

February 11, 2020

Department of Administration
Agency HR Services
Attention: Gennie Hudson
400 W. King Street, Suite 460
Carson City, NV 89703

Dear Ms. Hudson,

This letter is to formally express my interest in the Executive Officer position for the Public Employees' Benefits program. As the Operations Officer and most recently, the Interim Executive Officer of PEBP since 2015, I have been heavily involved in all areas of the program. As PEBP's Operations Officer for the previous 4 years, I oversaw most of the agency units, including eligibility, member services, communications and IT as well as working closely with both quality control and the Chief Financial Officer. I also generally oversaw most human resources functions of the agency. Most significantly, I have had the opportunity to be part of the executive leadership of the program through my participation in policy decision making, legislative matters and strategic planning.

Prior to my experience at PEBP, I was both the Project Manager and Quality Control Officer at the Silver State Health Insurance Exchange. During my time at the Exchange, the agency was among the first to successfully transitioned away from a failing vendor on to a hybrid version of the federal platform. As the project manager, I had direct oversight of many insurance related programs such as plan certification and quality control. Indirectly, I played an integral role in many other parts of the program such as marketing, navigator assistance programs and broker training and certification. Most importantly, being part of the initial roll out of the Affordable Care Act provided immense experience and knowledge about federal and state insurance mandates.

During my tenure at PEBP I have placed heavy importance on modernizing the program and providing an improved member experience through enhanced communication and greater accessibility. I also believe that in order to continue providing high quality benefits to members, many of the strong relationships that have been developed with the advocacy groups must be maintained and relationships with other state agencies should be strengthened.

As requested, I have included my responses to the questions referenced in the job recruitment on a separate page.

Thank you for taking the time to review my resume and consider my qualifications. I would be honored at the opportunity to continue to serve PEBP as its Executive Officer.

Sincerely,

Laura Rich
Interim Executive Officer

1. *Describe your professional experiences working with a diverse stakeholder group. Specifically, include your experience with any benefit program board of directors, active employee program members, retired program members, state legislative bodies and other elected officials.*

Both the Public Employees' Benefits Program (PEBP) and my previous agency, the Silver State Health Insurance Exchange (SSHIX) are governed by a Board of Directors and although different, they both have diverse stakeholder groups for which the organization is accountable to. During my tenure at the SSHIX, there was enormous public pressure on the Board, elected officials and staff to ensure the program was carrying out the federal and state requirements of the Affordable Care Act. The delicate nature of the situation required consistent interactions and communication with the Board, the Governor's office and various congressional representatives and their staff. At PEBP, the desires of various stakeholder groups are constantly being addressed and assessed to ensure PEBP is meeting the needs of each group equally.

2. *Describe your communication style with each of the following: a) Executive management team members and other professional staff; b) Program Board of Directors; c) Elected officials; and d) Other member constituencies.*

(a) Executive Management team members and other professional staff

My communication style with staff is one of inclusiveness. I believe it is important to seek and understand other points of view in order to solicit engagement from staff and to build relationships and trust within my team.

(b) Board of Directors

First and foremost, it is important for a Director to recognize the type and level of communication that should be conveyed to the Board. My focus is to provide important, but high-level updates to ensure the Board receives clear and concise information regarding the program. Offering one-on-one discussions provides individual board members who wish to receive more in depth explanations an opportunity to discuss matters in greater detail while adhering to open meeting law requirements.

(c) Elected Officials

Elected officials and their staff are always prioritized as it is critical to have open communication with the leaders of our state. Often, a director's role when communicating with elected officials is to educate and provide defensible statistics to assist elected officials determine strategies and draft legislation.

(d) Other member constituencies

The most effective tool when communicating with member constituents and their advocacy groups is to be willing to listen and be receptive to input. Seeking high quality engagement is more productive and produces better results to the membership you are responsible to serve.

3. *Describe your budgetary and financial management experience for self-insured benefit programs in a public (i.e. state or local government) setting.*

As a member of the PEBP Executive team, I have worked closely with the CFO and Accounting section to develop new budgets and ensure operations remain within established approved appropriations and projected expenses. I am aware of the state budgetary process and understand the functions related to accounting, budgeting and fiscal management of the program. Additionally, I have extensive experience with procurements, including the development of solicitations,

evaluations, negotiations and ongoing contractual oversight. I have also been involved in the rate setting process for the self-insured plans at PEBP and have an understanding of the complexities of the program, such as the potential volatility and impacts of trend, the effect rates have on the budget process and how every decision can create a large impact on plan cost. Moreover, my experience as Interim Executive Officer has provided me with the opportunity to analyze and further understand the fiscal position of the program.

4. *Describe the approach you would take in working with the PEBP Board to set benefit plan design priorities.*

This is best accomplished through annual strategic planning, where staff, Board members and vendors are invited to engage in conversations with the ultimate goal of developing strategies and identifying opportunities for the program. All benefit enhancements and cost saving opportunities would be vetted through contracted actuaries and a complete analysis, as well as budgetary impacts would be presented to the Board at the annual plan benefit design board meeting. It is vital that the Executive Director receive input from other various stakeholders, such as legislative bodies/members, the Governor's Finance Office and advocacy groups throughout each stage of this process.

