

Fiscal Year 2019

Statewide Human Resources Management Strategy Roll-up Report



State Human Resources
Office of Financial Management
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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-nine agencies submitted fiscal year 2019 reports.

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 practices
- Employee engagement survey
- Statewide exit survey
- Modern work environment
- Inclusive and respectful work environments
- 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 key highlights

This report presents these key highlights:

- The top three agency priorities are to identify and develop potential future leaders, recruit and retain employees, and create a diverse workforce.
- Agencies continue to support employee engagement, employee retention and develop leaders from within.
- The number of employees who participated in the employee engagement survey is at an all-time high.
- Improvements in the response numbers and data integrity allowed State HR to conduct more analysis and develop new resources for the statewide exit survey.
- OFM's website hosts many resources to support the people, places and connectivity associated with a modern work environment.
- Agencies employ a wide variety of strategies to increase the diversity of applicant pools.

- Gov. Jay Inslee’s supplemental budget demonstrates his commitment to a better Washington.
- Agencies report including people with disabilities in diversity recruitment goals and using utilization reports to improve recruitment efforts.
- Agencies will start tracking the number of reservists, National Guard members and military spouses after the governor signed [Executive Order 19-01](#).
- Six of 39 agencies reported specific LGBTQ+ inclusion policies and seven others will review agency policies to make sure they support LGBTQ+ staff inclusion.

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

Key Workforce Strategies

Summary

- A new top priority for agencies is to develop potential future leaders through training, mentorship and job shadowing.

The top three agency priorities are to identify and develop potential future leaders, recruit and retain employees, and create a diverse workforce.

Background

Agencies outlined strategies to reduce key workforce challenges. The top three strategies were:

- Recruit and retain employees (28 of 39 agencies reported this)
- Train and develop employees (23 of 39 agencies reported this)
- Employee engagement (21 of 39 agencies reported this)

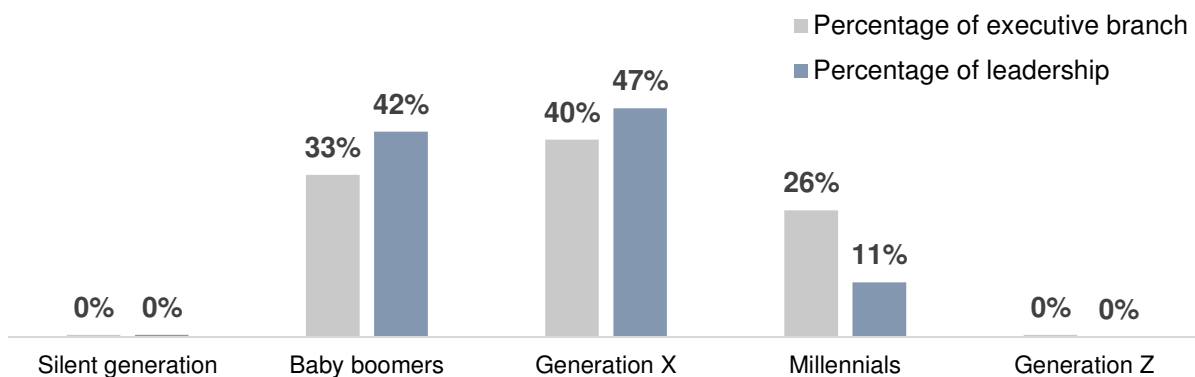
While the agencies' top priority is to develop potential future leaders, this priority does not include the highest number of strategies or solutions. This might indicate the difficulty agencies experience while addressing this priority. Solutions that other agencies offer can be a valued reference, especially when people in leadership positions start to retire.

Most of the suggested solutions include training, mentorships, job shadowing and succession planning. Other strategies include working with business resource groups and posting executive management position descriptions to the intranet.

Workforce demographic trends

The data shows why so many agencies are concerned with developing future leaders. Even though Baby boomers (aged 55 to 73 years old¹) are not the largest share of agency leadership, they make up a significant portion that will likely retire in the next decade.

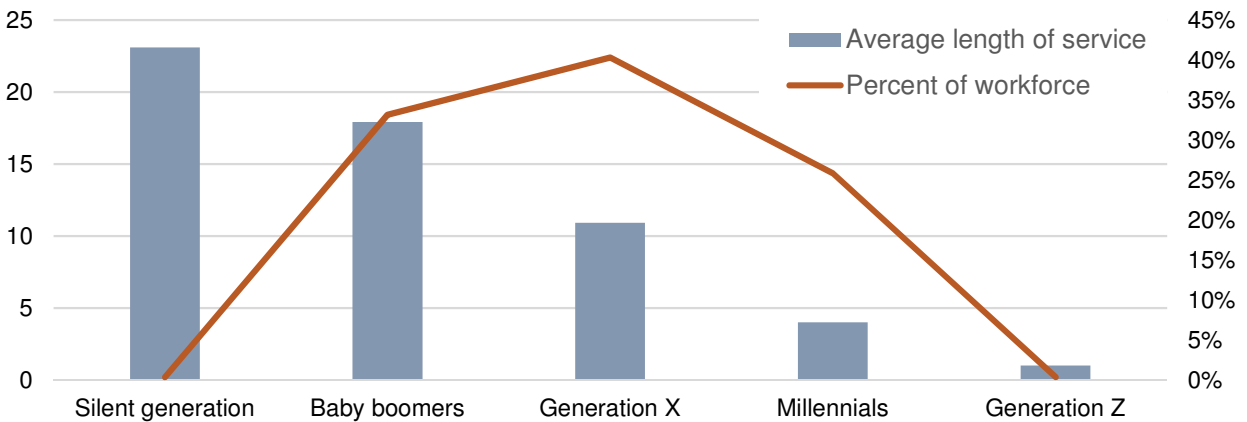
Baby boomers and Generation X make up the majority of agency leadership.



