



74th Annual Report

STATE UNIVERSITIES CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

FY 2025

July 1, 2024—June 30, 2025

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The State Universities Civil Service System respectfully submits our 74th Annual Report. This Report provides an overview of our business operations, programs, and initiatives, along with a brief description of our FY 2026 agency action plan. Our business objectives remain consistent with our statutory directive, mission, and purpose. This Report demonstrates our continuing commitment to proven policies, procedures, and practices that allow us to maintain and improve the program and oversight of personnel administration in the State of Illinois public university system.

We strive to work closely and cooperatively with state universities, higher education agencies, employee constituency groups, and labor organizations to foster an environment of open interaction, trust, and professionalism. This approach has enabled us to build and develop programs, upgrade the classification and examination plan, revise and improve the audit program, and has allowed us to continue the process of updating our administrative program so that it meets the dual goals of providing essential oversight of the human resource programs throughout higher education and providing the structures, procedures, and practices higher education employers need to meet their essential missions. This approach also continues to promote positive changes and process improvements in many of our business operations.

As an agency, our legislative mandate is to establish and administer a personnel program that assures job applicants at higher education employers have the opportunity to compete for employment based on merit and fitness, and allows employers to attract high-quality applicants by utilizing sound processes. The job market continues to evolve in response to technological advancements, economic shifts and uncertainties, and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The resulting constriction of job applicant pools exacerbates the challenges of administering a personnel administration program and overseeing already-stressed higher education agencies and public universities. It is our obligation to develop policies and practices that allow



each University System employer to compete fairly in the market for employees, while maintaining the fundamental principles of fitness and merit and the rights established by our statute for employees and applicants.

We are grateful to the Illinois higher education community and to the broader statewide network of state agencies and legislative offices for their continued support and commitment to our efforts and services. This Report demonstrates our commitment to upholding high standards of public accountability, consistent with our statutory responsibilities and obligations. We hope you find this report informative and illuminating.

Gail Schiesser
Executive Director

AGENCY PROFILE

The central task of the State Universities Civil Service System (the University System or Agency) is to ensure opportunities for employment at the State's public universities and associated higher education agencies on the basis of merit and fitness. To accomplish this goal, the State Universities Civil Service Act¹ (the Act) instructs the Agency to establish a "sound program of personnel administration."

A core component of this sound personnel administration program is the civil service classification plan and examination program. The classification plan and the examinations related to the job classifications that make up the plan are continuously monitored and modified to ensure that this program both meets the evolving needs of constituent employers and complies with the Act and Civil Service Rules.²

At the end of FY 2025, the program included 874 classifications, each with its own examination. These examinations were utilized in pre-employment testing of 57,601 applicants and promotional candidates during FY 2025.

Operating with a staff of 15 people, the Agency provides essential regulatory oversight for approximately 25,100 civil service employees throughout the state of Illinois. The University System also monitors the designation of more than 5,700 principal administrative employees, 14,700 student employees, and 17,000 exempt administrators and faculty members.

As regulators, the University System works collaboratively with the higher education community by:

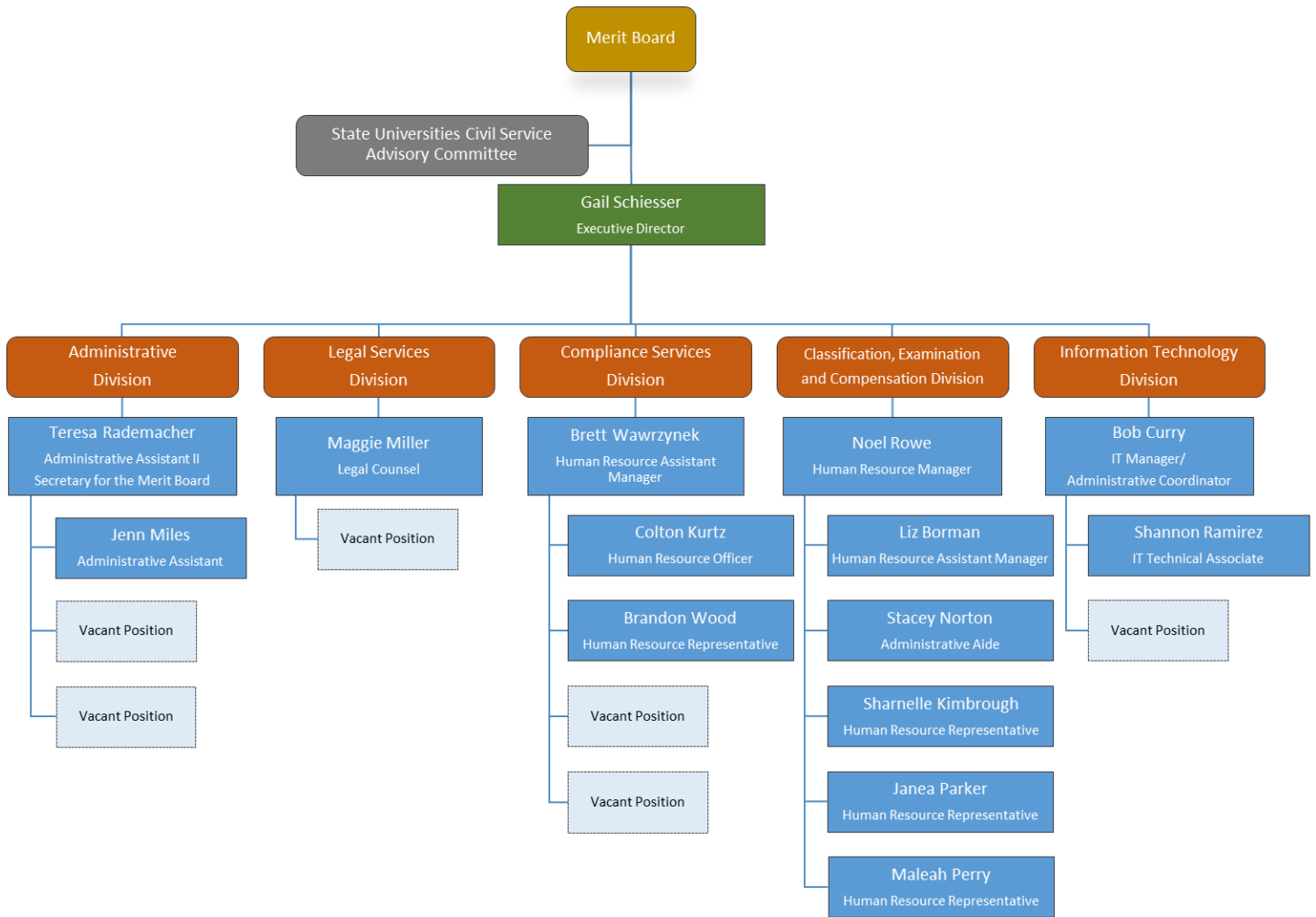
- Providing training for human resource personnel at University System employers and answering questions regarding the requirements of the Act, Civil Service Rules, and related procedures.
- Responding to requests from employers for changes to the classification plan or unique personnel transactions, such as compensatory qualifications.
- Working closely with the employee advisory group and Designated Employer Representatives to identify opportunities for clarification or improvement within the classification plan or Civil Service Rules.
- Performing audits and reviewing personnel transactions to ensure compliance with the Act, Civil Service Rules, and related procedures.

During FY 2025, the University System oversaw thousands of civil service employment transactions, including hiring, promotions, layoffs, discharges, and salary adjustments. The Agency also coordinated system employers to revise the Act, Civil Service Rules, and related procedures to ensure that the program of personnel administration continues to promote efficiency and economy within the higher education community by providing a consistent application of personnel policies and practices throughout the State.