5. *Please include a description of your management and leadership style, along with recent successes and why they were successes.*

My leadership style is similar to that of my communication style. I attempt to lead not only by example, but I find that my mix of participative and strategic leadership engages staff and creates a team of well-equipped individuals who play an integral part in the overall success of the organization. Despite my tendency to be an inclusive leader, I am not afraid to take charge, make final decisions and be held accountable for the results. I employed my leadership style through the implementation of a recent system upgrade. As Operations Officer, I empowered my team throughout the project by allowing lead staff to make decisions and implement appropriate solutions in their functional areas. Leading up to the launch, the vendor was unable to meet the agreed upon deliverables and discovered numerous system glitches. As a result, many staff had become so invested in the project that they dedicated their own personal time to ensure the system launch went as smoothly as possible.

6. *Describe your philosophy on the development of staff and the successes you have had with this approach.*

I believe it is the obligation of a leader to build and develop staff. I have reaped the benefit of being mentored and taught by those in leadership positions throughout my career. Had I not been provided the opportunities I was given throughout my 11 years in state service, I would not have many of the crucial skills and knowledge that I have today. Developing staff by leveraging their strengths and empowering them not only provides value to the employee, but also to the agency and the state. At PEBP, I believe the empowerment of staff has shown to be a success. Staff who were offered cross-training opportunities quickly received promotional opportunities as a result of the additional experience and training. When PEBP expanded its communication program, the team was provided direction, general goals and resources. However, they have also been provided extensive autonomy and creative discretion. As a result, PEBP has greatly improved the materials and communication that is available to its' members.

LAURA RICH



OBJECTIVE

To bring my strong sense of dedication, motivation and experience and knowledge of state and federal programs to the Public Employees' Benefits Program.



EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION

Bachelor of Arts, LS (Elem. Education) | California State University Dec. 2004

Master of Business Administration | Western Governor's University, Jan. 2020

Certified Public Manager (CPM) | State of Nevada Apr. 2018



EXPERIENCE

Operations Officer/Interim Exec. Officer | Public Employees' Benefits Program

AUGUST 2015 – PRESENT

- Oversee and direct all agency operations, including eligibility and enrollment, IT, member services, communications and program management. Motivate and lead 20+ staff to ensure high performance and continuous improvement.
- Participate in strategic planning and policy development.
- Presentations to the Board and public as well as presenting testimony to the legislature.
- Develop and participate in RFP's, negotiations and contracting.
- Direct project implementation, both internally and in coordination with other state agencies and outside organizations.
- Conduct ongoing vendor management.
- Coordinate with the Attorney General's office on agency related legal matters.
- Oversee communications program responsible for communicating program information to over 70,000 active and retired members and dependents.
- Oversee the Human Resources functions of the agency.
- Collaborate with EO and CFO on fiscal matters, including budget building, program utilization analysis, and legislative fiscal notes.
- Perform ongoing analysis, review and administration of the health plan to ensure compliance within all federal and state regulations.
- Participation in statewide and project steering committees.

Project Manager, Quality Assurance Officer | Silver State Health Insurance Exchange

AUGUST 2013 – AUGUST 2015

- Responsible, under the supervision of the COO, for the management of the day-to-day projects and operations of the agency. Managed and coordinated with federal partners

(CMS, HHS) on various programs and projects related to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act in Nevada.

- Managed and led staff, coordinated with federal and state agencies, consultants and vendors on several projects and ultimately transitioned Nevada on to a new technology platform.
- Development and oversight of health plan certification and Quality Control as well as administration of marketing campaign, broker certification and training programs, Navigator program, and several massive IT interconnectivity projects.
- Constant review and interpretation of proposed and enacted federal regulations in a constantly evolving regulatory landscape.
- Developed and presented reports and presentations to the Board, media and to the public.
- Coordinated with the offices of various elected officials to assist consumers requiring program assistance.
- Coordinated with various state agencies (DWSS, DHCFP, DOI) regarding all aspects of the SSHIX program and ACA implementation to ensure compliance, solvency, efficiency and consumer satisfaction.

Social Services Program Specialist II, III | Division of Health Care, Financing and Policy

APRIL 2012 – AUGUST 2013

- Responsible for supervision of the unit, including a team of staff and program management.
- Program oversight of Medicaid waiver programs to ensure CMS requirements.
- Participated on various committees.
- Program oversight of Medicaid estate recovery efforts.
- Managed various IT development projects and implementations.
- Evaluate and interpret statutes and regulations and develop program policies and procedures.

Elder Rights Advocate II | Division of Aging and Disability Services

AUGUST 2009 – APRIL 2012

- Conducted routine visits of long term care facilities to identify issues related to resident care. Coordinated with facility managers and administrators to develop strategies to rectify compliance concerns.
- Conducted independent investigations on facility complaints reported to the division.
- Provided outreach and educational presentations and trainings in community and facility settings.
- Educated families, residents, facility staff on Medicaid resources as well as Medicare and other community resources.



SKILLS

- Strong health care and Medicaid knowledge
- Solid understanding of State processes
- Bilingual; fluent in Spanish
- Proven ability to develop strong relationships
- Certified Public Manager (CPM) certification

Professional References:

Damon Haycock
Executive Director
Public Employees' Benefits Program

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Heather Korblic
Executive Director
Silver State Health Insurance Exchange

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Agata Gawronski
Executive Director
Board of Examiners for Alcohol, Drug and Gambling Counselors

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]