¹ Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project. "Post-Millennial' Generation On Track To Be Most Diverse, Best-Educated," November 15, 2018. <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/11/15/early-benchmarks-show-post-millennials-on-track-to-be-most-diverse-best-educated-generation-yet/>.

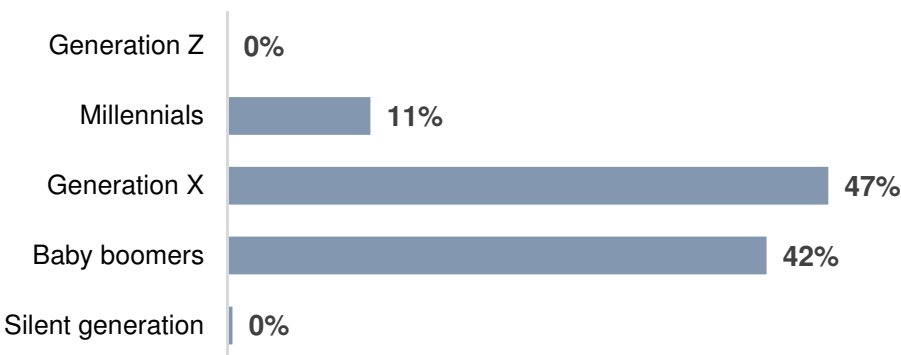
The majority of state leadership belongs to Generation X, a pattern you can see in leadership positions across the world.² Millennials comprise the largest share of the U.S. labor force but Generation X represents the largest proportion of Washington state workforce.³ This suggests agencies can make their staff more generationally representative by employing recruitment strategies for Millennials.

State workforce length of service by share of total workforce.



In addition to a lack of state labor force representation, Millennials are not largely represented in leadership positions. While limited experience could account for some of this, Generation X has less average experience than Baby boomers but they still comprise a larger leadership share. As Baby boomers retire, agencies should consider preparing younger generations for leadership positions. Mentorship strategies and succession planning can identify possible roadblocks that may prevent Millennials from a more equitable share of leadership positions.

Millennials make up a small fraction of executive branch leadership.



² “The Hidden Potential of Generation X.” Accessed November 1, 2019. <https://www.ddiworld.com/glf2018/GenX-Generational-diversity>.

³ Pew Research Center. “Millennials Are Largest Generation in the U.S. Labor Force.” Accessed November 1, 2019. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/11/millennials-largest-generation-us-labor-force/>.

Summary of strategies

Enterprise strategies

- DES offers leadership training for all employees, such as Leading Others and Leading Teams. We encourage agencies to promote and fund these trainings for their employees.
- State HR developed a pilot based on best practices from the public and private sectors. The 10 agencies enrolled in the pilot will get access to career mapping, trainings, an employee toolkit and resources from entities with successful succession planning programs. We expect the results in summer 2020.
- Knowledge transfer, an idea from the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, entails interviewing a retiring employee and their customers to develop transition material. In this way, an agency can take multiple perspectives into account while mapping out the position and its impacts.
- The Workforce Planning Committee will reconvene after the succession planning pilot is underway (expected spring 2020).

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Employee Performance Management

Brief summary

- Agencies report an increase in the number of completed performance expectations and current position description forms.
- Agencies report a decrease in the number of completed evaluations.
- More than 67% of agencies use the standard statewide performance development plan form.

Agencies continue to support employee engagement, employee retention and developing leaders from within.

Background

Supervisors create performance development plans to give an employee written work expectations and assessments based off of the employee's 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.

A majority of employees have current evaluations, expectations and position descriptions.



Summary of strategies

Agency strategies

- Conduct regular, frequent coaching and create developmental opportunities for career advancement (i.e., job shadowing, developmental assignments and mentorships).
- Evaluate the performance management process, the paper form and the timeframe for conducting and completing performance evaluations.
- Help employees become accountable for their own growth and development.
- Support a performance-based culture that fosters employee competency and productivity while supporting how an employee achieves organizational goals and objectives.
- Provide timely feedback to employees and reward performance.

Enterprise strategies

- State HR and multiple agencies continue to use insights from the employee engagement survey to improve the employee development and evaluation process.
- Implement a succession planning system that leverages effective performance management.

Agency successes

- The Office of the Attorney General was awarded the Platinum Level of the [Choice Performance Confirmation Program](#).
- The Washington State Gambling Commission achieved a 100% completion rate for both performance expectations and evaluations.
- The Department of Ecology created a SharePoint site that provides tips to complete position descriptions for every role at the agency.
- The Department of Labor and Industries created a position dedicated to coach employees, supervisors and managers.

Next steps

- Provide resources to help develop individual and team goals.
- Develop better ways to provide consistent feedback and coaching.
- Create supervisor tools that increase employee accountability and make sure employees understand their role in the agency's success.
- Market the Choice Performance Confirmation Program and help agencies apply.

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Engagement Survey

Brief summary

Agencies focused on how to improve communication about changes, expand employee recognition and expand opportunities to learn and grow to increase employee satisfaction.

