

Fiscal year 2020

Statewide Human Resources Management Strategy Roll-up Report



State Human Resources
Office of Financial Management
March 2021

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Executive Summary

Background

Executive branch agencies with more than 100 employees must submit an annual Agency Human Resource Management Report. Thirty-eight agencies submitted reports for fiscal year 2020.

Statewide HR Management Strategy Roll-up Report

This report analyzes and provides summary information on key workforce performance measure data, enterprise workforce measures, and agency and enterprise strategies. We've included the following topics:

- Key workforce issues and strategies
- Employee performance management
- Employee engagement survey
- Exit survey
- Modern work environment
- Telework and COVID-19 response
- Inclusive and respectful work environments
- Workforce diversity and inclusion:
 - Affirmative action employment plans
 - Disability employment plans
 - Veterans employment plans
 - LGBTQ+ inclusion and safe places policies

This report pertains to the executive branch only. It does not include higher education institutions or the legislative and judicial branches.

Strategy briefing highlights

This report presents these key highlights:

- Two new agency priorities include COVID-19 response and workforce planning during a budget crisis. Identifying and developing potential future leaders continues to be a top priority.
- Agencies adapted to providing ongoing feedback while working remotely.
- Employee engagement survey scores increased in all survey questions. Both 'employee job satisfaction' and 'willingness to recommend the agency' increased by an average of 5% statewide.
- The statewide exit survey will be required for all general government agencies starting in spring 2021.

- An unprecedented number of state employees are now teleworking. Many are fully remote for the first time.
- Based on employee engagement survey data, most employees feel positive about their agency's response to COVID-19.
- Agencies created a diversity plan ([HR Directive 20-02](#)) to sustain and embed best practices for a respectful and inclusive work environment.
- Agencies employed a wide variety of strategies to increase the diversity of applicant pools.
- Agencies began tracking the number of reservists, National Guard members and military spouses to support [Executive Order 19-01](#).
- The percentage of people self-identifying with disabilities in the workforce increased in 2020.
- Agencies began to measure the representation of employees who identify as X/non-binary and LGBTQ+.

For questions about the Statewide HR Management Strategy Briefing Roll-up Report, contact SHRPlanning@ofm.wa.gov.

Workforce strategies

Brief summary

- COVID-19 response is a new top priority for agencies.
- In addition to working safely and virtually, agencies are facing difficulties due to the budget crisis.

The top three agency priorities are COVID-19 response, workforce planning during a budget crisis, and identifying and developing potential future leaders.

Background

Agencies outlined how they can work toward solving key workforce challenges. The top three strategies were:

- COVID-19 response (30 of 38 agencies reporting).
- Workforce planning during a budget crisis (27 of 38 agencies reporting).
- Identifying and developing potential future leaders (26 of 38 agencies reporting).

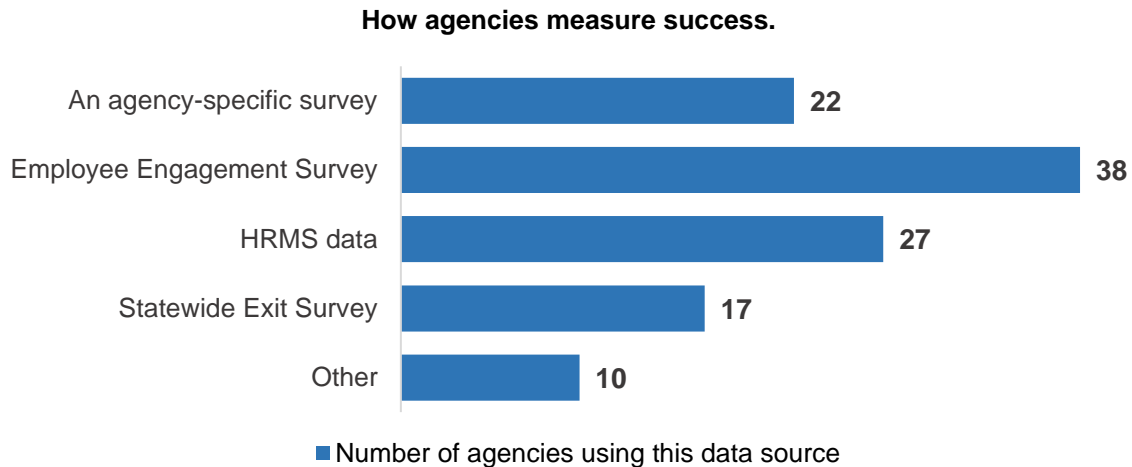
It has been a busy year for HR staff, who balanced the following because of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Rapidly moved huge portions of the workforce to remote work due to the governor's Stay Home Stay Healthy order.
- Kept essential on-site employees in the office safe through the state's Safe Start guidelines.
- Administered widespread furloughs and supported employees covered under the statewide Shared Work program.
- Navigated a hiring freeze and budget difficulties.
- Supported teleworking employees.
- Maintained recruitment and retention efforts in the face of budget shortfalls and a recovering private sector.
- Pursued diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in the office and virtually.
- Planned for the future, with a majority of engagement survey respondents desiring to telework at least three days a week.

Agencies report being proactive about these solutions, from setting ambitious goals for a large portion of employees teleworking to prioritizing virtual training for HR staff and all other employees. The largest area of improvement we identified was finding meaningful ways to stay connected to coworkers. This was also the lowest-scoring engagement survey question in the COVID-19 response section.

Measuring success

With so many challenges, it is important to build in ways to receive feedback and monitor progress toward agency goals. Teleworking surveys were very popular this past year, allowing agencies to check in with virtual employees to see how they were doing and identify barriers.



Agencies can use some of these tools to disaggregate data by different groups. Many of the data sets include age, gender identify, LGBTQ+ status, race and ethnicity, supervisor status, county, disability status, veteran status and job classification. State HR analyzes differences between these groups to look for possible inequities. They can then work with agencies to redirect resources or investment. In this way, we can create a workforce that includes and welcomes all employees — not just a majority.

Proposed solutions

- **Use employee engagement survey data to develop strategies.** For more information, visit the [Employee Engagement website](#).
- **Stay connected while teleworking.** State HR has heard that some employees find it difficult to maintain social connections in a virtual environment. (The employee engagement survey results support this.) Many multiagency telework committees are working on best practices and will release guidance soon.
- **Regularly check in with employees.** Several teleworking surveys show that employees appreciate their agency checking in with them and being responsive to their concerns.
- **Disaggregate data to look for disparities.** State HR hired a diversity, equity and inclusion data analyst in 2020 to use data and research to identify disparities and remedy gaps with evidence-based best practices.