¹ 110 ILCS §§70/36b-70/36t

² Illinois Admin. Code tit. 80, Ch. VI, Part 250.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART (October 2025)



JURISDICTION

In 1951, the Illinois legislature passed the State Universities Civil Service Act¹ (“the Act”) effective January 1, 1952. The Act created a “classified civil service system to be known as the State Universities Civil Service System” or “University System.”³

The legislature specified that the University System was to be “a separate entity of the State of Illinois,” which “shall be under the control of a Board to be known as the University Civil Service Merit Board.”⁴

“The purpose of the University System is to establish a sound program of personnel administration” for its constituent agencies and universities.⁵ These include:

Chicago State University

Eastern Illinois University

Governors State University

Illinois State University

Northeastern Illinois University

Northern Illinois University

Cook County

Lorado Taft

Naperville

Rockford

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

**Southern Illinois University School
of Medicine Springfield**

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

University of Illinois at Chicago

Division of Specialized Care for Children

Division of Specialized Care for Children (Chicago)

College of Medicine at Rockford

College of Medicine at Peoria

UIC Hospital and Clinics

University of Illinois at Springfield

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Robert Allerton House

Robert Allerton Park

County Agriculture and/or Home Extension
Office

Department of Agronomy, College of
Agriculture

Dixon Springs Agricultural Center

Western Illinois University

Quad-Cities

Illinois Board of Higher Education

Illinois Community College Board

Illinois Student Assistance Commission

State Universities Retirement System

State Universities Civil Service System

³ 110 ILCS 70/36b(1)

⁴ 110 ILCS 70/36b(3)

⁵ 110 ILCS 70/36b(2)

JURISDICTION continued...

Less than five years after the legislature created the State Universities Civil Service System, the legislature enacted the Personnel Code.⁶ The Personnel Code established a civil service system for merit-based employment in Illinois government more broadly. Nonetheless, the legislature maintained this separate civil service system for the higher education community.

Within the State Universities Civil Service System in particular, the legislature determined that “all certificates, appointments, and promotions to positions in these agencies and institutions shall be made **solely on the basis of merit and fitness, to be ascertained by examination**, except as specified in Section 36e.”⁷ Specifically, the legislature exempted the following from civil service:

- (1) The members and officers of the Merit Board and the board of trustees, and the commissioners of the institutions and agencies covered hereunder;
- (2) The presidents and vice-presidents of each educational institution and the executive director, directors, deputy directors, managing directors, chiefs, and attorneys of each higher education agency;
- (3) Other principal administrative employees of each institution and agency as determined by the Merit Board;
- (4) The teaching, research and extension faculties of each institution and agency;
- (5) Students employed under rules prescribed by the Merit Board, without examination or certification.

Since issuing this directive in 1952, the legislature has revised the Act multiple times without ever deviating from its stated purpose of ensuring opportunity on the basis of merit and fitness.

The Merit Board supplemented this purpose in Administrative Rule (“Civil Service Rules”), stating that its Rules were adopted both to “establish a sound program of personnel administration,” and “to promote efficiency and economy in the services performed” by constituent employers.

Ultimately, the Merit Board determined that its program of personnel administration should “provide equal opportunity for all, equal pay for equal work, and career opportunities comparable to those in the business industry, which will attract outstanding personnel to the State university service.”

⁶ 20 ILCS 415/ *et seq.*

⁷ 110 ILCS 70/36b(2), *emphasis added*

UNIVERSITY CIVIL SERVICE MERIT BOARD

The governing body of the University System is the University Civil Service Merit Board, also referred to as the “Merit Board.” The Merit Board is composed of 11 members appointed by the public universities of the State of Illinois.

The current membership of the Merit Board is as follows:

Barb Baurer

Eastern Illinois University

Carolyn Blackwell

University of Illinois

John Butler—Chair

Northern Illinois University

Ramon Cepeda

University of Illinois

Tami Craig Schilling

University of Illinois

Jim Kvedaras

Governors State University

Kisha Lang

Western Illinois University

Robert Navarro

Illinois State University

J. Todd Phillips

Northeastern Illinois University

Jason Quiara

Chicago State University

John Simmons

Southern Illinois University

The Merit Board meets several times a year to conduct activities necessary to direct, manage, and maintain business operations of the agency. The powers and duties of the Merit Board are set forth in Section 36d of the Act.

During FY 2025, the Merit Board met three times — July 9, 2024, October 15, 2024, and April 22, 2025. All meetings were held at the University System in Urbana and simultaneously by video conference at the various Illinois public universities.

All Merit Board meetings are open to the public and conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. Formal business activities and actions are captured in the minutes as required and publicly provided at the University System website. Organized statewide advisory committees and groups are consulted on a regular basis and provided various opportunities for interaction with the Merit Board on numerous topics. A complete detailed account of all Merit Board activities, the formal Merit Board minutes, and a schedule of their yearly meeting dates at www.sucss.illinois.gov.

ADVISORY GROUPS

STATE UNIVERSITIES CIVIL SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The State Universities Civil Service Advisory Committee, also known as the Employee Advisory Committee (EAC) is mandated by Section 36c of the Act. The Committee is chaired by Jill Odom, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. EAC meets quarterly at campuses throughout the state, encouraging civil service employees at the particular university to attend. Members of the committee are elected by civil service employees at each of the universities and agencies served. Committee members represent their constituents by functioning in an advisory capacity to the Merit Board on “all matters pertaining to the University System.”

During FY 2025 the EAC met five times — July 18 and 19, 2024, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, October 23 and 24, 2024, at University of Illinois at Chicago, January 22 and 23, 2025, at the University System, February 21, 2025, Special Committee Meeting, via Video Conferencing, and April 15 and 16, 2025, at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

More information is available online at www.sucss.illinois.gov.

The Designated Employer Representative (DER) Group is comprised of the human resource directors, DERs,

DESIGNATED EMPLOYER REPEPRESENTATIVE GROUP

or other human resource personnel from each university or agency. This group plays a significant role in our overall general review and maintenance of University System Classification Plan, Code, and procedures. This collaboration is essential in maintaining an oversight system of rules and procedures consistent with the demands of the various complex employment environments within the University System.

During FY 2025, the group met on January 24, 2025, and April 11, 2025.

More information is available online at www.sucss.illinois.gov.

EMPLOYEE SERVED DATA (June 2025)

Organizations Served	Civil Service Employees (See Note 1)	Total Status Employees	Total Non Status Employees	Exemptions					Total Employees (See Note 3)
				36e(2)	36e(3)	36e(4)	36e(5)	Total Exemptions	
System Total	25,133	22,121	3,012	97	5,757	17,017	14,758	37,629	62,762
University of Illinois	14,328	12,694	1,634	8	4,341	9,716	6,614	20,679	35,007
Chicago	3,336	2,950	386	3	1,623	4,054	2,114	7,794	11,130
College of Medicine at Peoria	166	159	7	0	48	227	0	275	441
College of Medicine at Rockford	153	112	41	0	23	123	13	159	312
Division of Specialized Care for Children	259	257	2	0	10	0	0	10	269
Springfield	414	294	120	1	145	298	215	659	1,073
UIC Hospital and Clinics	3,116	2,938	178	0	468	2	19	489	3,605
Urbana-Champaign	6,884	5,984	900	4	2,024	5,012	4,253	11,293	18,177
Southern Illinois University	4,389	3,754	635	10	537	1,681	2,204	4,432	8,821
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	1,515	1,132	383	8	184	230	1,032	1,454	2,969
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	1,181	1,080	101	1	95	1,320	1,172	2,588	3,769
Southern Illinois University School of Medicine	1,693	1,542	151	1	258	131	0	390	2,083
Other Universities	5,933	5,195	738	48	814	5,620	5,937	12,419	18,352
Chicago State University	257	238	19	10	52	349	18	429	686
Eastern Illinois University	548	525	23	6	77	461	635	1,179	1,727
Governors State University	378	337	41	6	59	574	192	831	1,209
Illinois State University	2,037	1,700	337	5	190	1,803	2,434	4,432	6,469
Northeastern Illinois University	430	393	37	6	184	457	336	983	1,413
Northern Illinois University	1,717	1,461	256	11	189	1,404	1,516	3,120	4,837
Western Illinois University	566	541	25	4	63	572	806	1,445	2,011
Agencies	483	478	5	31	65	0	3	99	582
Illinois Board of Higher Education	24	24	0	0	27	0	0	27	51
Illinois Community College Board	56	56	0	0	12	0	0	12	68
Illinois Student Assistance Commission	229	224	5	22	11	0	0	33	262
State Universities Civil Service System	12	12	0	2	0	0	0	2	14
State Universities Retirement System	162	162	0	7	15	0	3	25	187

EMPLOYEE SERVED DATA (June 2025) continued...