The number of employees who participated in the employee engagement survey is at an all-time high.

Background

Since 2006, agencies used the employee engagement survey as the primary source of information on state employee perceptions of the workplace. Agencies conduct this survey each October. Over the years, decision makers increasingly use the survey as a key tool. In 2019, 79% of the workforce (50,976 state employees), that represented 79 agencies, participated in the survey.

Summary of strategies

Agency strategies

- Agencies reported approximately 100 different strategies focused on increasing employee engagement. Popular areas of focus were improving communication and recognition.
- Agencies used social media, town hall events and activities (that included field offices) to increase outreach to employees outside of Thurston County.

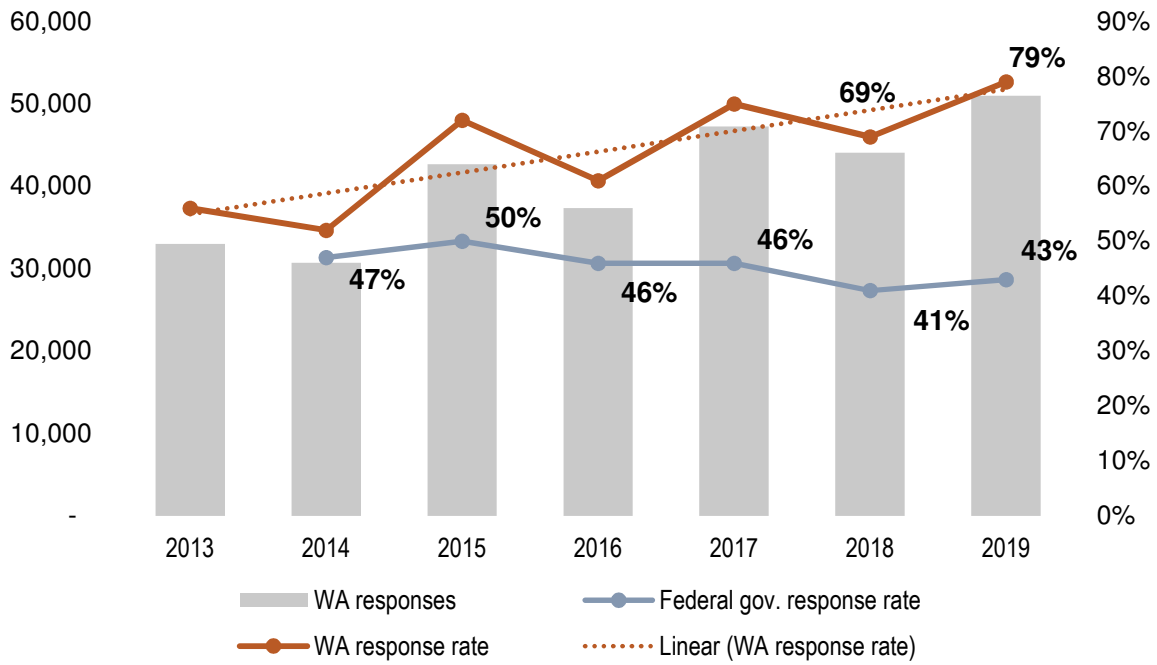
Enterprise strategies

- State HR will continue to encourage agencies to tap into human values that better drive lasting motivation at work such as relationships, autonomy, mastery, purpose (for more information, [RAMP: A Model of Intrinsic Motivation](#)).
- State HR piloted 10 demographic questions to better identify employee engagement levels in different groups.

Successes

- The number of employees who participate in the employee engagement survey is at an all-time high at 79%.
- To increase response rates, agencies provided easier access to hard-to-reach employees, increased communication from leadership, incentivized participation and provided open comment fields.
- The State Lottery Commission increased employees' response rates and satisfaction around communicating changes by focusing on improved communications. It also partnered with DES to train staff on how to give and receive feedback.
- The Department of Revenue increased employee satisfaction with opportunities to learn and grow by offering employees a career map to identify potential growth opportunities.

Participation Trends



Additional resources

- [State Employee Engagement Survey.](#)

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Statewide Exit Survey

Brief summary

- State HR increased data integrity and also received a consistent and large amount of responses over the past two years.
- OFM’s website now shows the current analysis and resources from agency exit survey data.

Improvements in the number of responses and data integrity allowed State HR to conduct more analysis and develop new resources for the statewide exit survey.

Background

The statewide exit survey allows agencies to learn about workplace issues. State HR manages the survey and conducts data cleaning and analysis. Agency contacts distribute the survey link and use the data to make improvements for their employees.

Currently, the statewide exit survey includes 30 standard questions, with 59 agencies opting to add agency-specific questions. The most common agency-added question is job classification. The survey takes about six minutes to complete.