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Employee performance management

Brief summary

- Agencies aim to provide a culture that encourages managers and employees to have meaningful and timely performance conversations.
- Agencies provide ongoing feedback to employees throughout the year.

Agencies adapted to providing ongoing feedback while working remotely.

Background

Performance development plans, or PDPs, provide written expectations and assessments of an employee’s demonstrated key results and competencies. A state law requires supervisors to give classified employees performance feedback at least annually ([WAC 357-37](#)). Many agencies also provide employee reviews for exempt and management service employees.

Agencies report that most employees have current evaluations, expectations, and position descriptions.



Proposed solutions

Agency strategies

- Collaboratively develop performance goals with staff.
- Provide resources and training to managers and supervisors regarding difficult or contentious evaluations.
- Encourage open, honest, and frequent conversations between supervisors and employees.
- Provide the training that employees need to perform their jobs.
- Recognize and reward performance.

State HR strategies

- State HR and multiple agencies continue to use insights from the employee engagement survey to improve the employee development and evaluation process.

- State HR launched the [Succession Planning Pilot Project](#) to help agencies align staffing and leadership needs with strategic objectives.
- State HR developed a [Succession Planning Toolkit](#) to help agencies align staffing and leadership needs with future strategic goals.

Agency successes

- The Department of Ecology created a SharePoint site that provides tips for completing position descriptions, performance evaluations and expectations.
- The Department of Fish and Wildlife's performance management program encourages people to attend meetings to share progress on their joint goals.
- The Department of Health implemented Outward Mindset Tools to help employees see how their work contributes to the success of the agency.
- The Department of Children, Youth and Families draws a direct connection for each employee and the work they perform to the agency's mission.
- The Office of Administrative Hearings added a diversity equity and inclusion competency to all position descriptions.

Next steps

- Market the [Choice Performance Confirmation Program](#) that now includes represented employees for the first time.
- Provide a [Succession Planning Toolkit](#) progress report to participating agencies.
- Review and report on lessons learned during the State HR Succession Planning Pilot Project.
- Continue to provide performance management resources.
- Support agencies to incorporate [Statewide DEI Competencies](#) into employee position descriptions.

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Employee Engagement Survey

Brief summary

- Top three focus areas for increasing employee satisfaction are improving communication about changes, expanding employee recognition and increasing satisfaction with mobility options.
- Participation in the survey declined from an all-time high of 79% in 2019 to a response rate of 67% in 2020. Still, 2020 provided the third most participants in the 14-year history of the survey.

Engagement scores increased in all survey questions. Both 'employee job satisfaction' and 'willingness to recommend the agency' increased by a 5% average statewide.

Background

Since 2006, Washington has conducted an employee engagement survey to collect vital information on its perceived status as an employer. Over the years, the survey has become a key tool for decision makers. About 67% of the workforce (44,487 state employees), representing 77 agencies, participated in the 2020 employee engagement survey.

The top 5 survey questions agencies focused on improvement



Proposed solutions

Agency strategies

- Agencies provided approximately 90 strategies focused on increasing employee engagement in their agency. They placed a large focus on improving communication and adjusting to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To increase outreach to employees during the pandemic, agencies relied heavily on using town hall meetings, coffee chats, recorded video messages and newsletters to share information. Agencies are increasingly dependent on communication tools such as Skype, Zoom, WebEx, Teams, intranets and agency blogs to share urgent information or have informal chats.

State HR strategies

- State HR will continue to use the [RAMP: A Model of Intrinsic Motivation](#) to encourage agencies to incorporate intrinsic motivation when they craft engagement strategies.
- Most agencies added demographic questions to their survey. 78% of employees that responded to the survey also answered demographic questions.

Successes

- Satisfaction with mobility options increased by 23% between 2019 and 2020. **This represents the *largest increase in satisfaction ever in the survey's history*.** The pandemic has provided many employees a perceived benefit to their current work situation and agency mobility strategies are largely fulfilling it.
- Satisfaction with support for diversity increased by 6% to an all-time high of 80%. With new demographic information available, leaders will have more actionable engagement data going forward.
- The survey added supplemental COVID-19 questions in 2020. Agencies generally received high marks for prioritizing safety, supporting a work/life balance, and communicating the impacts of the constant changes related to the pandemic.
- Finding meaningful ways to stay connected to coworkers typically had the lowest agency score out of the COVID-19 questions. Agencies such as the Department of Ecology established an Employee Resiliency Committee that includes helping employees adjust to less reliance on physical presence.
- To help agencies identify how the current increase in mobility could affect future planning, the survey asked employees how much they would like to telework in the future. About 56% of employees indicated they would like to telework either 100% of the time or 3 to 4 days per week.
- The Department of Transportation focused on improving employee opportunities to learn and grow. The agency established a training community of practice to identify ways to improve access. They compiled training on an external website to make sure their employees could easily access the material. As a result, their satisfaction scores increased.

Additional resources

- State HR's website provides background and resources pertaining to the [State Employee Engagement Survey](#).

Next steps

- State HR will publish the Statewide Employee Engagement Survey Report in April 2021.

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Exit Survey

Brief summary

- State HR released several tools giving survey contacts more access to their data.
- You can now access new analyses and resources based on exit survey data on the [State HR website](#).

The statewide exit survey will be required for all general government agencies starting spring 2021.

Background

The exit survey helps agencies learn about why employees leave. State HR manages the survey, and analyzes and cleans up the response data. Agency contacts distribute the survey link and can use the data to make improvements for their employees.

Currently, the exit survey has 29 standard questions, 59 agencies also opt to add agency-specific questions. The most common agency-added question is job classification. The survey takes about six minutes to complete.

Of the 38 agencies that answered the HR Management Report survey, 42% use the statewide exit survey. More than a dozen of these agencies mentioned how useful it is to get this feedback. Matching experience to job classification was important to some. For others, checking for improvements they could make to their work environment was their top priority.

Number of responding agencies that use data from the statewide exit survey.