Employee Served Data Notes: see page 8 for chart

Note 1: Total Civil Service Employees is the sum of the Total Status Employees and Total Non-Status Employees.

Note 2: Total Non-Status Employees is the sum of all individuals currently employed as Interns, Apprentices, Temporary, Extra-Help, and Provisional.

Note 3: Total Employees is the sum of Total Status Employees, Total Non-Status Employees, and Total Exemptions.

Note 4:

36e(2) – presidents and vice-presidents of each educational institution.

36e(3) – other principal administrative employees of each institution and agency as determined by the Merit Board.

36e(4) – the teaching, research, and extension faculties of each institution and agency.

36e(5) – students employed under rules prescribed by the Merit Board, without examination or certification.

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND YEARLY BUDGET PROCESS

The University System is a participant in and component of the Illinois Board of Higher Education's (IBHE) annual budget review and recommendation process for the Illinois public higher education community. The final annual budget recommendation is the culmination of a process of review and formal approval by IBHE for the Illinois public higher education community.

This process begins in early October with a budget presentation and proposal to the Merit Board. Upon approval by the Merit Board, the budget proposal is forwarded to IBHE and the Governor's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB) for discussion and review. Following a statewide review of the budget proposals submitted by the entire Illinois public higher education community, IBHE, as well GOMB, issues final budget recommendations and appropriation proposals for the entire Illinois public higher education community.

Further presentations and discussions with IBHE are then afforded to provide additional clarification and input and possible revisions of the recommended budget and appropriation proposal. Ultimately, IBHE, as well as GOMB, adopts the final budget and appropriation proposal for the entire Illinois public higher education community.

The University System's final line item or lump sum appropriation request, is therefore a component of the statewide Illinois public higher education budget recommendation, which is submitted to the Governor's office for state budget appropriation planning and subsequent legislative consideration. Significant oversight and review of budget parameters are conducted by the Merit Board, IBHE, GOMB, and various legislative committees before final annual appropriations are approved and distributed.

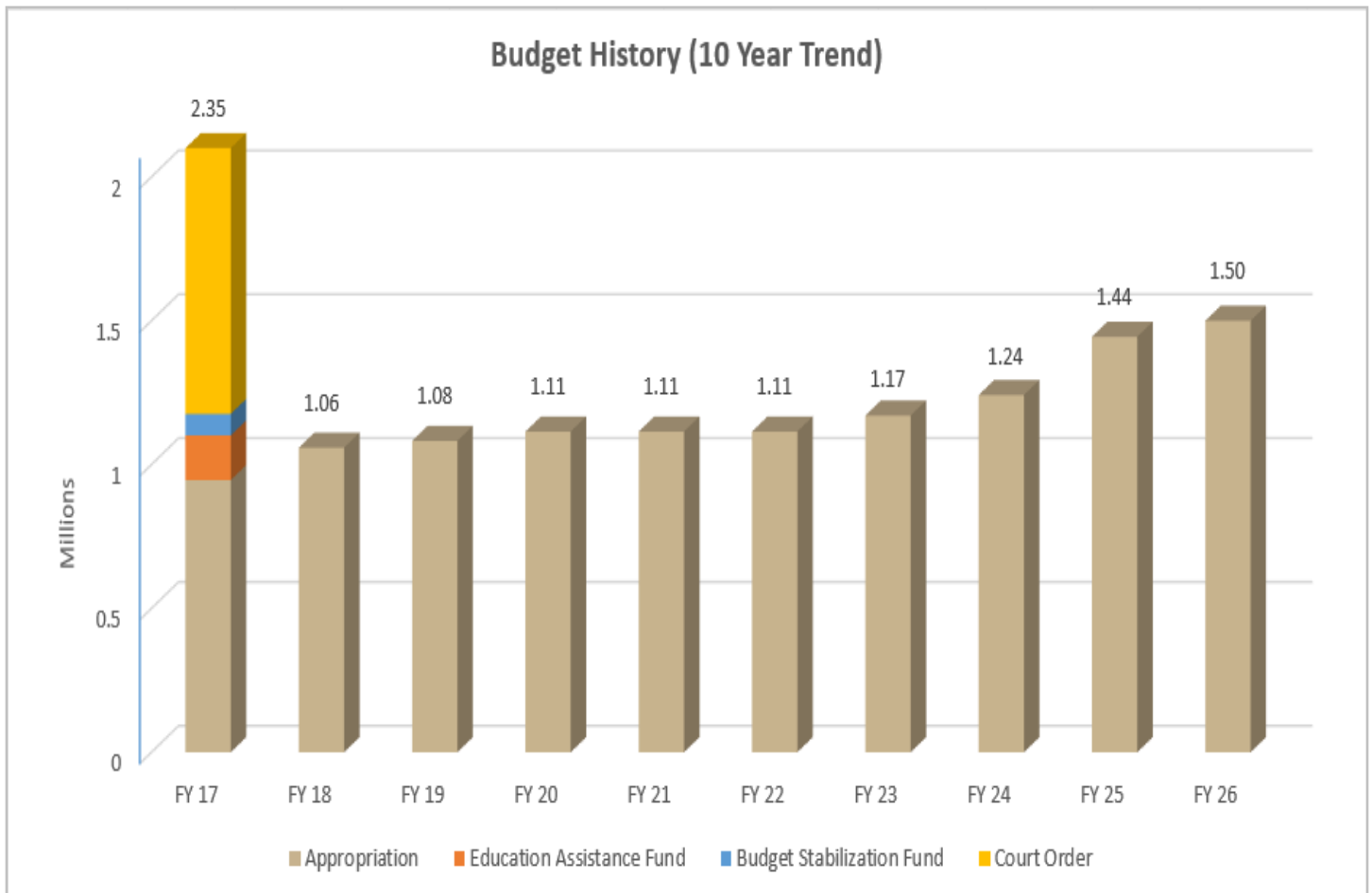
The University System is proud of our accomplishments and continued progress in implanting modernization efforts. Many of the initiatives have significantly generated financial and resource savings at the agency level and have strengthened relationships with the universities and agencies under its oversight.

The University System remains committed to its statutory objective of providing essential oversight of the human resource programs throughout the state's public university system. Through fiscal responsibility, efficiency, and innovative business practices, the University System continues to promote effective management and operational excellence throughout the higher education community.

In FY 2025, the appropriation or spending level for the University System was \$1,444,500 as a lump sum appropriation. Expenditures for FY 2025 were \$1,154,333. Actual employee headcount as of June 30, 2025 were 13 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee. The average monthly full-time equivalent headcount for FY 2025 was 13.

The graph on page 11 is a historical recap of the agency's budget since FY 2017.