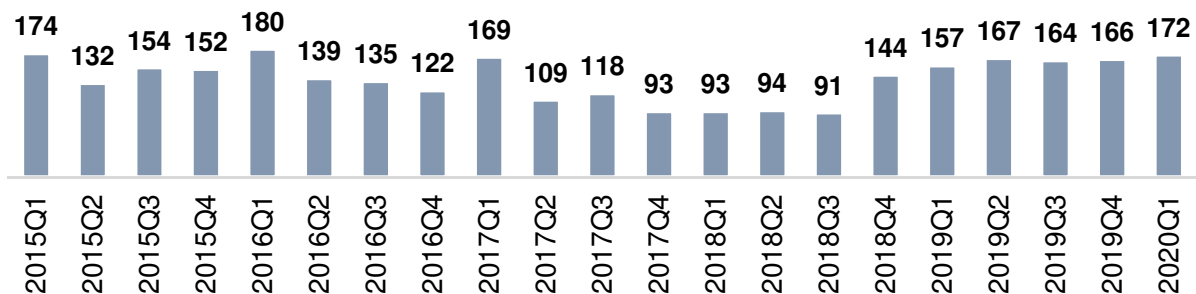
Of the 39 agencies that answered the HR Management Report survey, 42% use the statewide exit survey. Ten of these agencies mentioned how useful the feedback was from exit survey participants. One mentioned this survey helps departing employees share their views when they do not feel comfortable sharing directly with the agency.

Of the 23 surveyed agencies that do not use the exit survey, three plan to use the statewide exit survey in the future and 14 use their own internal survey. Three agencies conduct in-person interviews, an option State HR is exploring for the statewide exit survey.

Participation trends

We found increasingly consistent and numerous statewide exit survey responses over time.

Responses to the statewide exit survey by quarter



Increased responses come in addition to data integrity increases. State HR added criteria for complete responses and included filtering questions to determine eligibility. This increase allows researchers to conduct higher-order analysis in the upcoming year.

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Modern Work Environment

Brief summary

- Telework participation increased by 4.6% since 2017. Almost 6,000 additional people are eligible and just over 2,000 additional people started teleworking since we started tracking in 2017.
- The top modern work strategies are updating policies and increasing access to mobile technology.
- A number of agencies are using newer strategies, such as infants at work.

The [Building a Modern Work Environment](#) pages on OFM's website provide many resources to support the people, places and connectivity we associate with a modern work environment.

Background

Gov. 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 by modernizing the physical environment, providing greater workplace flexibility and enabling a more mobile workforce. We started collecting this information in 2017.

Summary of strategies

Agency strategies

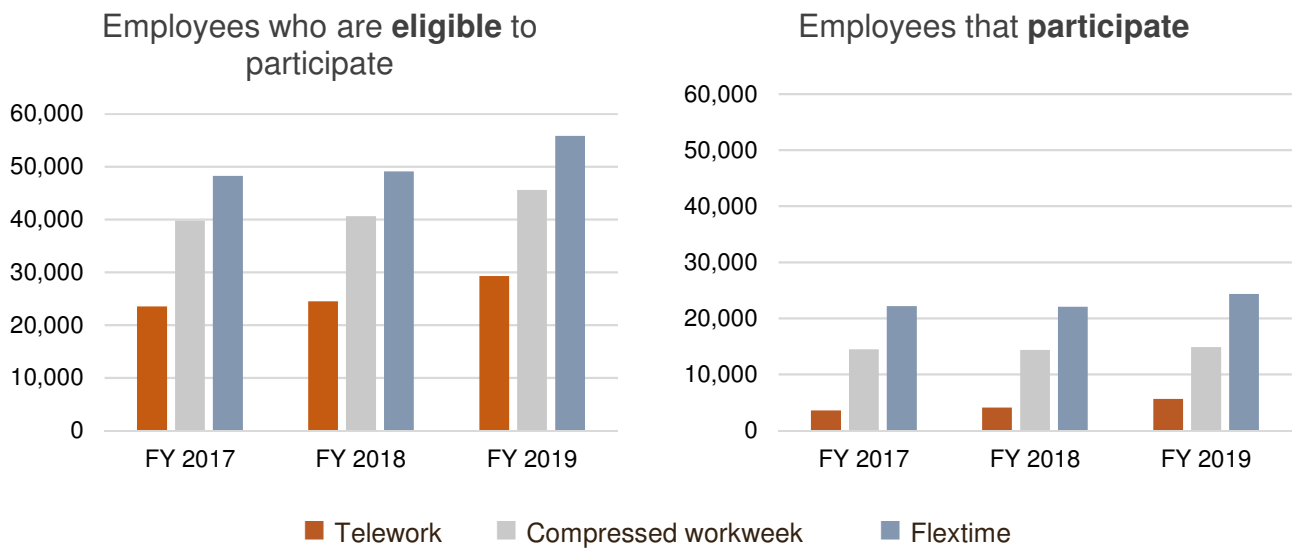
- Agencies updated policies, offered the commute trip reduction program and increased access to mobile technology.
- This year, an increasing number of agencies will implement infants at work and how to market modern work in their recruitment strategies.

Enterprise strategies

- The Statewide Data Stewards Group will continue to press for data integrity in the modern work and other fields in the HRMS. This makes sure we get an accurate picture of strategy participation.
- The top barrier for agencies is incompatibility with type of work. We need to continue communicating that agencies can use the [Telework Suitability Tool](#). This will help address this barrier by providing guidance and consistency to the position assessment process.
- Agencies will continue to communicate available resources and training for managing performance. This will address barriers around managing performance, and training for employees and supervisors – items that agencies report are a challenge.

Agency successes

- The Department of Financial Institutions increased eligibility rates and participation rates. Participation rates increased dramatically in all categories. Telework increased by 24%, flextime increased by 33% and compressed workweek participation increased by 43%.
- The Department of Health logged every position as eligible for telework, flextime and a compressed workweek. They took a “start with yes” approach to modern work and wanted to reflect that approach in HRMS (the state’s payroll system). They took steps to increase participation by creating an easy, online form to request a mobile work arrangement, making it clear to new supervisors in the interview process that they will manage mobile employees and creating an appeal process for when they deny a request.