Participation requirement

State HR is continuing to partner with agency contacts to ensure the survey is accessible and useful for all agencies. Currently, many exit survey efforts are decentralized, making it difficult to analyze this important data source. Agencies may preserve ongoing exit survey efforts by adding questions to the statewide exit survey and requesting regular data deliveries. Many agencies request a dashboard report that includes additional analysis, filters or displays for agency-added questions.

The requirement to participate in the survey will:

- **Create an adaptive and innovated state government.** Organizations must learn from employees themselves—why they stay, why they leave and how the work environment needs to change. This is especially important now, as we begin the long process of economic recovery.
- **Consolidate statewide data collection.** Much like the engagement survey, a centralized data collection model reduces the overall amount of work and ensures data integrity and comparability.
- **Compare and report on statewide data.** State HR will be able to compare data from the engagement survey to the statewide exit survey to HRMS. This will provide more actionable data and analysis for agencies, the Legislature and other stakeholders.
- **Support better, data-driven class package proposals.** Exit survey data is one of the strongest evidence sources for class package proposals. Demonstrating that employees in a job class are leaving specifically due to compensation and pay is vital. The exit survey can give us this evidence.

Proposed solutions

State HR strategies

- The statewide exit survey [webpage](#) launched in fall 2019. This central location allows the public to access dashboards, reports, response rates and other information. In addition, agency-specific dashboards are available on the HR Portal.
- The 2020 annual report and the dashboards available on the website explore how successful a focus on learning and growth has been—**lack of skill or career development is no longer a leading reason for leaving.**
- State HR hosted the first exit survey contact meeting in fall 2020. State HR sent the interactive presentation with an agency filter to exit survey contacts for their own presentations and analysis.
- Just like with the engagement survey, agencies can add questions specific to their employees. Agency contacts can also request their own dashboards to interact and view their data in a timely and accessible way.

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Modern work environment

Brief summary

- Agencies implemented many strategies to create a more modern work environment because of the [COVID-19 telework policy memorandum](#).
- Implementing these strategies brought large employee satisfaction increases in the areas of mobility and flexibility on the employee engagement survey.

An unprecedented number of state employees are now teleworking. Many are fully remote for the first time.

Background

Gov. Jay Inslee directs Washington’s modern workplace strategy initiative through [Executive Order 16-07](#). Led by State HR, the initiative helps agencies identify, experiment with and adopt innovative ways to support business performance by modernizing the physical environment, providing greater workplace flexibility and enabling a more mobile workforce. State HR began collecting eligibility and participation data for telework, flexible schedules and compressed workweeks in 2017.

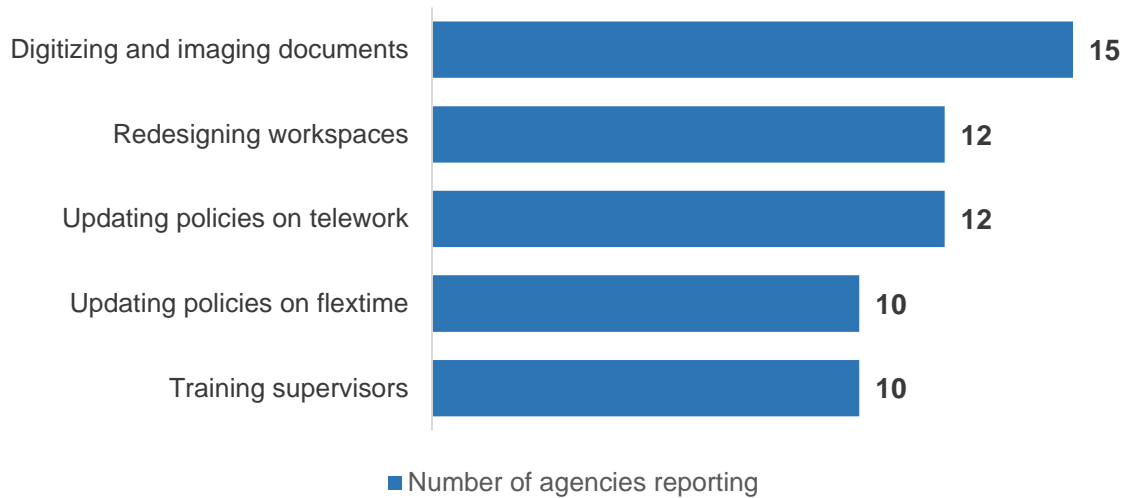
In March 2020, the [Stay Home, Stay Healthy](#) proclamation directed all Washingtonians to stay home unless they were performing essential work. State agencies were required to rapidly shift in-office workers who could work from home, to work from home so we could reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19. The quick pivot to remote work for so many so quickly highlighted serious technology gaps and resource shortages that state agencies labored to address through the spring and summer of 2020.

Record numbers of state employees continue to work remotely full time nearly a year later. Many agencies are exploring how to continue supporting substantial rates of telework in our post-pandemic future.

Proposed solutions

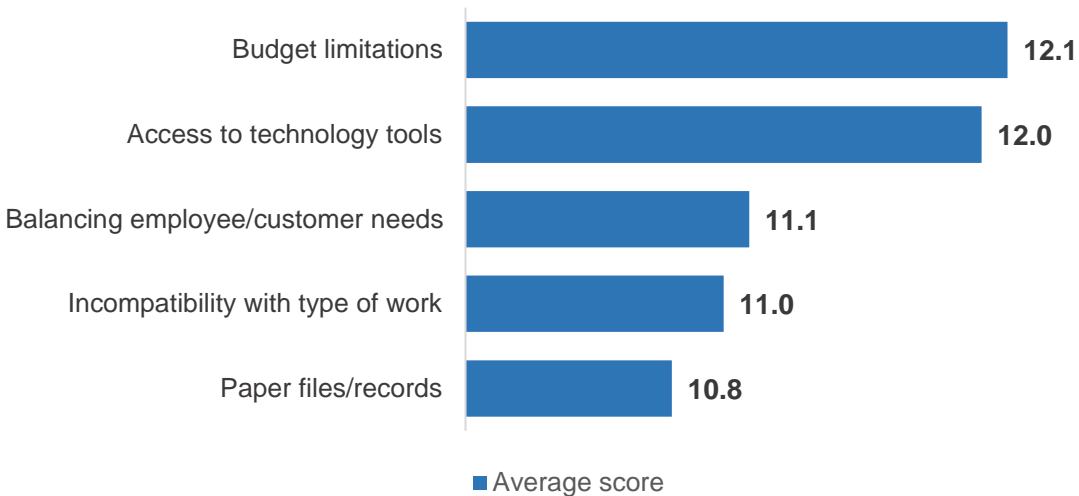
With such a monumental change in the work environment, agencies implemented many strategies. Among these, the most common was encouraging a modern work environment and participation in the Commute Trip Reduction program. Agencies also identified what they will implement next, with the most common plan being to digitize and image documents.

