



State of Illinois
Illinois Department of Central Management Services



A STRONGER STATE OF ILLINOIS WORKFORCE:

Reform, Recruitment, Results



Governor JB Pritzker
CMS Director Raven A. DeVaughn
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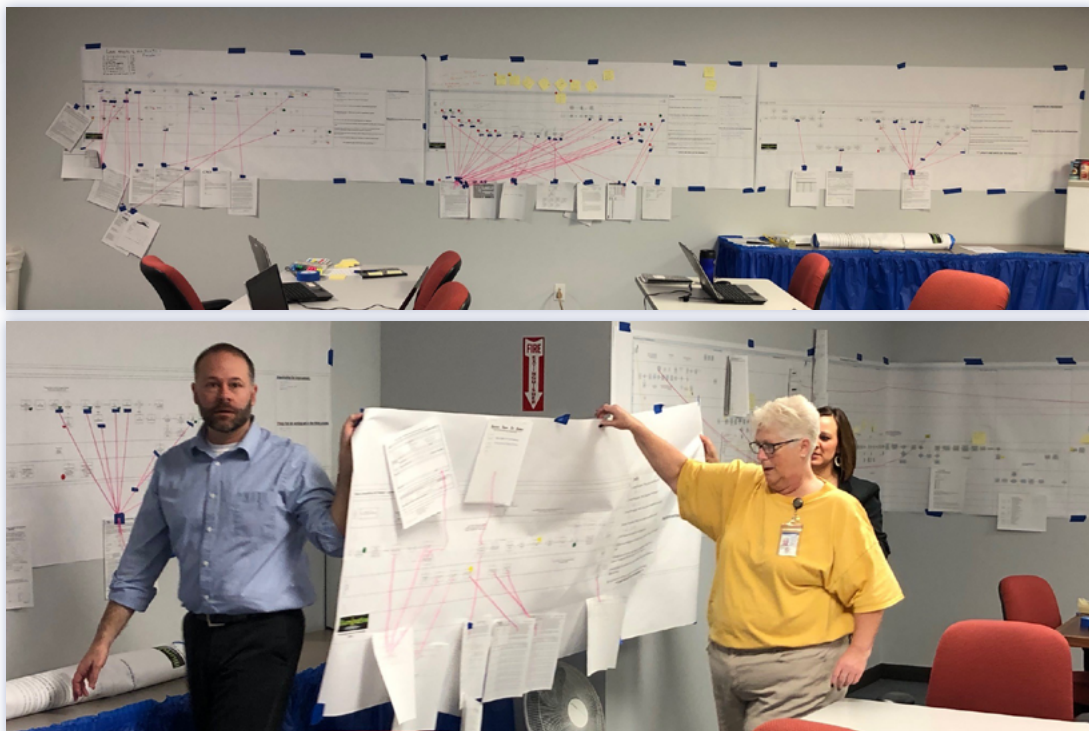
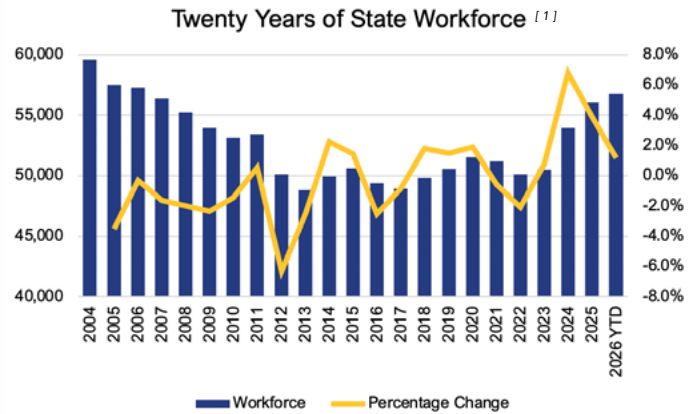


State of Illinois: Hiring Transformation & Workforce Growth

The Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS) Bureau of Personnel has supported the State in achieving its highest workforce level since 2007, with total employment reaching **56,740** employees in January 2026. These efforts were made possible, in part, by overhauling the State’s manual hiring procedures, reaching agreement with labor partners, and using a more efficient and streamlined hiring system. This transformative modernization paved the way for a focused recruitment effort that rebuilt the State workforce.

