



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Health, Education, and Human Services Committee receives report from Navajo Nation Department of Personnel Management

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received a report from the Navajo Nation Department of Personnel Management regarding issues and concerns with hiring and personnel policies.

According to the report by NNDPM, the department is currently facing challenges regarding revisions to the Navajo Nation Personnel Policies Manual, improving efficient background checks, and policy trainings.

HEHSC member Council Delegate Peterson Yazzie (Coyote Canyon, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, Bahastl'a'a') raised concerns regarding the background check process, in which only individuals who are hired to work in sensitive positions such as working with children and elderly on a daily basis, are subject to background checks according to the NNPPM.

"I understand that federal background checks are done through an outside agency, but I recommend that we develop a way to streamline this process. In fact, I think Navajo Nation employees should all be subject to a background check, which can be completed during their 90-day probationary period after they have been selected for a job. We have to promote safety for employees," said Delegate Yazzie.

He added that NNDPM should begin to work towards increasing NNDPM staff to hire and recruit Navajo employees, as well as improve the background check process.

NNDPM reported that their department currently has a staff of 22 employees who oversee the hiring, recruitment, and management of over 7,000 Navajo Nation employees. The department is currently holding job fairs to fill vacant positions in each of the five Navajo area agencies.

HEHSC member Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) said the recruitment process is very important, and asked NNDPM how they can create competitive positions that attract Navajo professionals back to the Navajo Nation.

“We have a lot of young people with the education and experience who want to come home, but we don’t pay them enough. What is stopping the Nation from increasing the pay for some of these positions? Please let this committee know how we can aid in helping you improve your overall program and fill the vacant positions,” said Delegate Brown.

Delegate Brown said another concern of the committee are the temporary positions that could be converted to permanent positions, allowing temporary employees to collect benefits and insurance. He recommended that the NNDPM begin communicating with programs to begin reclassifying the temporary positions.

HEHSC members voted 3-0 to accept the report from the NNDPM.

For more information regarding the NNDPM’s job fairs and recruitment opportunities, please contact (928) 871-7280.

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