Top 5 strategies to be implemented in the future



There are still some barriers for agencies to support a modern work environment. The most frequent barrier they cite is the current budget, a result of an unprecedented recession and uncertain biennial budget outcome. A close second was access to technology tools such as laptops and VPNs.

Top 5 barriers to implementing a modern work environment



Agency efforts for modern work are paying off more than they ever have before. The employee engagement survey results showed that *satisfaction with modern work increased more than these scores ever have* since they were added to the survey in 2017. Satisfaction with flexibility increased from 72% in 2017 to 78% in 2020. *Satisfaction with mobility increased from 47% in 2017 to 78% in 2020.*

State HR strategies

- State HR has convened the Statewide Telework Advisory Team. This team of dozens of volunteer HR professionals from across state government produces guidance and recommendations for telework policy issues. They will start to release guidance during spring 2021.
- State HR published a [Modern Work Environment dashboard](#) that reports employee participation and eligibility rates for telework, flextime and compressed workweeks by agency, county, job class and fiscal year. The data from this dashboard comes from the Human Resources Management System.
- Additional resources related to state employee telework can be found on the [OFM Emergency Telework](#) webpage.

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Teleworking and COVID-19

Brief summary

- Agencies have shown a remarkable degree of resiliency in adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Agencies with leadership who took immediate action and made efforts to communicate directly with their staff achieved a higher percentage of positive employee engagement survey responses compared to agencies that mostly relied on middle managers to communicate COVID-19 policies and procedures.

Based on the employee engagement survey data, most employees feel positive about their agency's response to COVID-19.

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic brought an unprecedented degree of change to how state government operates. Gov. Jay Inslee and executive branch leadership took decisive steps to have as many state employees as possible work at home. Data from the employee engagement survey suggests that employees support continuing high rates of telework even after it is safe to return to the office.

We added supplemental questions relating to COVID-19 to the employee engagement survey. Most responses were overwhelmingly positive. 'My agency makes decisions that prioritize my safety during the COVID-19 pandemic' received the highest percentage of positive responses. 'I find meaningful ways to stay connected to coworkers during the COVID-19 pandemic' received the lowest rate of positive responses.

Engagement Survey question	% Positive response
"My agency makes decisions that prioritize my safety during the COVID-19 pandemic."	94%
"My agency keeps me informed about workplace impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic."	86%
"My agency takes steps to positively impact my work/life balance during the COVID-19 pandemic."	83%
"I find meaningful ways to stay connected to coworkers during the COVID-19 pandemic."	72%

State HR performed statistical analysis on the responses to these four questions. We found that overall, larger agencies tend to have slightly lower scores than medium and small agencies. This is not surprising considering that several of our largest agencies contain institutions where employees were unable to shift to remote work due to the nature of their jobs.

Employees at large agencies were most intensely impacted by the public health crisis, the stay-at-home orders, and the economic downturn. Medium and smaller agencies where most of their workforce was not required to remain onsite and could shift to telework did not face the same challenges.

Proposed solutions

State HR strategies

- State HR, in collaboration with state agencies, will continue to coordinate enterprise HR strategies on how agencies can operate effectively during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- State HR, in collaboration with LNI and DOH, will continue to provide guidance on how to keep employees, especially high-risk employees, safe from COVID-19.
- State HR will help coordinate re-opening efforts across the enterprise once experts say it's safe to re-open.

Agency successes

The Department of Labor and Industries, the State Healthcare Authority, and the Department of Financial Institutions stand out for their performance level during the pandemic. Their efforts were reflected in higher approval rates on the COVID-19 Engagement Survey questions relative to other agencies of similar size.

- The Department of Financial Institutions established a weekly all-staff email that includes agency happenings, personal stories, kudos, what are you reading/listening to and other employee-submitted stories. It also includes division and diversity advisory team reports and trends.
- The State Health Care Authority schedules periodic welfare and morale check-ins to connect, address questions, identify barriers and provide encouragement to staff. HCA has actively encouraged its employee resource groups to sponsor check-ins, organize special events and continue engagement through meeting platforms.
- The Department of Labor and Industries established a coronavirus integration committee to remove teleworking barriers. The committee launched a needs-assessment survey. Based on the survey data they collected, they created a dashboard to inform employees of a variety of unique and program-specific information. Employees were engaged through a combination of email, news articles, fast facts, frequently updated coronavirus Q&As and director's office broadcasts (which included time for staff questions).

Next steps

- State HR will coordinate telework committees to provide teleworking best practices.
- State HR will continue to explore ways to collaborate with agency leaders on how to disseminate COVID-19 information to employees.

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Inclusive and respectful work environments

Brief summary

- Agencies incorporated respectful work environment expectations into their onboarding strategies.
- Agencies initiated or improved internal review processes and how they assess complaint and investigation trends.
- Agencies increased their use of alternate resolution methods to resolve low-level workplace issues at the supervisory level.

Agencies created a diversity plan to sustain and embed best practices for a respectful and inclusive work environment (in compliance with [HR Directive 20-02](#))

Background

In spring 2018, the governor released a memorandum that reaffirmed the state's commitment to build an inclusive and respectful work environment. The memo directed agencies to review policies, track compliance with required training and create three committees – comprised of agency representatives – to work on policies, training and data/investigations.

Building respectful, supportive and inclusive work environments requires intentional effort on multiple fronts. Agencies must create environments that engage, motivate and support staff doing their best work. Agencies must also address problems that stand in the way of respectful work environments and promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the services they provide.

New employee onboarding strategies

For new employees, the respectful work environment begins with an introduction to agency culture. The top three strategies agencies incorporated in the onboarding process were:

- Make sure new hires are aware of policies and procedures for raising concerns and filing complaints about their work environment (38 of 38 agencies reporting).
- Encourage managers to create onboarding plans with regular check-ins (35 of 38 agencies reporting).
- Inform new hires about both internal and statewide business resource groups (25 of 38 agencies reporting).

