



Sedgwick County...
working for you

Sedgwick County Employee Stakeholder Engagement

Surveys conducted in November 2019

Elected/Appointed

When you are doing your best work, what tools and environment are necessary?

Key Themes:

- **Office equipment:** Working equipment and adequate technology, faster Internet with additional bandwidth, up-to-date software, well-stocked office supplies
- **Climate control:** Temperature maintained at comfortable levels
- **Perks:** Jeans days on Fridays, Christmas luncheon
- **Ergonomic work stations:** Stand-up desks, office chairs, equipment
- **Morale:** Positive work environment, trust and respect
- **Training:** Basic support for our job and need for informed supervisors

What are the critical issues the organization faces?

Key Themes:

- **Call Center:** Accuracy of information being conveyed, need for comprehensive directory and info made available on county website
- **Pay/Benefits:** Align pay with market, change vacation/sick to PTO, bonuses for part-timers, deductibles for insurance are a stressor for those earning lower wages, tuition reimbursement, gym membership and health-related benefits
- **Retention:** Concerns with costs of turnover/onboarding/training, stress leading to good employees leaving
- **Communication/Transparency:** Desire to get to know county management, internal news memos, update county website, educate public about differences in city/county/state services, atmosphere of listening to employees and acting on suggestions
- **Consolidation:** avoid duplication of services

What critical issues currently face your specific division or work area?

Key Themes:

- **Safety:** Physical space and security at external locations, building security for early and late workers, gun-free zone and security at Historic Courthouse
- **Supervisors:** Professionalism, knowledgeable, consistency in answers and directives
- **Training:** Retraining of seasonal workers, better training for employees, standardized training opportunities for supervisors, cross-training, training on programs, training in updated technology, training on county-wide routing and FAQs for customers
- **Atmosphere:** Sense of teamwork, working equipment, internal customer service, support

Is there work that you are currently doing that you believe should no longer be done?

Key Themes:

- Homestead filings. Tag calls to call center. Free notarial services. Services without user fees. Collecting back taxes for other counties. Duplicate services. Efficiency and effective of call center calls. Paperwork when it could be done via e-work

Is there work that is not being done that we should be doing?

Key Themes:

- **Elections:** Recruiting poll workers, voter registration drives, better service for immobile voters
- **Customer service:** Better overall knowledge to prevent multiple stops/trips, educate public
- **Benefits/recognition:** Longevity pay, employee recognition, free parking, PTO, discounts to zoo/Exploration Place, YMCA discounts, fitness facility, open tunnel between city/county for transit/exercise, break areas for employees, jeans day, and help with retention
- **Streamlined services:** Utilize kiosks and technology to improve services

Finish the statement: I want to work in a place ...

- That is appreciative of, respectful toward and empathetic with employees
- With a good work/life balance and flexible hours
- That provides competitive, livable wages and benefits and a good work/life balance
- That considers outside factors and closes when state is closed and offers snow/inclement weather days and holiday eves off
- With windows and the ability to breathe fresh air outside
- Where work is more fun than stressful and there are growth opportunities and the ability to advance
- With productive communication, positive morale and a sense that supervisors trust employees to work hard and get the job done well

General government:

When you are doing your best work, what tools and environment are necessary?

Key Themes:

- **Technology:** Working and updated technology, equipment, materials and other resources that meet the needs of the job. Multiple monitors are preferred set-up. Ability to purchase what is needed.
- **Communication:** Overall improvement in both internal and external. Known expectations and deadlines
- **Culture:** Recognition and appreciation for a job well-done, appropriate training, and other opportunities to learn and grow. A positive work environment, opportunities to celebrate and build the team, and a greater sense of trust and teamwork. Supportive HR and management.
- **Physical spaces:** That are safe with staffed front desks. There is some variance on whether employees prefer work areas near co-workers or semi-private work spaces with fewer interruptions to enhance ability to focus. Appropriate temperature controls.
- **Compensation:** Adequate and appropriate compensation, flexible schedules.

What are the critical issues the organization faces?