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND YEARLY BUDGET PROCESS



PRINCIPAL ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

The Merit Board is statutorily obligated to determine whether employees designated as exempt from the Act by a University System employer have been properly exempted from the Act and the Civil Service Rules. The Merit Board has delegated the responsibility for making these determinations to the Executive Director.

In 2017 a complaint was made to the Office of Executive Inspector General (OEIG) regarding the improper exemption of employees from the Act and the Civil Service Rules by University System employers. During the investigation that followed, the University System met with interested parties, including a series of meetings between the Merit Board Chair and university higher education human resources leadership. Each session was followed by a meeting between the Merit Board Chair and the statutorily created EAC.

This collaborative process enabled the Merit Board and University System to reach an agreement with the University System employers regarding the application and interpretation of the phrase “principal administrative employees” and implementation of a revised Principal Administrative Appointment Exemption Procedures Manual. The various employers were intensely involved in revising the PAA Exemption Procedures Manual.

This agreement states that “Principal Administrative Appointments (PAA) may be exempt pursuant to section 36e(3) of the Act, whose primary duties constitute senior management or senior administrative functions for an entire university, campus, agency, administrative/business department/unit, or academic department/unit.” The procedure also describes the criteria to be considered by the employers and the Agency in determining whether a position may be exempted from the provisions of the Act if “the position does not fit within the general scope, duties, or function of an existing civil service classification.”

On October 1, 2018, when the agreed procedure went into effect, the ratio of status civil service positions to exempt PAA positions at University System employers system-wide was 2.98:1. At the end of FY 2025, that ratio was 3.384:1. The total employee data is below:

DATE	Total Civil Service Status Positions System-Wide	Total PAA (Exempt) Positions System-Wide	Ratio of Civil Service Status Positions to PAA (Exempt) Positions	Percentage of PAA (Exempt) Positions to Civil Service Status Positions
9/30/2018	18,219	6,121	2.98:1	25.15%
6/30/2025	22,121	5,757	3.84:1	20.65%

The improper designation of positions as exempt from the Act remains a concern for the Agency.

The University System conducts Governance, Risk, and Compliance Audits approximately every three years at each of the universities and agencies. The University System’s procedures regarding audits were modified to include an assessment of the employer’s conformity with these revised Exemption Procedures. If the audit of a University System employer demonstrates continued improper designation of positions as exempt from the Act, the University System will require that the improperly designated positions be correctly designated in the proper civil service classification, along with any other appropriate remedies.

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES

Business Processes

The University System continues to update and modify its business processes to better meet the operational needs of the employers served by the University System. Some of these business functions include:

- ◆ propose an annual budget to present to the Illinois Board of Higher Education;
- ◆ work with the State ERP Team on the development of a new payroll system;
- ◆ work with CMS on required documents;
- ◆ work with the Comptroller's Office on required documents;
- ◆ develop, modify and maintain the classification plan;
- ◆ ensure consistency and validity of each examination;
- ◆ develop and administer web-based applications, including electronic testing (E-Test), specialty factors, salary ranges, and electronic data submission;
- ◆ coordinate, administer, and proctor the Police Sergeant Oral Board examinations;
- ◆ process and analyze requests for position reclassifications;
- ◆ review requests for compensatory qualifications;
- ◆ review Extra Help Appointment Extensions beyond 900 hours;
- ◆ review Intern Appointment requests;
- ◆ review specialty factors for a position;
- ◆ establish and implement a Supported Employee Program;
- ◆ review requests for Student Appointment Exception;
- ◆ review salary data;
- ◆ maintain a Salary Data System;
- ◆ collect salary data from University System employers semi-annually;
- ◆ assist in recruitment, training, and retention of underrepresented candidates into various civil service positions;
- ◆ comply with the biennial compliance audit conducted by the Illinois Auditor General;
- ◆ review of the Act, Code, internal policies, and procedures for the University System;
- ◆ review and respond to Freedom of Information Act requests;
- ◆ manage the discharge and demotion process to ensure compliance with the Code and procedures;
- ◆ ensure each University System employer complies with the Act and University System procedures through a triennial compliance audit plan;
- ◆ review by the director of any acts or omissions by an employer; and
- ◆ provide a comprehensive resource for all agency operations and constituency relations.

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Classification Plan Management

The University System is charged by the Act to "establish a sound program of personnel administration."⁸ "The Act gives the Merit Board the power to "approve a classification plan."⁹ The classification plan provides a comprehensive system for classifying University System civil service positions. Standardizing the requirements of each classification ensures that the opportunity throughout the University System to be appointed to these civil service positions is based on merit and fitness through examinations.¹⁰

The University System administers a classification plan consisting of 874 class specifications (including one alternate title). The management and maintenance of the classification plan involves a continuing review and revision process. Revising a classification and its corresponding examination involves careful analysis and research into industry standards, proven practices, current use of the classification, and relevant laws and regulations.

Classifications and Examinations Reviewed and Revised

Following is a list of classifications and examinations revised:

- ♦ Building Heat and Frost Insulator Series:
 - *Building Heat and Frost Insulator*
- ♦ Building Service Worker

A total of two classifications and examinations were revised.

New Classifications and Examinations Completed

Following is a list of classification and examinations completed:

- ♦ Building Heat and Frost Insulator Series:
 - *Building Heat and Frost Foreperson*

A total of one new classification and examination was completed.

⁸110ILCS 70/36b(2)

⁹(110 ILCS 70/36d(1)

¹⁰110 ILCS 70/36b(2)

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Classifications and Examinations Revisions (in development)

Following is a list of classifications and examinations currently in progress:

- ◆ Certified Clinic Nurse
- ◆ Clinic nurse Series:
 - *Clinic Nurse*
 - *Charge Nurse*
 - *Nurse Administrator*
- ◆ Clinical Nursing Consultant Series:
 - *Clinical Nursing Consultant I*
 - *Clinical Nursing Consultant II*
- ◆ Health Care Administrator Series:
 - *Health Care Administrator I*
 - *Health Care Administrator II*
 - *Health Care Administrator III*
- ◆ Instructional Development Specialist
- ◆ Library Series:
 - *Library Clerk*
 - *Library Assistant*
 - *Library Specialist*
 - *Senior Library Specialist*
 - *Library Operations Associate*
- ◆ Licensed Practical Nurse Series:
 - *Licensed Practical Nurse I*
 - *Licensed Practical Nurse II*
- ◆ Member Service Representative Series:
 - *Member Service Representative I*
 - *Member Service Representative II*
 - *Member Service Representative III*
 - *Member Service Representative IV*

- ◆ Professional Nursing Series:

- *Staff Nurse I*
- *Staff Nurse II*
- *Administrative Nurse I*
- *Administrative Nurse II*
- *Administrative Nurse III*

- ◆ Research Nurse

A total of 27 classification revisions are in development.

In addition to the 27 classifications currently in development, the Agency is reviewing 92 requests for classification revisions or new classifications to develop.

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Classifications and Examinations Additional Activities

The Agency substantially modified 58 classifications in the Classification Plan that resulted in new Final Status Notices being issued in FY 2025 to provide corrections and clarification from prior years.