Required training

Agencies reported the percentage of employees who completed the following mandatory training: diversity, sexual harassment awareness and prevention, supervisor and management development, and recognizing and mitigating implicit bias.

Agencies used various methods to measure the trainings' impact. Methods include collecting feedback, attendance and rate of completion. Several agencies reported that they did not measure training effectiveness.

Number of agencies with a training policy.



Policies

Agencies submitted responses to [HR Directive 20-03](#) that required an update or establishment of policies for respectful work environment; diversity, equity and inclusion; anti-discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment; and reasonable accommodation. Most agencies are in the process of updating or have already updated the required policies (pending final approval).

Agency successes

- The Department of Children, Youth and Families is working on a variety of diversity-related policies. These include racial equity, social justice and access to services for clients who are limited English proficient and/or have a disability.
- The Department of Social and Health Services is updating policies that provide equal access to services for individuals with a disability; communication access for persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, and/or speech disabled; accessible meetings; and lactating employees.

Complaints and investigations

Agencies must take steps to prohibit, address and correct disrespectful or inappropriate workplace behavior so all employees can successfully perform their work. About 97% of agencies reported having a written complaint filing process, policy or procedure.

Agency successes

- The Student Achievement Council implemented an anonymous inbox for employees to voice concerns.
- The Department of Natural Resources converted their crucial conversations training to an online interactive format.
- The Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals revised complaint procedures to include an informal process for low-level issues.
- The Department of Ecology has a full-time dedicated position to improve the consistency of handling complaints including tracking low-level issues and streamlining the investigation process.

State HR strategies

- State HR will continue to work with agencies on ways to remove barriers to reviewing investigation data and trends.
- A complaint data reporting pilot is currently underway to assess the feasibility and best approach to statewide complaint data reporting. The pilot ends in April 2021.
- State HR established and filled a full-time diversity, equity and inclusion data analyst position to review and assess workforce DEI data across the enterprise.
- State HR will work closely with the statewide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council to assist agencies with strategy recommendations and best practices on creating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce.
- State HR will continue to support statewide business resource groups that support diverse employees.

Additional detail

- State HR is leading interagency workgroups comprised of investigators and HR professionals to develop guidelines and best practices for respectful and inclusive workplace.
- State HR is collaborating with the Department of Enterprise Services to develop diversity, equity and inclusion training.
- State HR plans to encourage agencies to incorporate the [Statewide DEI Competencies](#) into employee position descriptions.

Next steps

- State HR in collaboration with interagency workgroups will progress this year from the development phase of complaints and investigations initiatives to implementation of improvement plans.

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Workforce diversity and inclusion

Brief summary

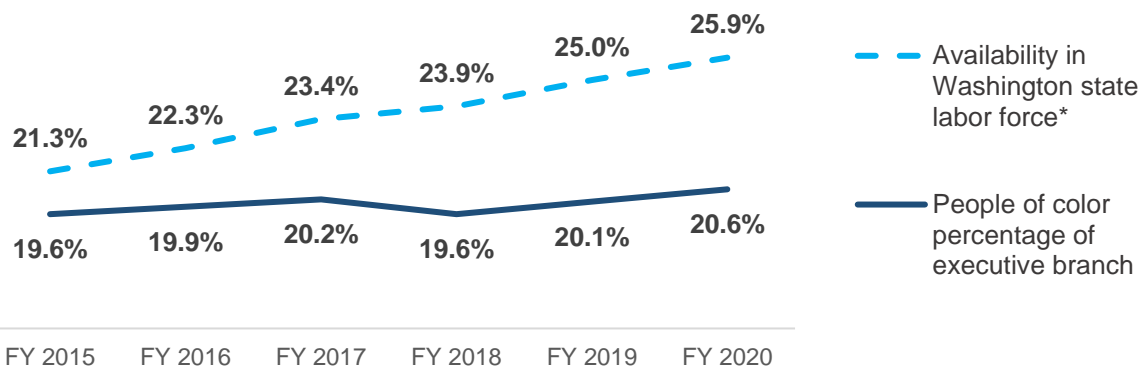
- The percentage of people of color in the executive branch workforce continues to fall below the availability of people of color in the state’s labor force.
- As the state’s population becomes more diverse, agencies must continue to implement strategies to increase diversity.
- Agencies employ a wide variety of recruitment and retention strategies. These include participating in business resource groups, attending job fairs and providing flexible work options, developmental job assignments, and job shadowing opportunities.
- The state recognizes that there are opportunities for improvement in our data collection and recruitment and retention strategies that could remove barriers to employment for underrepresented and historically marginalized groups. Several workforce diversity and inclusion improvement projects were launched in 2020. Some were completed and others are currently underway.

Agencies employ a wide variety of strategies to increase the diversity of their applicant pools.

Background

[Executive Order 12-02](#) requires executive branch agencies to develop an annual affirmative action plan to address the underrepresentation of women, people of color, people with disabilities and veterans in the workforce. (Other executive orders include [Executive Order 16-04](#) Reaffirming the Interagency Committee of State Employed Women and [Executive Order 17-01](#) Reaffirming Washington’s Commitment to Tolerance, Diversity, and Inclusiveness).

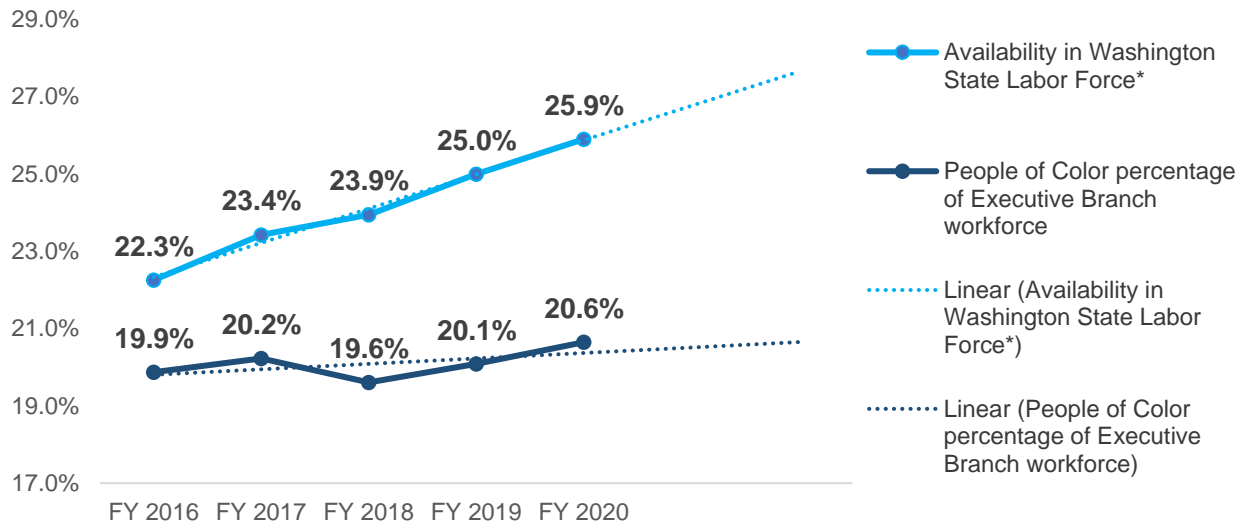
The people of color percentage employed by the executive branch remains below the available labor force