Additional detail

- From FY2017 to FY2019 compressed workweek participation decreased by 4.2% and flextime participation decreased by 3.3%. Telework eligibility, however, increased by 4.6%.
- Although the rate of participation in modern work strategies declined over the last several years, more people are eligible and participate in those strategies.

Additional resources and examples

- The OFM Modern Work Environment [website](#) has resources on how to shift culture and manage change related to a modern work environment. It offers employee and supervisor training, FAQs, telework evaluation tools, sample policies and much more.
- The Department of Health created an external facing [website](#) that promotes its mobile work practices that employees can use as a resource for other state agencies and job seekers.

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Inclusive and Respectful Work Environments

Brief summary

- Agencies report that the percentage of employees who completed mandatory training increased from last fiscal year.
- Many agencies initiated changes to improve their complaint and investigation processes.
- Most agencies report barriers in reporting complaints by offering early resolutions and/or low-level issues at the supervisory level.

Gov. Jay Inslee's [supplemental budget](#) demonstrates his commitment to a better Washington.

Background

In spring 2018, Gov. Jay Inslee released a memorandum that reaffirms 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 (37 of 39 agencies reporting).
- Encourage managers to create onboarding plans with regular check-ins (30 of 39 agencies reporting).
- Integrate diversity, equity and inclusion in onboarding sessions (22 of 39 agencies reporting).

Required training

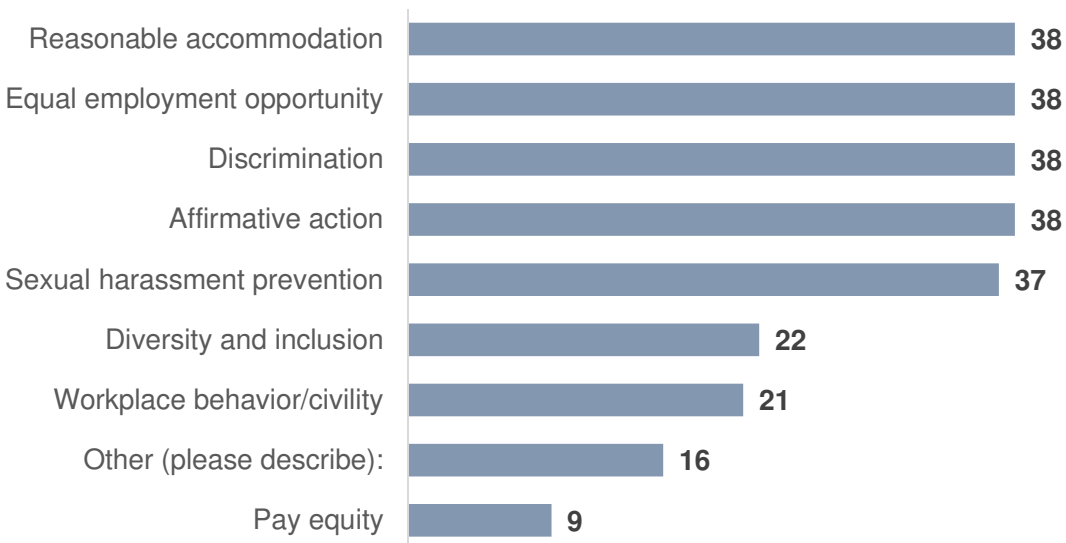
The percentage of employees who completed mandatory training, on average, increased by 3.5 percentage points during the last fiscal year. Also, 85% of agencies reported having a specific training policy.

DES developed principles to make sure agencies design training materials with inclusive language, scenarios and photos. They seek feedback to reduce biases and encourage participation to increase unique contributions and experiences. They found that learning improves when employees' participation is authentic, without fear or self-editing.

Policies

Diversity, equity and inclusion policies must describe desired behaviors to help achieve an inclusive and respectful work environment. State HR will provide model policy templates to make sure agencies share common language and shared goals.

Number of agencies with policies that have specific language related to:



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. Most agencies reported significant barriers to track and assess complaint data because they do not have a reporting system or reporting requirements.

Agency successes

- The Department of Commerce updated its tracking tool to capture complaint data trends, which include demographics and employment levels.
- The Department of Revenue updated its investigations policy to identify information options for possible early resolution and presented it to all employees.
- The Department of Fish and Wildlife researched anonymous reporting methods and secured a contract and funding plan.
- OFM created an internal agency DEI council with emphasis on training, psychological safety, recruitment and leadership based on priorities that an OFM employee survey identified.
- DSHS completed a third cohort for certification as Certified Diversity Professionals and Certified Diversity Executives. Participants were from various executive cabinet agencies.

Enterprise strategies

- State HR will develop a complaints handling guide as well as definitions and naming conventions for complaints and investigations data collection.
- State HR will convene an interagency investigator's community of practice group to create best practices for complaint and investigation processes. (A community of practice group is a group of professionals that regularly meet to learn from each other and talk about better ways to do things).
- State HR will continue to provide support to six business resource groups.
- The DEI Council will sponsor a second annual DEI Summit in January to build community and competency among professionals and leaders in the executive branch.

Next steps

- State HR may ask business resource groups, on occasion, to provide input or feedback on recommendations, tools and resources.
- State HR will continue to explore ways to collaborate among the DEI council, business resource groups, talent management council and HR governance groups.

