning the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-declaring-national-emergency-concerning-novel-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-outbreak/>
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (2020). *Determination that a public health emergency exists*. <https://www.phe.gov/emergency/news/healthactions/phe/Pages/2019-nCoV.aspx>
- U.S. Department of Labor (2020). *Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Questions and answers*. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions>
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2020a). *Pandemic preparedness in the workplace and the Americans with Disabilities Act*. <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/pandemic-preparedness-workplace-and-americans-disabilities-act>
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2020b). *What you should know about COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and other EEO laws*. <https://www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitation-act-and-other-eeo-laws>
- Venteicher, W. (2020a, April 9). Extra pay for essential workers? California state unions press for coronavirus incentives. *Sacramento Bee*. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/extra-pay-for-essential-workers-california-state-unions-press-for-coronavirus-incentives/ar-BB12obDJ>

Venteicher, W. (2020b, May 15). California cut state salaries 10 percent to offset COVID-19.

Governing. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/extra-pay-for-essential-workers-california-state-unions-press-for-coronavirus-incentives/ar-BB12obDJ>

World Health Organization. (2020a, April 17). *Q&A on Coronaviruses (COVID-19)*.

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

World Health Organization. (2020b, March 11). *WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 – 11 March 2020*.

<https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020>

Yeung, T. (2020, March 31). The emergency exception to bargaining. *California PERB blog*.

<http://www.caperb.com/2020/03/31/the-emergency-exception-to-bargaining/>

Yoon-Henricks, A. (2020, June 23). Sacramento County workers, some at risk, return to the office as COVID-10 cases rise. *Sacramento Bee*

<https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/article243667982.html>