*American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Includes people of color in Washington’s civilian labor force.

People of color comprise 25.9% of Washington’s labor force yet make up only 20.6% of the executive branch workforce. Even though this is a 1 percentage point improvement from 2015, the gap between the availability and the utilization is widening. We forecast will increase 7% by fiscal year 2022 unless the state embraces new strategies and efforts.

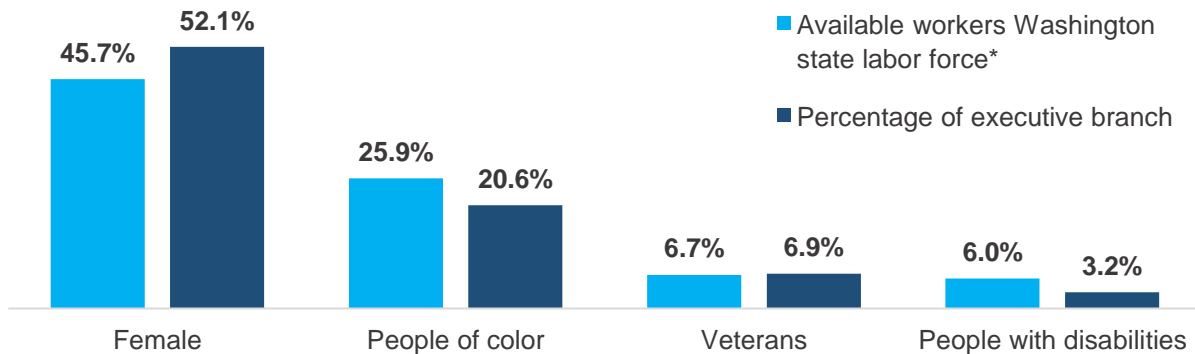
We forecast the gap between the available labor force and the executive branch to be over 7% by fiscal year 2022



*American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Includes people of color in Washington state’s civilian labor force.

People with disabilities represent 3.2% of the state workforce. This is significantly below the available labor force (6.0%). People who identify as female (52.1%) and veterans (6.9%) both exceed the available labor force, although the percentage of veterans represented in the state workforce has decreased for the previous three years and continues to trend downward.

Executive branch workforce diversity compared to the percentage of available workers in Washington’s labor force



*American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Proposed solutions

State HR strategies

- State HR will continue to provide agencies with semi-annual affirmative action utilization reports. This report is a descriptive-statistical analysis of affirmative action data used to assess the available workforce. State HR will also provide regular training, coaching and strategy consultation.
- State HR will continue to coordinate enterprise strategies on employment of veterans, people with disabilities and people of color.
- State HR will continue to support employee-led business resource groups.
- State HR will partner with agencies to review and analyze engagement data from the 2020 survey through a DEI lens. The addition of voluntary demographic questions provides unprecedented visibility into the experiences of diverse groups within our workforce which may differ from the experiences of the majority.
- A preliminary research report on State Employee Gender Pay Equity was developed and published in 2020. The report provided valuable context to begin to analyze statewide compensation practices through a pay equity framework. State HR will continue to explore questions related to pay equity for state employees in all position types.
- State HR undertook a significant data improvement effort beginning in 2019 to update our demographic data collection form and the Human Resources Management System data fields to be more accurate and inclusive. The launch of the My Demographics self-service tile within the statewide MyPortal pay and leave application was the culmination of this effort to increase the accuracy and security of state employee demographic data. Phase one of the MyPortal upgrades was completed in October 2020, with phase two scheduled for completion in spring 2021.
- State HR is partnering with the Department of Enterprise Services to establish a mechanism for regular reporting of aggregate statewide demographic data for applicants and candidates, to enhance the state's ability to identify barriers to inclusion and employment with the state.
- In 2020, State HR issued two directives. State [HR Directive 20-02](#) established the requirement for agencies to review their DEI policies and hiring practices, ensure staff involved in hiring processes were trained in mitigating implicit bias in the recruitment process, and develop a plan to review and act upon their own internal demographic data with executive leadership. State [HR Directive 20-03](#) built upon 20-02 by directing agencies to create or update their DEI policies and outlined required policy content.

Agency successes

- Washington's Lottery focuses on recruitment and relationship building with schools, communities and organizations. Hiring managers are reminded to assess candidates based not only on skills or years of experience but also with an awareness of candidates who can "add to" the team culture rather than focusing on who will "fit in."

- The Department of Financial Institutions works with hiring managers to identify qualified diverse talent. They use a variety of measures including one-on-one consultation, in-house recruitment training and attendance at diversity fairs. The diversity advisory team briefs leadership on its semi-annual affirmative action data to identify areas of underutilization and opportunities to improve diverse representation.
- The Health Care Authority asks members of employee resource groups to participate in local recruitment events. They have found that the use of social media as a recruitment tool attracts a younger pool of applicants.

Next steps

- State HR and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council will continue to provide feedback and recommendations to agencies.

