



State of South Carolina
Office of the Inspector General

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

March 4, 2020

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The Honorable Wm. Weston J. Newton
House Legislative Oversight Committee, Chairman
228 Blatt Building
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

The Honorable William M. Hixon
House Legislative Oversight Subcommittee, Chairman
228 Blatt Building
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

RE: Climate Survey Results - South Carolina Housing Finance and Development Authority

Dear Chairman Newton and Chairman Hixon:

The purpose of this letter is to transmit the results of the climate/leadership survey administered by the South Carolina Office of the Inspector General (SIG) to the South Carolina Housing Finance and Development Authority (SC Housing) as recommended by the South Carolina House of Representatives Legislative Oversight Committee (LOC).

Enclosed for your review are the following documents:

- [Appendix A – SC Housing Climate/Leadership Survey Results](#)
- [Appendix B – SIG Summary Compilation of Survey Results](#)

Predication, Scope and Objectives

The SIG administered a 60-question climate/leadership survey to SC Housing staff during the period of 2/14/2020 – 3/2/2020 at the recommendation of the LOC subcommittee following the subcommittee's hearing on 12/5/2019. The purpose of this survey was to provide an anonymous platform to SC Housing staff to gather employee feedback regarding agency leadership, supervisory leadership, morale and work environment, integrity and professionalism, and job satisfaction.

As noted in its [2019 SC Housing Review](#), the SIG reviewed an anonymous concern (Concern #3) alleging low employee morale at SC Housing. The SIG determined that SC Housing administered a 31-question survey to its employees in October 2019 and that the employees found the survey questions confusing, which the executive director acknowledged to the SIG. In addition, five of the 31 questions requested demographic and departmental information of each participant, which raised concerns about the survey participants’ anonymity. The SIG recommended that an independent entity conduct an employee climate/leadership survey to which the executive director concurred and accepted the SIG’s offer to administer the climate/leadership survey to all SC Housing staff.

Methodology and Survey Development

In January 2020, the SIG collaborated with SC Housing executive staff and developed the survey questions framed in the form of individual statements. Through this collaboration, 58 questions were constructed and aligned into five specific categories: (1) Agency Leadership; (2) Supervisory Leadership; (3) Work Environment; (4) Integrity and Professionalism; and (5) Job Satisfaction. Two optional questions were included to provide survey participants the opportunity to offer comments about the agency’s successes and areas for improvement.

The survey utilized a five-point scale, with “1” as the lowest rating and “5” as the highest rating for each question. For Question 35, “*Morale at work*” the number “1” represented “poor” and “5” represented “high.”

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree (Poor)	Disagree (Low)	Undecided (Average)	Agree (Good)	Strongly Agree (High)

On 2/14/2020, IG Brian Lamkin emailed the online survey hyperlink to all 125 SC Housing employees and invited their participation in the SIG-administered survey. On 2/27/2020, IG Lamkin sent a second email as a reminder the survey would close on 3/2/2020. The survey period was active for the period of 2/14/2020 – 3/2/2020.

Summary Results and SIG Analysis

Eighty-six (86) respondents participated in the SIG-administered climate/leadership survey. These 86 respondents represented 69% of the 125 SC Housing staff given access to the survey.

Questions 59 and 60 were optional and afforded each survey participant the opportunity to provide written comments on areas for improvement and areas of success at SC Housing. Sixty-eight (68) participants provided comments to Question 59, “*What do you like best about working for SC Housing?*” Fifty-nine (59) participants provided comments to Question 60, “*What are a few things we could do to make SC Housing a better place to work?*” Redactions were made to the comments, as needed, in order to protect the identity of the respondents. (*Appendix A*)

The SIG offers the following observations for each of the five survey categories and individual questions of particular note.

Agency Leadership (Questions 1 – 16)

The Agency Leadership category received 68% favorable responses (agree/strongly agree) and an overall rating of 3.756, while 20% “disagreed or strongly disagreed.” The highest rated question (Q1), “*I have a high level of respect for the SC Housing’s leadership*” was rated 3.965, while question (Q13) “*SC Housing is effectively utilizing the resources and programs it manages*” received the most favorable responses at 77%. The lowest rated (3.523) question (Q12) “*SC Housing’s leadership proactively addresses issues or problems*” received the fewest favorable responses (59%). (Appendix B)

The following questions equaled or exceeded 20% for the combined “strongly disagree and disagree” response, and/or equaled or exceeded 15% for the “undecided” response, and are presented for closer review and discussion.