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Workforce Diversity and Inclusion

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

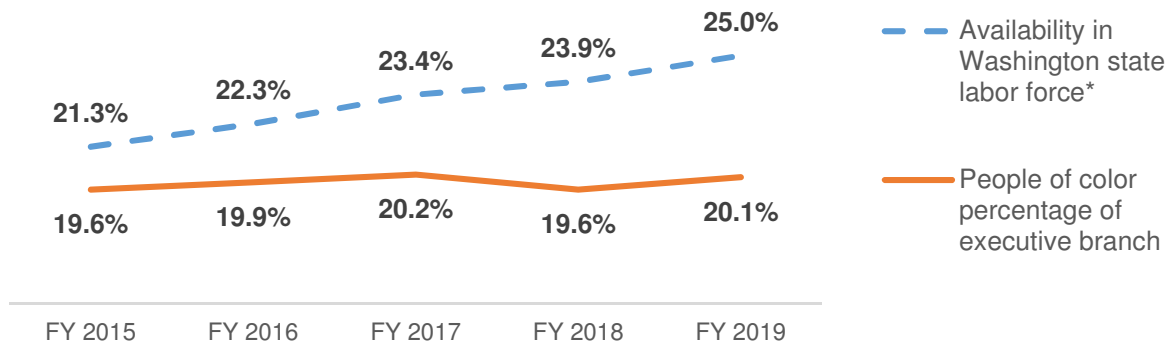
Brief summary

- The percentage of people of color in the executive branch workforce continues to fall below the availability 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.

Background

A formal order signed by the governor 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 ([Executive Order 12-02](#)). People of color comprise 25% of Washington’s labor force yet make up only 20% of the executive branch workforce. This gap widened over the past five fiscal years.

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 state’s civilian labor force.

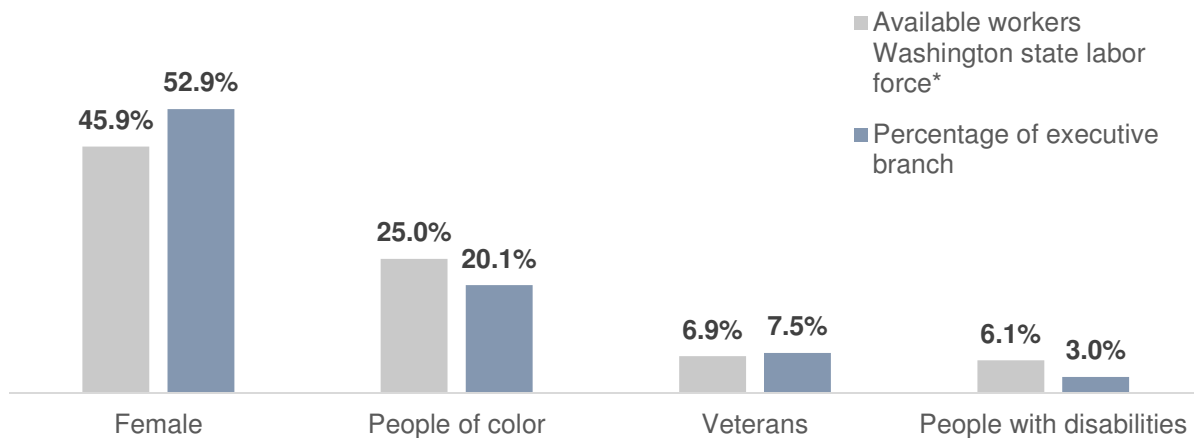
People with disabilities represent 3% of the workforce. This is significantly below the available labor force (6.1%). Females (52.9%) and veterans (7.5%) both exceed the available labor pools.

Summary of strategies

Agency strategies

- Conduct targeted outreach to diverse job seekers by attending career fairs and working with community partners such as colleges, military bases, and professional associations.
- Continue to use social media for outreach and recruitment.
- Promote and support internal diversity committees and statewide employee resource groups.
- Offer diversity awareness training for hiring managers.

Workforce diversity compared to the number of available workers in Washington's labor force.



*American Community Survey, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Includes Washington state's civilian labor force.

Enterprise strategies

- State HR will continue to provide agencies with semi-annual affirmative action utilization reports. This report is a statistical analysis of affirmative action/equal opportunity data that we can use 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 LGBTQ+, immigrant, Latino, black and disability business and employee resource groups.

Agency successes

- Washington State Parks created a hiring toolkit and provided diversity, anti-bias, and recruitment training. As a result, the number of people of color hired into park aide field staff positions increased from 24 in 2018 to 48 in 2019.
- Employment Security conducted informational interviews for disabled veterans which provided tips on how to apply for state employment and prepare for interviews.

- The Attorney General’s Office partnered with Challenge Seattle to host outreach for disadvantaged high school students. They also removed the convictions screening question from all applications and implemented a post-selection conviction screening process.
- The Department of Transportation attended nearly 60 outreach events, increasing the diversity of applicant pools for three entry-level job classifications by 29%.