Contact information

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Veterans

Brief summary

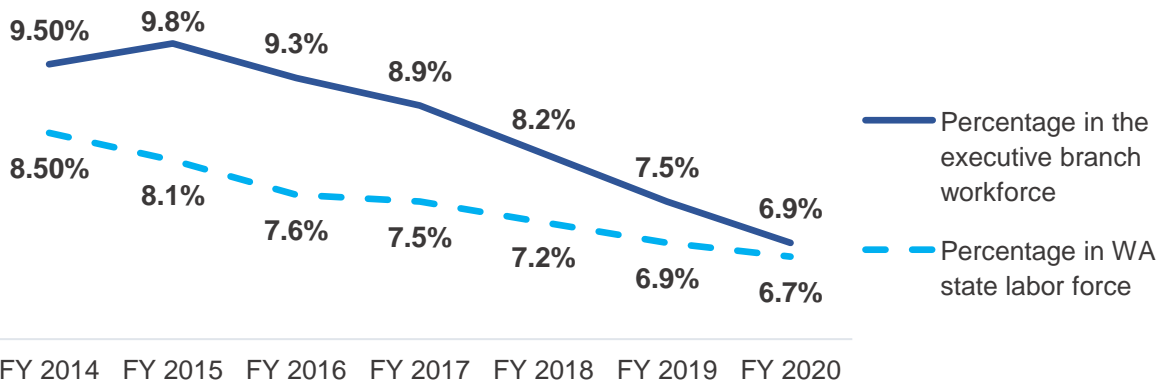
- Veterans make up 6.9% of the executive branch workforce. This is slightly higher than the availability of Washington’s veteran labor force.
- As Vietnam-era veterans approach retirement, agencies should increase the hiring of veterans. Twenty-nine agencies will focus on veteran recruitment for the upcoming year.
- Agencies began collecting the number of employees who are reservists, National Guard members and military spouses.

Agencies began tracking the number of reservists, National Guard members and military spouses to support [Executive Order 19-01](#).

Background

In 2019, Inslee signed [Executive Order 19-01](#), Veteran and Military Family Transition and Readiness Support. Agencies must develop employment plans that include veterans, reservists, National Guard members and military spouses. The executive order requires executive branch agencies to develop an annual employment plan for addressing veteran underrepresentation.

The percentage of veterans in the executive branch remains higher than how many are available in the state’s labor force



*American Community Survey, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, data accessed from Public Use Microdata. Sample includes all veterans in Washington civilian labor force ages 16 and older.

Representation of groups with a military affiliation on July 31, 2020

All veterans	Vietnam-era veterans	Veterans with disabilities	Military spouse
4,605 6.9%	510 0.8%	682 1.0%	139 0.2%

Executive Order 19-01 requirements

- Mechanisms to identify individuals who currently serve in the National Guard or reserve members from the armed forces (20 of 38 agencies reporting).
- Specific recruitment strategies to attract members of the National Guard and other reserve members (11 of 38 agencies reporting).
- The ability to track the number of bridge employment opportunities, which includes internships, mentorships and fellowships (13 of 38 agencies reporting).
- The ability to identify remote or flexible work opportunities, including out-of-state options (28 of 38 agencies reporting).
- Agency-designated military liaison (13 of 38 agencies reporting).
- Agency-internal veteran employee resource group (9 of 38 agencies reporting).

Proposed solutions

Agency strategies

- Assign internal military liaisons or certified [Veterans at Work](#) individuals to provide leadership for issues that affect veterans and military spouses. They often lead outreach and recruitment activities, mentorship programs or affinity groups.
- Educate hiring managers on military skills to improve how they screen veteran applicants. Emphasize the transferable skills service members bring to the workforce and the uniqueness of military spouses' resumes. This can help prevent bias against employment gaps and movement. Include veterans or military spouses as panelists in interviews.
- Develop partnerships with external organizations that provide employment services to individuals with military status, including military spouses, to increase the number of applicants. Host career workshops and provide one-on-one consultation to veteran and military spouse job seekers.

State HR strategies

- State HR encourages agencies to support representation at the Veteran Employee Resource Group as an outreach mechanism to increase veterans and military spouses in state service.
- State HR fosters collaboration between multiple non-profits, programs, councils, committees and resource groups created to advance efforts to the employment of military-affiliated individuals.
- State HR promotes the [Veterans at Work](#) certification, sponsored by the SHRM Foundation.

Successes

- The VERG in collaboration with other business resource groups and the Interagency Committee of State Employed Women conducted the first, joint virtual gathering addressing intersectionality and allyship.
- State HR updated the self-reported Employee Affirmative Action and Demographic Data form and HRMS to capture National Guard, reserve and military spouse status.
- State HR developed a state-to-state military spouse transition network helping military spouses working in government to identify job leads in the state of future residency.

Next steps

- State HR will continue to advise and support the VERG to increase the veteran and military spouse representation in the state workforce and recognize employee military service.
- State HR will continue to assess gaps or obstacles to implement [Executive Order 19-01](#).
- In collaboration with the Human Rights Commission, State HR will pursue a rule change, to allow agencies to collect military spouse data during the application process.

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People with disabilities

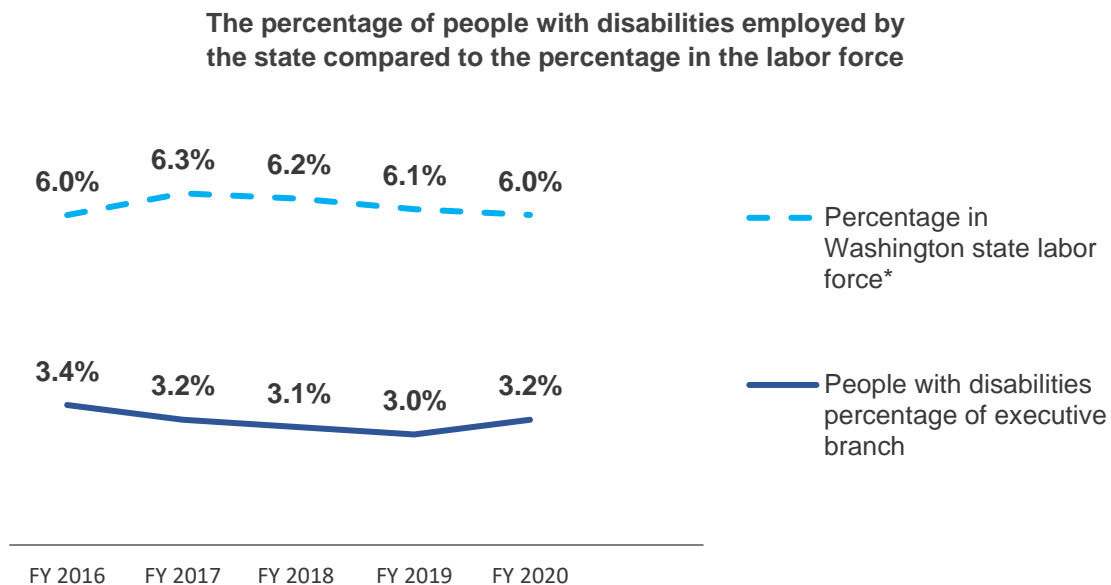
Brief summary

- People self-reporting a disability in the Executive branch workforce increased from 3.0% in fiscal year 2019 to 3.3% in 2020. However, the state is still falling short of the 5% target in the [Executive Order 13-02](#).
- Agencies must ensure that their recruitment and retention plans include a specific focus on ensuring fair access and inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Agencies should create a safe and inclusive environment so that employees feel safe to disclose their disabilities.