A total of five were deleted:

- ◆ Architect
- ◆ Director of Student Conduct Programs
- ◆ Loan Service Officer Series
 - *Loan Service Officer II*
 - *Loan Service Officer III*
- ◆ Student Conduct Advisor

A total of two had Minimum Acceptable Qualifications updated:

- ◆ Tumor Registrar Series (Certificate Title Change only)
 - *Tumor Registrar I*
 - *Tumor Registrar II*

A total of 51 classifications were deleted and the duties were moved into other classifications using the Change-In-Title (CIT) Policy #1:

- ◆ Automotive Foreman Series
 - *Automotive Foreman*
 - *Automotive Sub-Foreman*
- ◆ Campus Transportation Operator Series
 - *Campus Transportation Operator*
 - *Head Campus Transportation Operator*
- ◆ Driver Series
 - *Driver*
 - *Driver Helper*
 - *Route Driver*
 - *Route Driver Helper*
- ◆ (Scientific) Electronics Technician Series
 - *Scientific Electronics Technician I*
 - *Scientific Technician II*
 - *Scientific Electronics Engineer Assistant*
- ◆ Applications Analyst Series
 - *Applications Analyst*
 - *Senior Applications Analyst*
- ◆ Applications Programmer Series
 - *Application Programmer I*
 - *Application Programmer II*
 - *Application Programmer III*

- ◆ Communication Network Series
 - *Communication Network Specialist I*
 - *Communication Network Specialist II*
 - *Communication Network Specialist III*
- ◆ Communication Services Series
 - *Communication Services Specialist I*
 - *Communication Services Specialist II*
 - *Communication Services Specialist III*
- ◆ Electronic Technician Series
 - *Electronic Technician*
 - *Senior Electronics Technician*
 - *Principal Electronics Technician*
- ◆ Information Technology Management Series
 - *Information Technology Assistant Manager*
 - *Information Technology Manager*
 - *Information Technology Associate Director*
 - *Information Technology Director*
- ◆ Local Area Network (LAN) Series
 - *Local Area Network Support Specialist I*
 - *Local Area Network Support Specialist II*
 - *Local Area Network Administrator*
- ◆ Microcomputer Support Series
 - *Microcomputer Support Specialist I*
 - *Microcomputer Support Specialist II*
 - *Microcomputer Support Specialist III*
 - *Microcomputer Coordinator*
- ◆ Network Engineer Series
 - *Network Engineer I*
 - *Network Engineer II*
 - *Network Engineer III*
 - *Network Engineer IV*
 - *Network Engineer V*
- ◆ Systems Administrator Series
 - *Systems Administrator I*
 - *Systems Administrator II*
 - *Systems Administrator III*
 - *Systems Administrator IV*
- ◆ Systems Programmer Series
 - *Systems Programmer I*
 - *Systems Programmer II*
 - *Systems Programmer III*
- ◆ Web Specialist Series
 - *Web Specialist I*
 - *Web Specialist II*
 - *Web Specialist III*

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Examinations

The Act requires that "[a]ll certificates, appointments, and promotions to positions in these agencies and institutions shall be made solely on the basis of merit and fitness, to be ascertained by examination."¹¹ In FY 2023, all examinations, except for the Police Series and Police Telecommunicator, were converted to credential assessment examinations. The University System is responsible for defining the specific qualifications an applicant must possess before the applicant's credentials may be examined and scored by an employer. The Agency also delineates the criteria used to score a credential assessment examination. The University System has continued to refine, improve, and test the examination components to ensure consistency and validity of each examination.

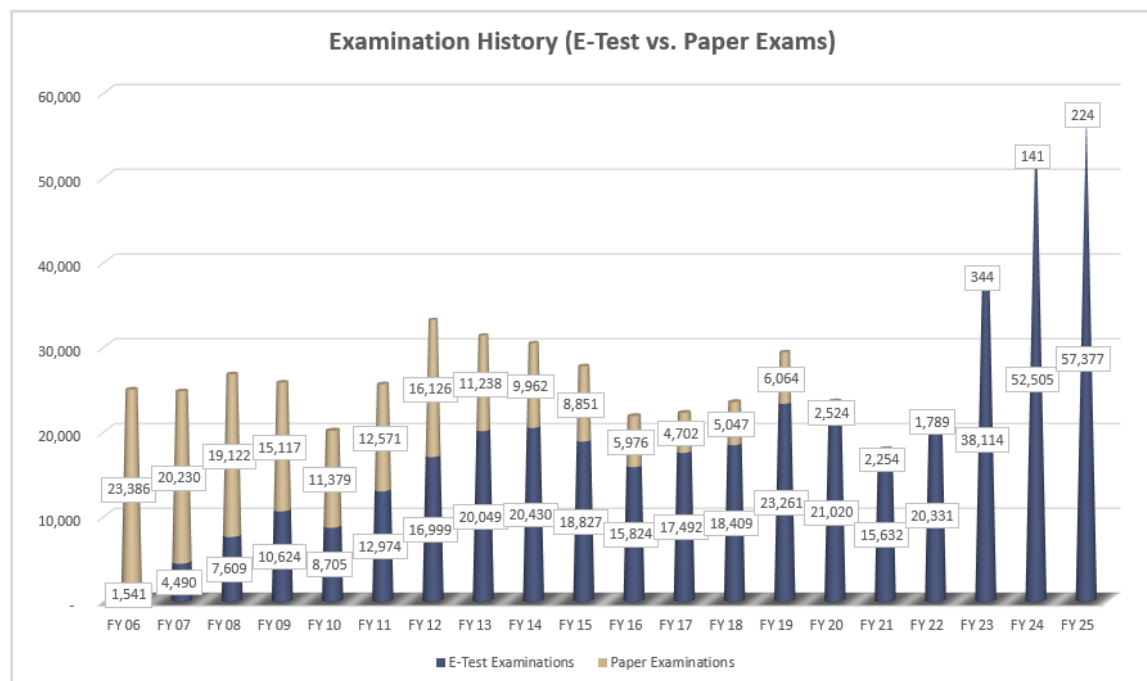
Examinations Completed

A total of 57,601 pre-employment examinations were administered in 510 of the 874 approved classes. *See chart below.* The continually evolving occupational areas of healthcare and technology affect a large number of civil service examinations. This requires the continued evaluation and review of the classification plan for redundancies allowing the potential consolidation, elimination, or revision of classifications.

A total of 224 paper tests were given in FY 2025 with a 64.3% passing rate.

A total of 57,377 electronic tests (E-Tests) were given in FY 2025 with a 99.82% passing rate.

Please note in most instances, Credentials Assessment examinations provide a passing score if the applicant qualifies for the position.



¹¹ 110ILCS 70/36b(2)

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Classification Audit Appeals

Position audits are an essential part of a “sound program of personnel administration” as required by the State Universities Civil Service Act¹². Position audits are used, in part, to ensure that University System employers correctly utilize the established Classification Plan and properly classify positions.

Each employer within the University System must establish position audit procedures that will ensure consistency with the classification plan at each place of employment.¹³ In order to maintain a sound classification program, Employers are responsible for conducting continuous classification studies.¹⁴ However, a request to audit an existing position may also originate at any time by an employee, an employing unit, an employer’s Designated Employer Representative (DER), or the University System Office.

A position audit can logically have only one of two possible results: either the position under review is predominantly comprised of duties that fall within the position’s classification, or the duties predominantly fall outside of the position’s classification.

If the position audit demonstrates that a majority of the duties being performed in the position under review are outside of the classification specification, the employer has two choices: (a) reclassify or reallocate the position into a classification that more closely aligns with the tasks currently identified in the position description, or (b) remove those tasks that are outside of the current classification specification from the duties of the position.

The employee may request a classification review by the University System if they disagree with the employer’s position audit findings and have exhausted all administrative appeal remedies with the employer. In these instances, the Agency will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the employee’s position. Classification reviews typically entail interviews with the employee, their immediate supervisor, and others who may have relevant information to determine factors such as the type of supervision received and exercised, the complexity of the work, the consequences of errors, and the level of independent judgment required to perform the tasks.

Based on this information, the Executive Director will determine the employee’s proper classification. This determination becomes the final administrative decision by the University System with respect to the classification of position.

¹² 110 ILCS 70/36b(2)

¹³ Administrative Rules, 250.30, Illinois Admin. Code tit. #80, Ch. VI., part 250.30.