The Lay of the Land Leading to the State’s Big Recruitment Push

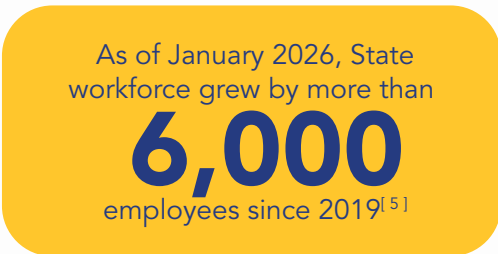
- At the end of 2018, the State’s workforce was **49,994** — almost **10,000** lower than 2004.
- The State continued to prioritize strengthening and standardizing its hiring process to protect the integrity of the process while also removing barriers to State employment
 - In 2020, CMS finalized a four- year plan to transform the hiring process from **400 steps to 12 steps**
 - In 2022, the State was released from federal court oversight rooted in the **Shakman** anti-patronage litigation
 - In 2022, the State reduced the number of positions that required in-person, pre-employment testing by nearly **90%**
 - In 2023, more internal process improvements and legislative changes led to the passing of **SB2228 (PA 103-0108)**, a law that modernized the hiring process in Illinois by removing outdated requirements and updating the Personnel Code for the first time since 1955. This also allowed CMS to finish process improvement to streamline hiring to **12 steps**.



To bring down the number of steps to hire from 400 to 12, each step was mapped out and reviewed

^[1] Includes Code and non-Code at Executive Branch agencies. **Source:** Monthly agency payroll data maintained by GOMB

By the Numbers



After SB2228 was implemented, the number of employees in the State’s workforce who identify as being members of communities of color grew. CMS Supports these communities through its Employment Plan Advisory Councils^[8]:



^[2] **Source:** Monthly agency payroll data maintained by GOMB – June 2019, June 2025

^[3] **Source:** CMS BoP internal tracking

^[4] **Source:** Authorized Headcount from ISLs versus monthly agency payroll data maintained by GOMB

^[5] **Source:** Monthly agency payroll data maintained by GOMB

^[6] **Source:** Monthly agency payroll data maintained by GOMB

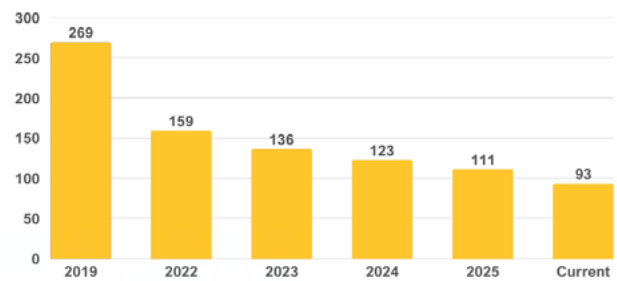
^[7] **Source:** DHS HR

^[8] **Source:** PEERs; FY2019 EPAC Report

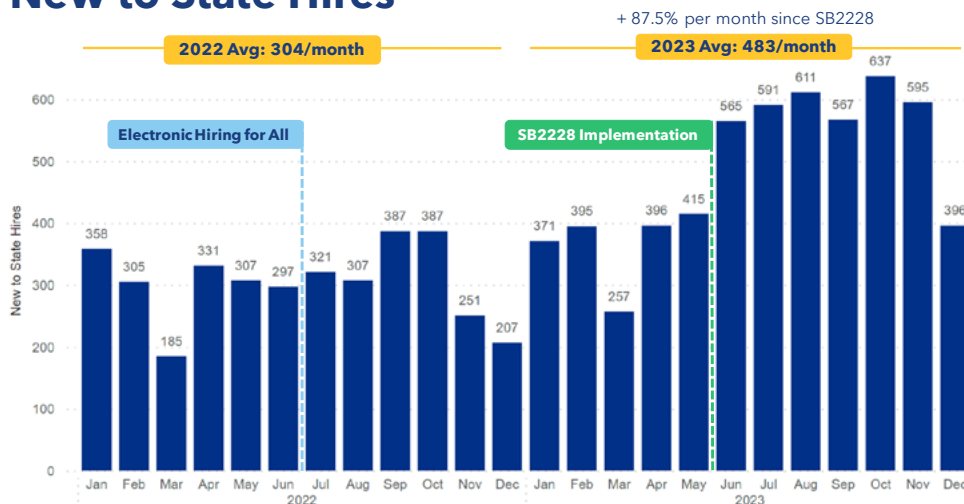
Since July 2022, the State has:

- Transitioned to **fully online** and mobile-friendly applications, leading to an initial **311%** increase in applications, and nearly half a million applications annually
- Implemented SB 2228 to remove outdated requirements, allowing us to finish process improvement to streamline hiring steps from **400** to **12**
- Built **statewide recruitment infrastructure** – Agencies, including CMS, stood up and/or built out recruitment teams to meet job seekers all over the State, particularly at **5** regional Career Services Centers
 - CMS increased outreach staff, redeployed career counselors to also serve as boots-on-the-ground recruiters, and hired its own CMS-specific recruiting staff
 - In 2025 alone, CMS staff attended more than **300** events to connect with job seekers statewide
- **Focused recruitment and expedited hiring**, made possible by the process improvements and reduction of non-value-add regulations and requirements, brought on more workers to serve our most vulnerable populations in record time
 - Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
 - ◇ Hired more than **250** investigators in a matter of weeks in early FY24
 - ◇ Headcount increased nearly **1,300** staff members from 2019
 - ◇ **DCFS was able to consistently meet caseload ratios** of not more than **10:1** for the first time in five years^[11]
 - Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS)
 - ◇ Collaborative hiring process expedited Mental Health Technician Trainees to put people to work less than **50** days from application
 - ◇ DHS direct care staff increased by **15%** (**4,167** → **4,789**) from 2019 to 2025^[12]
 - ◇ **24/7** facilities staffed sufficiently to stop continuous postings

Average Time To Hire In Days ^[9]



New to State Hires ^[10]



^[9] Source: SuccessFactors recruiting data

^[10] Source: SuccessFactors recruiting data

^[11] Source: DCFS Office of Employee Services; DCFS Director's Office

^[12] Source: DHS Human Resources

- CMS kicked off the **Really Great Careers** Marketing Campaign
 - TV, Radio, paid online spots, and social media posts
 - Targeted campaigns for IDOT Engineers, EPA lawyers, EPA engineers, Spanish Speakers, Illinois universities, and more
 - Saw applications for hard-to-fill positions increase by as much as **30%** per posting^[13]
- Implemented **Intern-to-Hire** procedures, which allowed agencies to extend job offers to successful interns upon graduation
- Expanded the enterprise **Diversity & Inclusion** team by more than three times to bring expertise and focus to the work of improving both representation of African-American, Asian-American, Native American, and Hispanic/Latinx workers in the State workforce and also the retention and inclusion of existing staff who identify as members of these communities.
- Developed the first **identity-centered internship** program to share State service opportunities with students from communities that have lacked inroads in the past
- Implemented the Disabled Workers Training Program to pave the way for State job opportunities for individuals with disabilities
- This work was recognized by the National Association for State Chief Administrators (NASCA) and in 2025, CMS received the **Innovation in State Government Award – Transformation: Hiring Process Reform** and Chief Administrative Officer Sarah Kerley was recognized by her national peers at the National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE) with the 2025 Leadership in State Human Resource Management Award.



Moving Forward with Targeted Recruitment and Retention

- Build on the success of the Really Great Careers campaign by shifting to targeted recruitment for specific roles and communities.
- Prioritize hard-to-fill roles, including direct service, IDOT engineers, accountants, auditors, lawyers, and skilled trades.
- Strengthen partnerships with educational institutions to engage talent earlier and raise awareness of State careers by:
 - Targeting marketing through UIUC, NIU, and UIC Athletics
 - Expanding in-State clinicals, internships, fellowships, and intern-to-hire programs
 - Developing training pathways aligned with high-demand roles
 - Engaging high schools and trade schools statewide
- Deepen engagement with key communities by investing in long-term relationships beyond traditional job fairs.
- Open the Metro East Career Services Center to connect with job seekers in the State’s second-largest metro area and better compete for regional talent.
- Enhance the enterprise employee experience through integrated onboarding, employee listening, and leadership response tools.
- Launch a job-shadowing program to support career mobility into and within State service.
- Improve retention by targeting engagement at key career milestones (**1, 2, 5, and 10** years).
- Empower employee resource groups to strengthen inclusion and organizational culture.



^[13] Source: SuccessFactors recruiting data

