

HRM's hiring practices need significant improvement, Auditor General, Andrew Atherton, said in his report released today, March 20, 2024.

The audit found HRM's hiring processes lacked direction and guidance to ensure appropriate hiring decisions are made, and this was reflected in the hiring files examined during the audit. "Overall, individual hiring processes and decisions were not well documented and supported. We found issues in every file we looked at" the auditor general said. Issues included not adequately establishing evaluation criteria, inconsistent and unsupported screening and assessing of candidates, and failing to complete pre-employment checks.

The audit also found justifications for the use of appointments were often not well supported. "For a public employer transparency is especially important; we expected the rationale for limiting competition to be clearly laid out in each case" the auditor general said.

The auditor general's report includes 17 recommendations which HRM management agreed to implement.

A follow-up report on the 2022 Management of Respectful Workplaces Audit, also released today, found limited progress has been made, with only five of the initial report's 15 recommendations implemented to date.

Improvements are still required in many areas including developing performance measures, monitoring of training and complaint files, and the establishment of a whistleblower policy. "HRM Management has been slow to act on known gaps around maintaining respectful workplaces. We will continue to follow up on this audit in the future." said Atherton.

Both reports are available on the auditor general's website at <https://hrmauditorgeneral.ca/published-reports>.

---

#### FOR BROADCAST USE:

In his report released today, Auditor General Andrew Atherton said HRM's hiring practices need significant improvement.

The audit found direction and guidance for hiring processes is needed, and this was evident in the hirings examined, with many aspects not adequately documented and supported. The audit also found issues with the municipality's employee appointment process.

The report includes 17 recommendations which HRM management agreed to implement.

A follow-up of 2022's Management of Respectful Workplace Audit, also released today, found only limited progress, with only 5 of 15 recommendations implemented 18 months after the initial audit.

Both reports are available on the auditor general's website at <https://hrmauditorgeneral.ca/published-reports>.

-30-

Media Contact: Katie Chaulk  
902-490-8407  
Email: [chaulkk@halifax.ca](mailto:chaulkk@halifax.ca)