¹⁴ Classification Plan Management Procedures Manual A, 2.3, Position Audits.

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Compensatory Qualifications

If an applicant does not meet the Minimum Acceptable Qualifications (MAQs) established for a classification but can offer comparable qualifications, an employer may submit a "Request for Prior Approval of Compensatory Qualifications" to the University System for review. A review is conducted to determine whether the applicant's application materials demonstrate sufficient work experience to compensate for a missing education component, or demonstrates an education component to compensate for missing work experience. If those comparable qualifications can be established, the applicant's credentials can be assessed and scored by the employer.

A total of 27 compensatory qualification requests were received; 24 were approved and three were denied during FY 2025.

Extra Help Appointments

An Extra Help Appointment may be made by an employer to any position for work the employer attests to be casual or emergent in nature and that meets certain conditions. An extra help position may be utilized for a maximum of 900-hours of actual work completed by the employee. The employer shall review the status of the position at least every three calendar months. A request for an Extra Help Extension must be submitted for an employee working over the 900-hour limit.

An employer may request the extension of an Extra Help Appointment beyond the original 900-hour limitation on the basis of several specific justifications, including the continued disability or another approved leave of absence where the employee holding the original appointment is expected to return, a project that requires completion within a short timeframe and for which there is no additional funding, or other situations resulting from rare circumstances or resulting in a critical need.

A total of 16 Extra Help Extension requests were received. Twelve were approved and four were denied during FY 2025.

Intern Appointments

"With the approval of the Executive Director, an employer may appoint an intern to any position, provided that specific criteria are met" Code Section 250.70d(1). The University System analyzes the request to determine if it conforms with the requirements of Section 250.70(d) of the Code and reviews the training and curriculum proposed. The Agency meets with the employer to review the intern program request and discuss any necessary modifications before approval is granted.

A total of 13 Intern Program requests were received and approved during FY 2025.

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Question Challenges

Candidates participating in a knowledge test may challenge a question on the examination. Examination question challenges with legitimate reasoning and references are reviewed by the University System for accuracy.

No question challenges were received during FY 2025.

Recheck of Examination Scores

Applicants may request that the University System review their eligibility for an examination and confirm their examination was accurately scored. The University System notifies the employer of the Agency's determination. This process safeguards opportunity based on merit and fitness by ensuring that examination and scoring criteria are properly applied.

Ten requests for recheck of examination score were received and completed during FY 2025.

Specialty Factors

Each class specification in the University System's Classification Plan identifies Minimum Acceptable Qualifications. (MAQ) These must be met for an applicant to be admitted to an examination.

For certain positions, employers may identify a job-related qualification that is in addition to, or more specific than, those defined in the class specification and necessary for successful performance upon hire. In these instances, the employer can request a specialty factor. A specialty factor is a specific knowledge, skill, ability, or other work characteristic that is considered basic to and essential for satisfactory performance of the duties and responsibilities of the position and a prerequisite to appointment in a position. Candidates with the top three scores on the respective register, who possess both the MAQs and the authorized specialty factor, are referred to the employing department for interview.

The Code, in Section 250.60(d)(9), vests the Executive Director with authority to determine whether a specialty factor is appropriate for each request. Because specialty factors act as filters on registers, with the potential to impact opportunity for employment, each specialty factor request is carefully analyzed. The analysis is based on several factors, including the relationship between the specialty factor and the classification's duties, whether the competency can be reasonably attained during the probationary period or in a relatively short period of time, and the necessity of the specialty factor for satisfactory performance of the general duties and responsibilities.

During FY 2025 the University System reviewed 130 Specialty Factor requests. This includes:

Approved - 95

Denied - 35

Deleted - 0

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

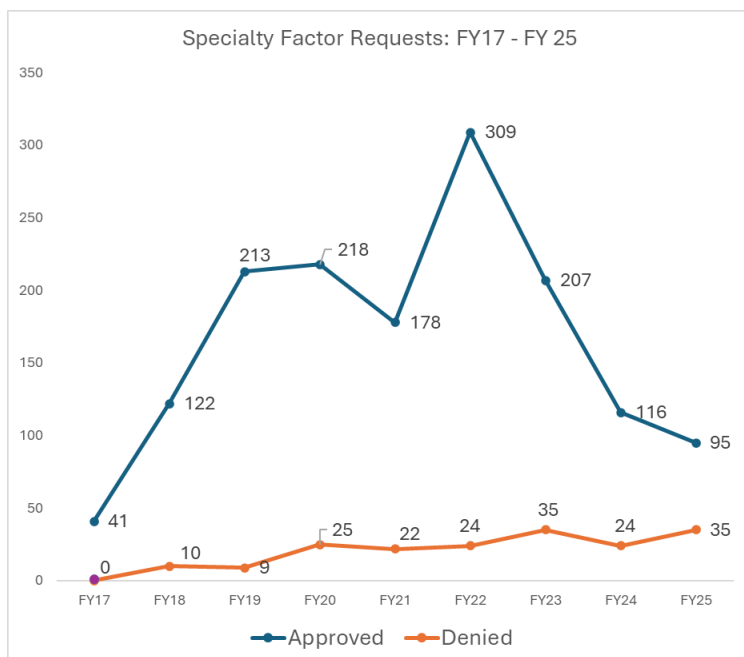
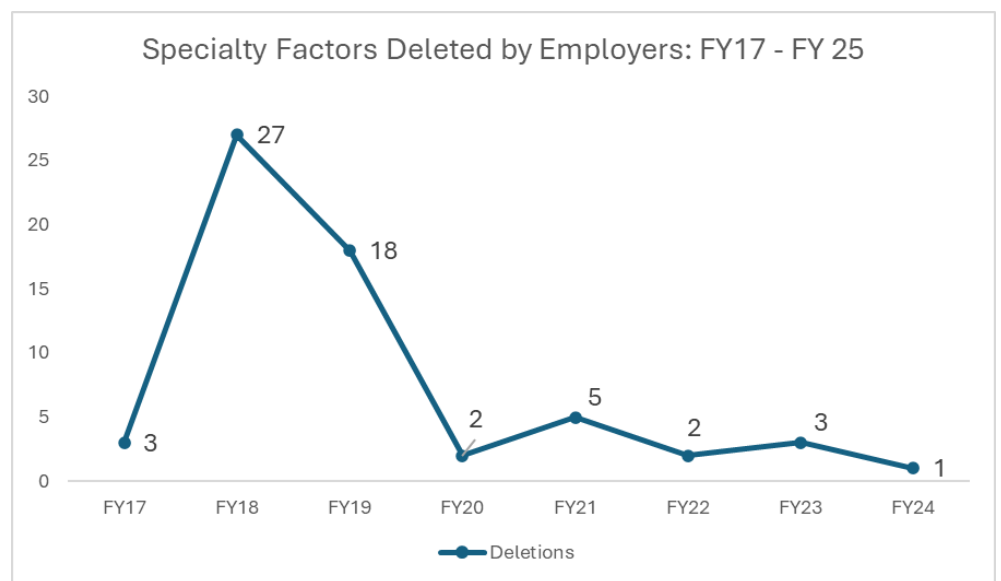
Specialty Factors continued

Exceptions

Employers are not required to secure formal authorization for specialty factors attached to positions in custom classifications. However, all specialty factor designations are subject to audit review.

Deletions

Employers are obliged to review approved specialty factor attachments at least once every three years to ensure that such specialized requirements continue to exist. Specialty factor attachments that are no longer required may be deleted by the employer.



FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Supported Employee Program

The University System is mandated by Section 36s of the Act to establish and implement a Supported Employee Program. This program is designed to encourage the employment of individuals who are severely disabled and in need of supported employment, as designated by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) community rehabilitation program. Participation in the program assumes that “with support, adaptation, or both, a job can be designed to take advantage of the supported employee’s special strengths.” The individuals in this program work in a trial capacity before being appointed to a permanent position and are not required to participate in the open competitive testing process. Once a position has been designated for supported employment, employers may work with IDHS counselors to develop an appropriate training program to assist the supported employee in becoming proficient at the targeted position.

In FY 2025, two new supported employees were appointed. As of the end of FY 2025, a total of 71 supported employees have been appointed since the program’s inception. Currently 18 employees are still actively employed.

Other Personnel Transactions

In FY 2025, the University System received a total of 196 other personnel transactions. This is composed of compensatory qualifications (27), extra help extensions (16), intern programs (13), recheck of examination scores (10), and specialty factors (130).

Student Appointments

Student Appointments are nonstatus appointments exempt from civil service. Per Section 250.70e(3) of the Code, a student must be enrolled at least "one-half of the normal [course load] of a regularly enrolled full-time student" at the university to be eligible for student employment. The University System reviews requests for an exception in compliance with this requirement.

Police Promotional Testing

The University System coordinates, administers, and proctors the Police Sergeant Structured Oral Board examinations. The Structured Oral Board requires a panel of four assessors to observe and score as many as ten applicants during a day-long testing period. During FY 2025, the University System conducted four days of Police Sergeant Structured Oral Boards and tested 29 applicants from 13 university police departments.

The University System has undertaken a comprehensive review to assess whether professionally developed examinations for three classifications within the Police Series (Police Officer, Police Corporal, Police Sergeant), and the Police Telecommunicator classification, continue to represent best practices within the profession. The University System expects to share its findings with employers and complete the process of implementing updated examinations in FY 2026.

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Salary Data System

Each employer under the jurisdiction of the University System must establish and recommend rates and ranges of compensation for each classification in use at their university or agency.¹⁵ Each employer is obligated to conduct research to support the validity of those rates or ranges that are not covered by union contracts. Collective bargaining agreements, information from local agencies, and prevailing rates provide the support necessary for establishing salary rates and ranges for various classification.

Once submitted by an employer, the University System reviews salary rates and ranges for each authorized classification in use. The University System maintains the Salary Data System, a web-based electronic approval process allowing employers to electronically request approval to establish, revise, correct, or delete pay rates or ranges via a secure website. The University System completes the review and authorization process, then notifies the requesting university or agency of a completed change. The Salary Range Report encompasses all salary ranges and is updated monthly.

A total of 3,058 Salary Data System requests were reviewed by the University System. Of these 2,812 requests were approved, 140 deleted, and 106 requests were denied.

Civil Service Salaries

Civil service salary data is collected semi-annually from employers. This data is compiled by classification with average salaries calculated for each classification. The average salary for civil service employees at Illinois higher education institutions and agencies across all classifications increased by approximately 4.69% between fiscal years FY 2024 and FY 2025 to a statewide yearly average of approximately \$67,030. Please note that the civil service salary average is not adjusted by the mix of positions and instead is presented as an actual average annual salary.

Diversity Programs

The University System has programs that assist in the recruitment and placement of candidates from diverse backgrounds. The Intern Program, as described on page 24, provides each employer with additional opportunities to recruit diverse applicants. Many other operational adjustments have been implemented to create more flexible employment protocols, minimize pre-employment variables, and increase overall the final applicant referral pools for status positions. All of these initiatives serve to facilitate specific university and agency diversity objectives.

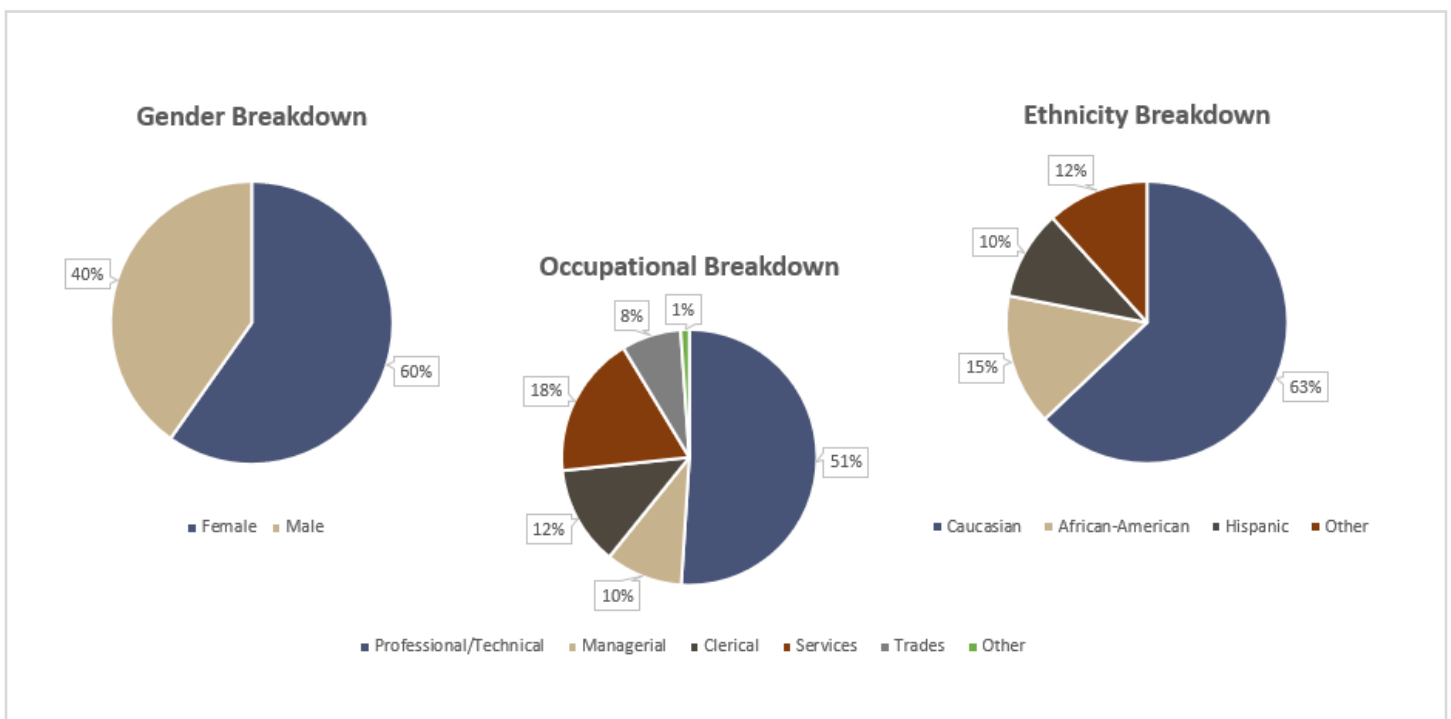
¹⁵ 110 ILCS 70/36d(3)

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Occupational/Ethnicity/Gender Data

The University System provides programs to employing universities and agencies to assist in the recruitment, training, and retention of underrepresented candidates into various civil service positions. These programs are utilized to support the various diversity programs designed by each university and agency. The Intern and Supported Employment Programs allow for on-the-job training and result in the non-competitive placement of successful candidates to positions. The University System continues to research and develop additional programs to further facilitate the recruitment and retention of underrepresented applicants to civil service positions throughout the University System. The University System is also investigating the possibility of expanding the Intern Appointment program to determine the potential to directly recruit employees from the student populations of both four-year and two-year colleges.

Over the past eight years, the ethnic distribution of civil service status employees throughout the University System has remained fairly constant. These numbers may vary tremendously among universities and agencies based on their geographic location. The chart below represents the statewide picture as of June 30, 2025.



FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Auditor General's Compliance Audit

On April 1, 2025, the Illinois Auditor General issued the final report of the routine biennial compliance audit of the agency for FY 2022 and FY 2023. The audit identified two Material Findings:

- ♦ Voucher Processing Internal Controls Not Operating Effectively; and
- ♦ Weaknesses in Cybersecurity Programs and practices.

The University System is working on development policies and procedures to correct these findings.

Statute and Administrative Code Changes

Sections 250.5, 250.20, and 250.110 of the Civil Service Rules were amended.

- ♦ Section 250.5, Definitions — added definition for Notice of Convening of Hearing;
- ♦ Section 250.20, The State Universities Civil Service and its Division — updated Section 250.20(c) by adding DER termination and departure information and adding revocation for the DER section; and
- ♦ Section 250.110, Separations and Demotions — updated his/her to their; updated Section 250.110(c)(6) (C) adding a time period; added a time period to Section 250.110(d) for layoff notices to be sent to the Executive Director; Section 250.110(f)(3)(B) updated what should be included on the Written Charges form and the certification form and that the DER shall sign the Written Charges for Discharge form; Section 250.110(f)(3)(D) updated what should be included on the Suspension Notice Pending Discharge form: added Section 250.110(f)(5)(B) on what should be included in a Notice of Convening of Hearing and clarifying that the University system may issue additional Orders; updated Section 250.110(f)(5)(F) regarding witness and proposed exhibit lists requirements; and other technical wording.

These changes were effective January 31, 2025.

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Governance, Risk, and Compliance Audit Program

During FY 2025, the Compliance Service Division conducted a thorough review of the audit program, seeking areas where the program could be improved. This research also included an extensive review of all actions required by the Act and its associated Civil Service Rules of University System employers, as well as an in-depth examination of standards and proven practices utilized in the public audit sector.

The Agency established lists of topics that will guide audit engagements and direct the information sought for examination. This enabled the development of templates for requests and facilitated the exchange of information between the University System and employers. In addition, the Agency acquired new software to reduce friction in this exchange of information between the employers and the University System.

The revised audit program will be launched in autumn of 2025.

The primary purpose of the Governance, Risk, and Compliance Audit Program is to ensure that public universities and affiliated agencies under the jurisdiction of the Merit Board maintain compliance with the Act, the Civil Service Rules, and University System procedures.

The audit program functions in a compliance capacity, focusing on building trust and credibility in our professional interactions based on a common operational understanding. This is realized through an extensive review of each employer's operational needs and objectives as they relate to statutory requirements, administrative rules, and University System procedures.

Following are some general topics addressed during the standard audit process:

- ◆ classification of positions and position control;
- ◆ completion of position audit requests within the processing timeframe standard;
- ◆ review and update of business procedures, regarding to position register and referral process;
- ◆ maintenance of review standards for position descriptions;
- ◆ proper maintenance, authorization, and designation of exemptions;
- ◆ open and continuous testing requirements;
- ◆ utilization of Custom Classes;
- ◆ review and verification of the employment relationships with union represented employees;
- ◆ documentation of Contract Appointments;
- ◆ review of Extra Help appointments and monitoring practices;
- ◆ supported Employee Program practices; and
- ◆ management and maintenance of pay ranges.

The University System Compliance Services Division did not conduct any remote audit visits in FY 2025 due to the review and revision of the audit program.

All final audit reports are available online at www.sucss.illinois.gov.

FY 2025 AGENCY ACTIVITIES continued

Ethics Officer

Legal Counsel for the University System serves as the Ethics Officer for the Agency, acting as liaison with the Office of the Executive Inspector General as required by the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act. The Ethics Officer prepares ethics guidance for the agency and investigates complaints in compliance with the “Procedures for Investigating and Reporting Misconduct and Incidents at State Facilities” as adopted from Administrative Order Number 6 (2003). In addition, the Ethics Officer reviews ethics disclosure forms submitted annually by the University System.

Ethics training was held on-line for all employees of the University System during April 2025 and for all new employees.

Equal Employment Opportunity Officer

Legal Counsel for the University System serves as the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) officer. This involves the researching and analyzing of current Civil Rights Laws and court opinions and drafting guidance and conducting training in compliance with these laws and opinions. The EEO officer also is responsible for investigating University System employment complaints with which the University System must comply and for recommending remedial action when appropriate.

Freedom of Information Officer

Legal Counsel for the University System is responsible for reviewing and responding to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act.

The University System received 23 requests under the Freedom of Information Act during FY 2025.

Discharge and Demotion

Legal Counsel for the University System is responsible for managing the discharge and demotion processes, in accordance with Code Section 250.110(f), including the pre-hearing, hearing, and post-hearing phases, to ensure compliance with the Code and applicable procedures.

During FY 2025, a total of 45 Written Charges for Discharge proceedings were initiated by University System employers. Eight hearings were requested by the employees involved in these matters.

Following is a breakdown of the outcome of these seven hearings:

- ◆ resigned prior to the hearing process — 2 employees;
- ◆ settlement agreements during the hearing — 1 employee;
- ◆ discharged for failure to appear at the hearing—1 employee;
- ◆ Reinstated by the Merit Board —1 employee; and
- ◆ Discharge by the Merit Board — 3 employees.

FY 2026 AGENCY ACTION PLAN

The Agency's Action Plan for FY 2026 will continue to concentrate on building relationships, communications, business process upgrades, efficiency, and updating the Governance, Risk and Compliance Audit Program. Consistent with these objectives, following are planned initiatives for the University System.

Act, Code, and Procedure Revisions

The Agency will continue to coordinate with the higher education community to identify opportunities for clarification or improvement of the Act, Civil Service Rules, and related procedures. During FY 2026, the Agency plans to prioritize opportunities to codify procedures into administrative rules. If necessary, the Agency will recommend legislative changes to the Act to facilitate this process and mitigate disruptions in personnel administration throughout the higher education community. To accomplish these tasks, the Agency will regularly consult advisory groups, propose language for recommended changes, present these proposals to the Merit Board, and coordinate with the legislature.

Classification, Examination, and Compensation

Our overall goal remains centered on maintaining a practical classification plan to safeguard the opportunity for employment by University System employers based on merit and fitness. To accomplish this, our plan includes:

- ♦ Reframing our approach to developing and revising classification specifications and examinations by focusing on a competency-based model that identifies requisite skills, knowledge, and abilities. This model offers opportunities to expand the definition of what qualifies someone for a role; recognizes differences in how people learn, how quickly they develop skills, and their strengths; allows for non-traditional career paths; and provides a straightforward evaluation criteria to reduce bias and rater errors. This new approach is also anticipated to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and consistency.
- ♦ Developing a systematic classification review cycle to prioritize classification revisions and the development of new classifications.
- ♦ Eliminating classifications that are redundant or obsolete through consolidation or deletion.
- ♦ Updating classification identification codes for consistency with State of Illinois and federal systems.

FY 2026 AGENCY ACTION PLAN

Audit Program

The University System has revised its Governance, Risk, and Compliance Audit Program to provide employers with more actionable feedback when issues of non-compliance with the Act or Rules appear, while decreasing the total time it takes the Agency to complete an audit.

Other Projects

The University System continues to enhance the Agency's administrative and oversight capabilities. Other projects the agency is considering are:

- ◆ evaluating staffing needs;
- ◆ expanding training programs and webinars;
- ◆ reviewing and updating the University System website for an improved user experience;
- ◆ updating EEO codes for classifications;
- ◆ procuring new police testing;
- ◆ developing a sustainable plan for the periodic review and revision of existing classifications and the addition of new classifications required by a significant change in workforce or environment; and
- ◆ developing a program to systematize the requests most frequently made by University System employers, to increase efficiency and transparency.