Key Themes:

- **Security:** Badge security and security protocols can be improved.
- **Morale:** Employees need to feel valued and trusted. Professional courtesy in the workplace. Accountability. Fairness. Building a proactive culture. Concerns within high-stress, dangerous jobs or jobs with significant volatility.
- **Staffing issues:** Retention, compensation/benefits in line with other sectors/cost of living, upward mobility, career progression planning, promotions based on qualifications, reducing turnover, addressing staffing shortfalls.
- **Training:** Staff trained to meet needs. Trained supervisors who pay attention to policies and procedures.
- **Reputation:** County having a reputation as a great place to be employed, as well as fostering a more positive public view with ease of access to government and quality customer service. A deliberate effort to rebuild public trust.
- **Communication:** Ensuring messages are communicated throughout the organization, communicating new manager's goals and holding divisions accountable for communication and implementation, ensuring employees engage with communications to stay informed, consistency.

What critical issues currently face your specific division or work area?

Key Themes:

- **Technology:** Multiple versions of technology that are not compatible.
- **Communication:** An awareness is needed of what others are doing. Notifications of procedures for different areas and when things change.
- **Staffing:** Several divisions mentioned insufficient staffing for the workload.
- **Co-workers:** Understanding roles of others, utilizing their experience as a resource, accountability for keeping processes moving. Prioritizing personal interactions.

Is there work that you are currently doing that you believe should no longer be done?

Key Themes:

- **Technology:** Use of available technology, reducing manual and paper-based tasks. Review software solutions and provide funding to implement automations where able.
- **Partnerships:** Combine services with City of Wichita and/or other communities where possible.

Is there work that is not being done that we should be doing?

Key Themes:

- **Taxes on Project Exemptions:** Educate on when county does or does not pay taxes.
- **Visibility:** Increased interactions and more ways for citizens to engage.
- **Customer service:** Emphasis on priority of service.
- **Strategic work:** Making sure we are future thinking on critical issues.
- **Call center:** Expand call center as a centralized communication center for the county.
- **Internal knowledge:** Networking between departments to gain understanding and efficiencies.

Finish the statement: I want to work in a place ...

- That offers recognition, advancement and purpose.
- With holistic support – such as healthy living goals, group walks during lunch, etc.
- With a positive culture.
- Where individuals and opinions are respected and valued.
- With compassion, respect and understanding for employees.
- Where there are good relationships with management and co-workers.
- With clear expectations and resourcing to do the job well.
- That values me and compensates me fairly, with flexibility in work conditions.
- That invests in me through continuing education and other benefits.

Human Services

When you are doing your best work, what tools and environment are necessary?

Key Themes:

- **Equipment & Technology:** Working computers. Responsive programs. Faster lab turnaround. Adequate internet bandwidth. Plenty of computer storage capacity.
- **Safety:** From client violence and environmental hazards. Clean work areas. Communication between buildings about clients who pose safety concerns.
- **Facilities:** Separate entrances for families/clients with severe mental health issues. Climate-controlled. Adequate lighting. Ability for receptionists to see waiting room. Office spaces conducive to HIPPA compliance – visibility, patient information gathering, phone calls. Minimal distractions. Updated patient rooms. Adequate office furnishings.
- **Communication:** Recognition of good work. Open communication. Collaboration with team as a whole. Transparency. Accessible resources for both staff and patients.
- **Work environment:** Flexibility – work from home, out of office email access. Healthy living incentives.

What are the critical issues the organization faces?

Key Themes:

- **Expectations:** Consistency. Enforcement. Training and onboarding. Expectations consistent with job responsibilities.
- **Turnover/retention:** Unfilled schedule slots. Funds to pay salaries. Competitive benefits/pay. Evaluation system dis-incentivizes good work.
- **Communication:** Transparency. Methods of reporting concerns without penalization. Public awareness of county programs. Information exchange between programs or departments.
- **Personal health:** Support for personal health. Lack of time for self-care. Safety.
- **Environment:** Commitment to improving public trust and creating healthy work environment.

What critical issues currently face your specific division or work area?