Next steps

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

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People with Disabilities

Brief summary

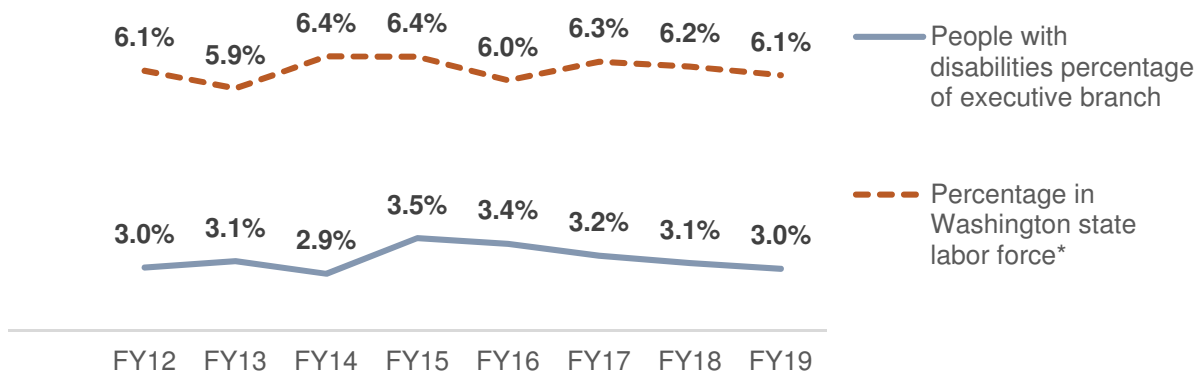
- Hires of people with disabilities continue to fall short of the 5% goal.
- 90% of agencies participate in the Disability Inclusion Network Business Resource Group.

Agencies report how they will include people with disabilities in diversity recruitment goals and use utilization reports to improve recruitment efforts.

Background

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

The percentage of people with disabilities employed by the state compared to the percentage in the labor force.



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

Three percent of our workforce experiences a disability. This is far below the 6.1% availability of Washington's labor force.

Summary of strategies

Agency strategies

- Participate in the state's Supported Employment Program, which provides paid competitive employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
- Create recruitment plans that target people with disabilities.
- Build stronger relationships with the Department of Social and Health Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Services for the Blind to access resources for recruitment and retention.

- Resurvey employees to encourage self-reporting and improve the integrity of disability and hiring data.
- Support employee resource groups and the enterprise-wide business resource group, Disability Inclusion Network.

Enterprise strategies

- State HR will collaborate with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to assist agencies to recruit and retain employees in supported employment positions.
- State HR will provide guidance on resurveying employees to improve the integrity of disability employment data and look at other options to address employee concerns about self-disclosing disability information and reporting difficulty.
- State HR created an enterprise-wide business resource group, the Disability Inclusion Network, to engage the experience, values and knowledge of people with disabilities in state government.

Agency successes

- The Health Care Authority is training hiring managers and leaders to be intentional about disability inclusion and proactive about the recruitment, hiring and retention of people with disabilities. They focus on increasing trust and confidence so that employees will feel free disclosing disabilities.
- The Employment Security Department is working to identify obstacles and create effective accessible environments for people with disabilities. The agency is also proactively addressing accommodation so accessibility is the cultural norm.

Next steps

- Conduct quarterly milestone reviews at the Employment Plan Coordinators meetings.

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Veterans

Brief summary

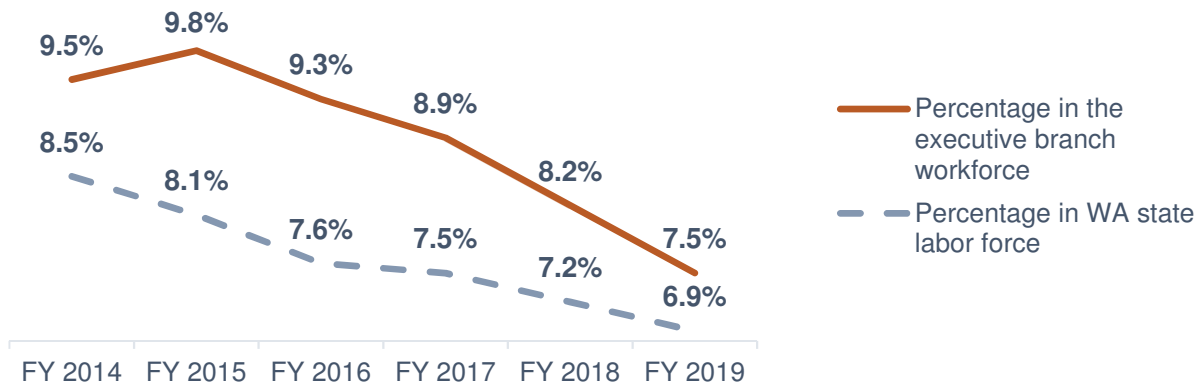
- Veterans make up 7.5% of the executive branch workforce. This is higher than the availability of Washington’s labor force.
- Agencies do not separately measure the number of reservists, National Guard members and military spouses in state service.
- The HR Management Report includes questions that assess how prepared state agencies are to implement new metric requirements ([Executive Order 19-01](#)).

Agencies will track the number of reservists, National Guard members and military spouses to follow the recent [Executive Order 19-01](#) signing.

Background

In 2019, Gov. Jay 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.

Agencies reported the following:

- Mechanisms to identify individuals who currently serve in the National Guard or reserve members from the Armed Forces (29 of 39 agencies reporting).
- Specific recruitment strategies to attract members of the National Guard and other reserve members (12 of 39 agencies reporting).
- The ability to track the number of bridge employment opportunities, which includes internships, mentorships and fellowships (21 of 39 agencies reporting).
- The ability to identify remote or flexible work opportunities, including out-of-state options (26 of 39 agencies reporting).