The percentage of people with disabilities in the workforce increased in 2020.

Background

The governor signed a formal order that requires executive branch agencies to develop an annual employment plan to address the underrepresentation of people with disabilities ([Executive Order 13-02](#)). Agencies submit annual plans to State HR but continue to fall short of the 5% target.



*American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates (Table ID: S2301). U.S. Census Bureau. Includes Washington civilian labor force.

Slightly more than 3% of our workforce identifies as having a disability. This is far below the 6% available in Washington’s labor force.

People with disabilities are closer to aging out of the workforce as a group, with a median age of 53 compared to just 47 for the entire executive branch. People with disabilities are also retiring at twice the rate of those without a disability (4.9% retirement rate compared to 2.6%).

Proposed solutions

Agency strategies

- Participate in the Supported Employment Program.
- Provide or find training for hiring managers and supervisors to remove barriers in the hiring process (now required by State HR [Directive 20-02](#)) to include analysis of current position description language and required job qualifications.
- Provide training for managers and supervisors on reasonable accommodations.
- Establish stronger relationships with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Services for the Blind to obtain resources for recruitment and retention.
- Re-survey employees to improve the integrity of disability representation data.
- Increase engagement in agency employee resource groups and the enterprise-wide Disability Inclusion Network business resource group.

Agency successes

- About 7.5% of the Department of Licensing workforce identifies having a disability. This is significantly higher than most state agencies. Their strategies include creating a work environment where employees feel safe to disclose and recruitment outreach to networks that provide job search and training programs to people with disabilities.
- Almost 6% of Washington's Lottery workforce identifies as having a disability. This is due, in part, to a practice of discussing the benefits of voluntarily disclosing disabilities with employees. This creates a safe environment to disclose and actively participate in the Disability Inclusion Network business resource group. They also send job announcements to disability networks.

Next steps

- Include and engage hiring managers and supervisors in reasonable accommodation training and the removal of barriers in the hiring process.
- Quarterly check ins on agency progress.

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The LGBTQ+ community

Brief summary

- The number of agencies with policies specifically related to including LGBTQ+ employees or those that added LGBTQ+ clauses into their diversity policies continues to increase. Eleven agencies reported policies specifically related to the inclusion of LGBTQ+ employees.
- Agencies began to measure X/non-binary and LGBTQ+ representation in the workforce in 2020, including new hires and turnover. As of June 11, 2020, sexual orientation and gender identity data is exempt from public disclosure requests on an individually identifiable level.
- The Rainbow Alliance and Inclusion Network, Washington’s LGBTQ+ business resource group, continues to be a valuable resource for agencies. The best practices committee facilitates LGBTQ+ panel format training to educate employees. Topics include pronoun usage pronouns, courtesy titles, gender identity, sexual orientation, gender-affirming/neutral bathroom and LGBTQ+ 101.

Agencies began to measure the number of employees who identify as X/non-binary and LGBTQ+.

Background

LGBTQ Inclusion and Safe Places Initiative, [Directive 16-11](#), charges Washington state cabinet and small-cabinet agencies to support an LGBTQ+ employee resource group, a best practices committee, and Safe Place Program development. The Safe Place Program identifies safe and secure spaces where LGBTQ+ community members can wait for police assistance.

Proposed solutions

Agency strategies

- Agencies can include LGBTQ+-related topics in new employee orientation diversity training.
- During orientation, agencies can provide new employees with information about RAIN.
- Agencies can add pronoun language to job postings, letting applicants share the pronouns to the want others to use to address them throughout the application process.
- Agencies can develop and support internal agency LGBTQ+ affinity group and recognize notable LGBTQ+ awareness dates and events such as Pride month and transgender day of remembrance.

Does your agency have a gender-affirming restroom policy?



State HR strategies

- State HR encourages agency representation in RAIN and its subcommittees.
- State HR will foster collaboration between the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council, the multiple business resource groups and other groups created to advance diversity efforts.
- State HR recommends that agencies use best practices guides to improve inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ employees. These include:
 - [Use of Pronouns in External Communication](#)
 - [Recommendation: Including a Gender X Option on Forms](#)

Successes

- RAIN recognized the Department of Financial Institutions, Department of Social and Health Services, and the Office of Insurance Commissioner with the 2020 RAIN Outstanding Agency Award for creating a welcoming and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ employees.
- Fifteen agencies installed [gender-affirming signs](#) on multi-stall restrooms or removed the gender-restrictive signs on single-stall restroom facilities.
- RAIN successfully transitioned to virtual meetings and celebrations, keeping members engaged during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- RAIN, in collaboration with business resource groups and the Interagency Committee of State Employed Women, conducted the first, joint virtual gathering addressing intersectionality and allyship.
- Began to collect sexual orientation and gender identity information in HRMS and allow employees to input their own information in these categories via the My Demographic tile on the MyPortal application.
- The Department of Retirement Systems and the Health Care Authority have been working internally to incorporate more inclusive gender identity data into their actuarial and reporting processes. HCA has updated their PEBB forms to begin collecting non-binary gender identity data and DRS will begin receiving non-binary data in their monthly HRMS GAP9 report from OFM by summer 2021.

Next steps

- State HR will continue to advise and support RAIN as they work with agencies identifying best practices to provide safe and inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ employees, including facilitating panel format training and publishing inclusive LGBTQ+ guidelines.
- Agencies continue to partner with the Safe Place program prioritizing safety requirements and maintaining the program's integrity over the locations designated as a Safe Place.

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