Key Themes:

- **Safety:** Mental health-related violence. Delayed public safety response times due to shortage of resources and demands. Staff request metal detectors, emergency egress.
- **Staffing:** Loss of good staff. Need additional providers/clinicians. Ability to increase pay grade. Attention to employee morale and review of current evaluation system.
- **Other:** Communication. Support from leadership. Unfunded mandates. Changing state/federal policies. Safety.

Is there work that you are currently doing that you believe should no longer be done?

Key Themes:

- **Efficiency:** Redundancy in reports, metrics, and information systems. Quarterly evaluations. Unnecessary meetings. Small, disruptive projects. Inefficient work distribution.
- **Client Expectations:** Ensuring clients are receptive to case management and services.
- **Insured:** Consider if those with insurance could be triaged elsewhere.

Is there work that is not being done that we should be doing?

Key Themes:

- **Assistance:** Additional protection and housing for homeless women. More transportation assistance. Partnerships with LEO and EMTs for mentally ill. Parenting groups. Primary care for low-income clients. Resources on well-being. Automated call reminders for appointments.
- **Professional development:** Leadership development. Innovation and creativity supported. Mentoring. Overall professional development.
- **Communication:** Create internal cohesion amongst departments. Automated call reminders for appointments.
- **Clarifying expectations:** With staff – actual job expectations. With families – what to expect from services.
- **Promoting public health:** Need for more promotion of public health.

Finish the statement: I want to work in a place ...

Key Themes:

- Where the quality of work matters.
- Where the wage and benefits are reflective of the challenges of the job.
- That brings me joy each day I am work.
- Where my co-workers and I will be safe and healthy.
- Where I am respected, my work is valued and I am supported
- That recognizes accomplishments and things done right and how to learn from mistakes.
- Without silos, and with positive communication and cooperation.
- Where I feel like I make a difference.

Public Safety

When you are doing your best work, what tools and environment are necessary?

Key Themes:

- **Leadership:** Support and clear direction from policy makers, leadership and management. Consider best practice for the BOCC and fire board functions. Authorization of budget to do the job.
- **Communication:** Continual improvement on communication between management and employees. Feedback on post-incident and support to improve.
- **Technology and tools:** Equipment needs to be in good working order, dependable, updated, correct tools for the needs of each call.
- **Facilities and vehicles:** Need to be in good repair. Adequate facility space and accommodations to focus on reducing stress. Trucks managed by fire department.
- **Staffing:** Decrease in staffing decreases morale; fully staffed dispatch. Appropriate pay without cuts. Step and cost-of-living increases. College tuition paid. PTO benefit. Lower insurance deductibles. Staffing to ensure proper protocol of evidence. Mentorship. Stability in response partners. Retention issues.
- **Environment:** Fun around station and business while on calls; ownership of decisions, crew comradery; clear expectations, transparency. Learning encouraged. Calm, collected and confident. Positive atmosphere, morale.
- **Training:** Leadership classes, but more specific response training as whole department.

What are the critical issues the organization faces?

Key Themes:

- **Leadership:** Relationship building with leadership. Review best practices as BOCC serving as fire board.
- **Perceptions:** Lack of differentiation between city/county for general public; improve public trust and transparency; concerns about collaboration.
- **Compensation:** Competitive pay, ability to donate sick leave to specific individuals, longevity rewards, PTO, fitness opportunities; county childcare/workout facility; discounts to YMCA and county amenities; paid family leave, incentives for skills such as bilingual staff.
- **Communication:** Clear and timely information on crucial issues.
- **Resources:** Trying to do more with less; flat budgets; need to project needs, plan, budget; sustainability of fire district; sustaining tax base and job; concerns about cost of infrastructure to potential development areas; need more Public/Private partnerships; annexation and shrinking fire district size.
- **Training:** Need for additional training.

What critical issues currently face your specific division or work area?

Key Themes:

- **Morale:** Loss of staffing; lack of acceptance of change; need clear communication.
- **Training:** Consistency; hiring of training officer; need specialized training, and training facility.
- **Equipment:** Reliable GPS; outdated databases; need security improvements and cameras

- **Staffing:** Need scheduling flexibility; redundant data entry and hand-written forms; mental health of staff; differences in pay increases for exempt vs non-exempt.
- **Safety:** Ensure employee safety; turnover of staff; work distribution
- **Public:** Education on when to call 911; need non-emergency line with staffing for other calls

Is there work that you are currently doing that you believe should no longer be done?