Summary of strategies

Agency strategies

- Educate hiring managers on military skills to improve how they screen veteran applicants, and how to emphasize that they understand the transferable skills service members bring to the workforce.
- Support representation at the Veteran Employee Resource Group, an outreach mechanism to increase veterans in state service.
- Assign internal military liaisons to provide leadership into issues that affect the veteran population. Often, they lead the agency's outreach and recruitment activities, mentorship program or affinity group for individuals with a military affiliation.
- Develop partnerships with external organizations that provide employment services to individuals with a military status to increase the number of applicants.

Enterprise strategies

- State HR advises and supports the VERG. This is designed to increase the veteran representation in state workforce and recognize employees' military service.
- Improve how agencies collect military status data among workers. This helps agencies more closely reach the veteran representation benchmark in state government.
- State HR fosters collaboration between multiple councils, committees and resource groups created to advance strategic efforts to the employment of military affiliated individuals.
- State HR promotes the [Veterans at Work](#) certification, sponsored by the SHRM Foundation.

Successes

- The self-reported Employee Affirmative Action and Demographic Data form was updated to capture National Guard, reserve and military spouse status. This is in addition to the previously collected veteran, Vietnam-era veteran and disabled veteran status.
- Five agencies reported "YesVets" recognition. The program awards a decal to employers who hired veterans. The decal is a military-friendly employer symbol for job seekers.
- Sixteen agencies reported a designated military liaison in their agency.
- Nine agencies reported an internal employee resource group for veterans.

Next steps

- State HR will assist VERG in the re-establishment of the Veterans Fellowship Program.
- State HR, in collaboration with the DES, will revise the Veteran's Preference Quick Guidance document.
- State HR will assess agencies' readiness to implement Executive Order 19-01.
- Agencies will increase their efforts to recruit military spouses into state service.
- Agencies will expand their recruitment efforts beyond Joint Base Lewis McChord.

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LGBTQ+

Brief summary

- The fluctuating number of agencies that report specific policies related to the inclusion of LGBTQ+ employees, reveals the need to develop a shared understanding of adequate LGBTQ+ inclusion policies.
- If agencies use broad nondiscrimination policies, agencies must include language specific enough to improve LGBTQ+ staff inclusion.

Six of 39 agencies reported specific LGBTQ+ inclusion policies and seven others are reviewing their policies to be more inclusive of LGBTQ+ staff.

Background

LGBTQ Inclusion and Safe Places Initiative, [Directive 16-11](#), charges Washington state cabinet and small-cabinet agencies to support the following initiatives:

- LGBTQ employee resource group,
- Best Practices committee, and
- the Safe Place Program development.

The Safe Place Program identifies safe and secure spaces where LGBTQ community members can wait for police assistance.

In FY2017, 15 agencies reported policies related to the inclusion of LGBTQ+ employees. In FY2018, the number of agencies decreased to six. In FY 2019, six of 39 agencies report having policies related to LGBTQ+ employee inclusion. Three of the agencies that report such policies are different from the six agencies that reported the policies in FY2018.

Summary of strategies

Agency strategies

- Support agency representation at the Rainbow Alliance and Inclusion Network, Washington state employees' LGBTQ+ business resource group and its subcommittees.
- Educate all employees on LGBTQ+ topics. Examples include the use of inclusive pronouns, courtesy titles, gender identity, sexual orientation and gender-affirming/neutral bathrooms.
- Develop and support internal agency LGBTQ+ affinity group and recognize notable LGBTQ+ awareness dates and events.

Enterprise strategies

- State HR will continue to support RAIN's subcommittees for best practices, outreach and safe places. These groups provide well-researched policy and practice suggestions for enterprise-wide inclusion efforts.
- Improve data collection of LGBTQ+ individuals in the workforce. This helps agencies reach the hiring benchmark of the group's representation in state government while providing employees the opportunity to identify themselves with their preferred sexual orientation and gender identity.

- State HR will foster collaboration between the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council, the multiple business resource groups and any other group created to advance strategic diversity efforts across state government.

Successes

- RAIN recognized the Employment Security Department, Department of Labor and Industries, and the Department of Health with the RAIN Outstanding Agency Award. This award recognizes agencies that create a welcoming and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ employees.
- Five agencies reported internal LGBTQ+ affinity groups. These groups are an agency asset in recruitment events, information sessions and LGBTQ+ training forums or panels.
- Twelve agencies installed gender-affirming signs on multi-stall restrooms or removed the gender-restrictive signs on single-stall restroom facilities.
- Seven agencies participated in Pride Month celebrations by hosting internal events or encouraging staff to participate in statewide or local events.
- State HR updated the self-reported Employee Affirmative Action and Demographic Data form to capture sexual orientation and enhance gender identity options. This ensures our Human Resource Management System recognizes the identities of all state employees.

Next steps

- State HR will continue to advise and support RAIN and its subcommittees to develop strategies that create safe, diverse and inclusive workplaces for LGBTQ+ employees.
- State HR, in collaboration with RAIN's best practices committee, will work closely with agencies to identify best practices that provide safe and inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ employees.
- State HR, in collaboration with RAIN, will develop a shared understanding of LGBTQ+ inclusion policy and provide templates or examples to state agencies.
- DES will continue to develop, in coordination with partners, a Safe Place Program. This program prioritizes safety requirements. DES will maintain the integrity of the program across all locations that receive the Safe Place designation.

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