

## Mentoring Overview

**Defined:** Professional relationship in which an experienced employee (the mentor) assists another employee (the mentee) to develop skills and knowledge.

Mentoring programs can vary substantially in the level of complexity and administrative detail. Initially, the Department proposes a simple pilot program which provides guidance and tools for employees to apply, mainly at their discretion and initiative. However, a mentoring arrangement can be included in an Individual Development Plan.

### Goals of Mentoring

This program contemplates two distinct, though complementary, goals:

- Knowledge Transfer
  - Example 1. An employee recruited from another department or the private sector will benefit from a mentoring by an experienced Department employee who can provide perspective on the mission, history, culture and structure of the organization.
  - Example 2. A recently promoted manager with increased responsibility can benefit from mentoring by an experienced manager on the distinctions between first-line supervision and program management.
  - Example 3. A manager recognizes that they will be more effective if they communicate better and establishes a mentoring relationship with a peer who has exceptional skills.
  - Example 4. A manager for a program with long-standing significant employee discipline issues establishes a mentoring relation with another manager experienced in successfully resolving such problems.
- Career Development
  - Example 1. A program manager recognizes their career goals include greater responsibility or accomplishments than are reachable in their current position. A mentoring relationship with a senior manager can provide access to experience and insights that may not be available in their own chain of command.

### Elements of a Mentoring Agreement

- Initiated by one individual to another
- Includes a clear statement of the goal and objectives
- A mentor is not within the chain of command for the mentee
- Agreement on the duration (i.e. when this arrangement will conclude)
- Agreement on the frequency of contact and length of each meeting
- Agreement on method of contact (e.g. in-person, skype, telephone, email)
- Agreement on expectations for confidentiality

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Employees are encouraged to use LEARN to request approval in advance before beginning a job shadowing or mentoring program and to ensure the learning experience is documented. This is particularly important for supervisors, managers, CEAs who need to show a record of continuous education in leadership (CEL) competencies. For more information, please contact the Office of Training and Development (OTD) at 916-928-8330.