Key Themes:

- **Automation:** Use of outdated systems and still using paper forms.
- **Core functions:** Need to focus on core duties with limited resources.
- **Non-emergency calls:** Address resources to non-emergency calls; transporting high-utilizers; inter-facility transfers; transporting of psych patients to alternate destinations; law enforcement doing mental health;

Is there work that is not being done that we should be doing?

Key Themes:

- Better mutual aid agreements with return for county fire district; public education; staff recognition and appreciation; addressing the mental health and drug crisis; pooling resources for efficiency; expand community paramedic program to 24/7; increasing community health and outreach efforts; building on partnerships.

Finish the statement: I want to work in a place ...

Key Themes:

- Where I feel valued, with open and honest communication.
- That appreciates my knowledge, experience and skills and values my input.
- That offers competitive pay, comprehensive insurance coverage and competitive benefits.
- That cares about me as a person, with mental health days, bereavement leave, educational opportunities, childcare and resources, particularly for employees who work third shift.
- With a flexible, safe, supportive environment.
- That provides the best equipment, facilities and apparatus.
- Where I can better myself and take pride of ownership in my work.
- That provides the best customer service.
- With clear expectations and a clear mission

Public Works

When you are doing your best work, what tools and environment are necessary?

Key Themes:

- **Communication:** Knowing the nature of the job before deploying so we can bring the right tools. Clear directions and communication. Cooperative environment.
- **Tools:** Having access to necessary tools and equipment, including safe, reliable vehicles rather than vehicles, and well-maintained trucks and forklifts. Computer and Internet access. Up-to-date codebooks. Laptop mounts and good internet access in vehicles for codes.
- **Staffing:** Filling vacant positions. Enough staffing to cover needs when people are out sick or on vacation.
- **City/County:** Continued review, adjustments with city/county merger.
- **Environment:** Office environment away from customers for focus or work-from-home option.

What are the critical issues the organization faces?

Key Themes:

- **Compensation:** Noncompetitive pay is causing retention problems. County is seen as training ground/stepping stone. Benefits desired include tuition reimbursement, lower-cost insurance with lower deductible. Need ability to attract and retain talent.
- **Communication:** A clear sense of purpose and direction is needed. Coordination with the city. Getting everyone on the same page. Improved process in coordination between City and County.
- **Morale:** Offer non-management advancement tracks. Improve services with other departments (IT, Finance, Purchasing).
- **Image:** Improve public trust.

What critical issues currently face your specific division or work area?

Key Themes:

- **Maintenance:** Working vehicles and equipment. Performance. Customer service. Technology updates.
- **Unmet needs:** Field technology to do the job. Ability to penalize contractors for working without appropriate permits. Staffing and/or overtime to accommodate seasonal surges.
- **Training:** Cross-training. Budget for training. Training that aligns with schedule.
- **Compensation:** Wages need to align with experience. Appropriate starting wages to attract qualified applicants. Opportunities to advance.

Is there work that you are currently doing that you believe should no longer be done?

Key Themes:

- **Work without fees:** Maintaining state traffic signals. Contracts with other entities. Signing state forms. Reviewing landscape plans. City sewer and water permits. Contracts with small cities (under MOU). Assisting township citizens. Roof permits.

Is there work that is not being done that we should be doing?

Key Themes:

- **Betterment of services:** Information to the public, including user-targeted Website, PSA announcements on what the county does. Improve mowing operations and asphalt mileage. License enforcement.
- **Management:** Clear expectations, involvement and support.

Finish the statement: I want to work in a place ...

- That values me, appreciates the work I do and pays what I'm worth; the best benefits and creative perks.
- Where I enjoy the work environment and feel like I'm part of the family.
- Where I can take pride in my work and have opportunities for advancement.
- Where employees are supported, there is accountability for actions and employee comments are acted on.
- With strong, present leadership