<u>Agency Leadership Category</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree / Disagree (>20%)</u>	<u>Undecided (>15%)</u>
Q2) The SC Housing’s leadership maintains high standards of honesty and integrity.	22.09%	
Q3) I believe SC Housing’s executives set a positive example for the organization by adhering to applicable rules, regulations, and policies.	19.77% (borderline)	
Q5) I am satisfied with how information is communicated by SC Housing’s leadership on what is going on with our agency.	29.07%	
Q7) Diversity and Inclusion are important to the leadership of this agency.		16.28%
Q8) SC Housing’s leadership encourage and consider alternative points of view and recommendations.		16.28%
Q9) I have trust and confidence in SC Housing’s leadership.		17.44%
Q10) SC Housing’s leadership has communicated a clear vision that motivates me.	19.77% (borderline)	16.28%
Q11) I believe in the approach SC Housing’s leaders take to reach our objectives.		16.28%
Q12) SC Housing’s leadership proactively addresses issues or problems.	22.10%	18.60%
Q14) SC Housing’s leadership is approachable.	22.09%	
Q15) SC Housing’s leadership treats people fairly.	24.41%	
Q16) I am satisfied with the leadership of SC Housing and the status of the agency.	22.09%	16.28%

Supervisory Leadership (Questions 17 – 34)

The Supervisory Leadership category received 82% favorable responses and an overall rating of 4.143, while 9% “disagreed or strongly disagreed.” The highest rated question (Q20), “*My supervisor is approachable*” was rated 4.430, while question (Q24) “*My supervisor listens to what others have to say*” and question (Q31) “*I have opportunities to voice my ideas about making work more efficient*

and/or to meet the public’s needs more effectively” each received 91% favorable responses. The lowest rated (3.930) question (Q19), “My supervisor recognizes my full potential and capitalizes on my strengths” received the fewest favorable responses (73%). (Appendix B)

The following question equaled or exceeded 20% for the combined “strongly disagree and disagree” response, and/or equaled or exceeded 15% for the “undecided” response, and is presented for closer review and discussion.

<u>Supervisory Leadership Category</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree / Disagree (>20%)</u>	<u>Undecided (>15%)</u>
Q26) Relative to my previous work experience, I have a better relationship with my supervisor.		16.28%

Work Environment (Questions 35 – 39)

The Work Environment category received 68% favorable responses and an overall rating of 3.758, while 13% “disagreed or strongly disagreed.” The highest rated question (Q39), “Employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job” was rated 4.151 and received 87% favorable responses, while question (Q35), “Morale at work” was rated the lowest at 3.314 and received the fewest favorable responses (52%). (Appendix B)

The following questions equaled or exceeded 20% for the combined “strongly disagree and disagree” response, and/or equaled or exceeded 15% for the “undecided” response, and are presented for closer review and discussion.

<u>Work Environment</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree / Disagree (>20%)</u>	<u>Undecided (Average) (>15%)</u>
Q35) Morale at work is: (Poor, Low, Average, Good, or High)	25.58%	22.09%
Q37) Employees report misconduct to the appropriate outlet(s).		34.88%
Q38) I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule, or regulation without fear of reprisal.		22.09%

Integrity and Professionalism (Questions 40 – 44)

The Integrity and Professionalism category received 92% favorable responses and an overall rating of 4.279 with only 3% of the respondents who “disagreed or strongly disagreed.” The highest rated question (Q40), “The people in my division are competent and know how to get the job done” was rated 4.419 and received 98% favorable responses, while question (Q43), “The people in my division are treated in a fair and consistent manner” rated the lowest at 4.035 and received the fewest favorable responses (83%). No individual question required a closer review or discussion. (Appendix B)

Job Satisfaction (Questions 45 – 58)

The Job Satisfaction category received 73% favorable responses and an overall rating of 3.867 while 15% “disagreed or strongly disagreed.” The highest rated questions (Q49), “I understand how my

role(s) and responsibilities fit in the agency's mission" and (Q57), "I am proud to work for SC Housing" tied at 4.337, while (Q57) received the highest percentage (92%) of favorable responses. Question (Q45), "I am satisfied with my total compensation" rated the lowest at 2.977 and received the fewest favorable responses (41%). (Appendix B)

The following questions equaled or exceeded 20% for the combined "strongly disagree and disagree" response, and/or equaled or exceeded 15% for the "undecided" response, and are presented for closer review and discussion.

<u>Job Satisfaction Category</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree / Disagree (>20%)</u>	<u>Undecided (>15%)</u>
Q45) I am satisfied with my total compensation (e.g., salary, bonus, etc.).	40.70%	18.60%
Q50) I am offered avenues of professional development to help with career progression in the agency.	31.40%	
Q51) Our mission motivates me to go above and beyond what I would do in a similar role elsewhere.		15.12%
Q53) In my role, I feel connected to other departments.	27.91%	
Q55) I can see myself working here in five years.		15.12%
Q56) I am satisfied with my job.		16.28%
Q58) I would recommend our agency as a great place to work.		20.93%

Overall, 76% of the survey respondents "agreed/strongly agreed" with the survey questions for an average rating of 3.948, while 13% "disagreed/strongly disagreed." The highest percentage (18.60%) of "undecided" respondents was in the Work Environment category, while the lowest percentage (4.19%) was in the Integrity and Professionalism category.

In closing, the SIG extends its gratitude to each SC Housing participant in this very important climate/leadership survey in order to improve SC Housing. The SIG is available to answer any questions you may have or provide a more detailed briefing to LOC members in this matter.

Sincerely,



Brian D. Lamkin
Inspector General

Enc. (2)

Cc: Bonita Shropshire, Executive Director, SC Housing
Robert D. Mickle, Jr., Chairman, Board of Commissioners, SC Housing