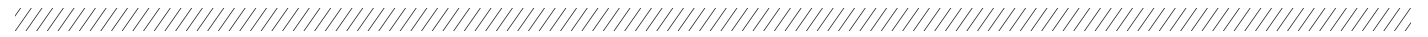




NEWSLETTER



WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER!

We are excited to present our State Employee of the Year newsletter! Throughout the newsletter, we will recognize our State Employee of the Year, Runner-Up for State Employee of the Year, and honorable mentions for all the wonderful state employees who were nominated. We appreciate all the hard work these individuals have done for their agencies and the State!



The State Personnel Board will meet on November 18, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. in the Board Room on the 3rd Floor of the Folsom Administrative Building in Montgomery.



We have recently joined YouTube! Subscribe to our YouTube channel and follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn for updates on testing, job announcements, and more!



Veteran's Day is November 11th. Don't forget to thank those who have served our country! Please check out the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs article regarding their initiative highlighting the prioritization of suicide prevention for Veterans.

04 Veteran's Day

OPEN ENROLLMENT

03 State Employees' Insurance Board Feature

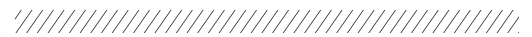
08 PerksConnect

Are you ready to start saving? As a State of Alabama employee you can start saving today with PerksConnect on travel, giftcards, and more! To start saving, visit alabama.perksconnection.com and click "Activate your Account Now" and fill in the required fields.

State Employee of the Year Aquanita Williams

Ms. Williams is the Executive Secretary for the Alabama Crime Victims' Compensation Commission (ACVCC). You can usually hear Ms. Williams every morning announce, "Good morning everyone, it's a great day," with a big smile on her face. She starts the day by assessing how to make the day run smoother for everyone. She is described as dependable and steadfast. If a task needs to be done, she has likely already seen the need, and usually replies, "I've already done that." Ms. Williams volunteers to assist claimants and victims and excels at it and by the end of the call many thank her for her assistance. Ms. Williams relishes operating on a higher level than required and her customer service skills are unmatched. For the past six years, she has volunteered to serve as the Commission's chair for the State Combined Campaign and has plans to continue. She is genuinely interested in the welfare of those less fortunate. Dr. Cassie Jones, Executive Director of ACVCC, states, "the word awesome describes everything about her."

When COVID-19 swept our nation, Ms. Williams did not waiver and continued to carry out the mission of the ACVCC and ensure essential functions were maintained. She was never asked to come in, but instead came in on her own volition because she believed that the mission of the ACVCC must continue to assist innocent victims of violent crimes. She ensured mail, checks, and applications were processed in the same manner as required prior to the pandemic. In anticipation of the resumption of work, she organized the main work areas to ensure social distancing and placed sanitizing stations around the office. Ms. Williams never complains and is always willing to serve and go the extra mile. She epitomizes the spirit and actions of who and what a state employee should be. Congratulations Ms. Williams!



Runner-Up for State Employee of the Year Jolynn Sanford



Ms. Sanford is a Programmer Analyst in the Information Technology Division for the Alabama Department of Revenue (ADOR). Ms. Sanford's supervisor, Ms. Angela Free, states, "I have never interacted with an employee who has such a wealth of knowledge and skills, along with an impeccable work ethic." Ms. Sanford is proactive at heading off potential problems by offering solutions before an issue even arises. She has been known to stay late in order to ensure the jobs run to completion, without being asked or expected to do so. Ms. Sanford is described as a team player and continuously shares her knowledge with other team members and is a patient and effective mentor for junior developers. Many of the issues that she has researched, analyzed,

and resolved have been some of the most complex requests received. She does not back down from a challenge, instead she learns and grows in her knowledge and ability. Ms. Sanford's abilities not only impress those within her division, but she is also admired by many throughout ADOR and on-site vendors. Ms. Sanford is an exemplary developer whose knowledge, expertise, professionalism, commitment, communication skills, and technical abilities rival those of the best developers in the private or public sector. The IT Division within ADOR states, "we are extremely fortunate to have such a talented person working towards achieving the mission of ADOR." Congratulations Ms. Sanford!

OPEN ENROLLMENT STATE EMPLOYEES' INSURANCE BOARD

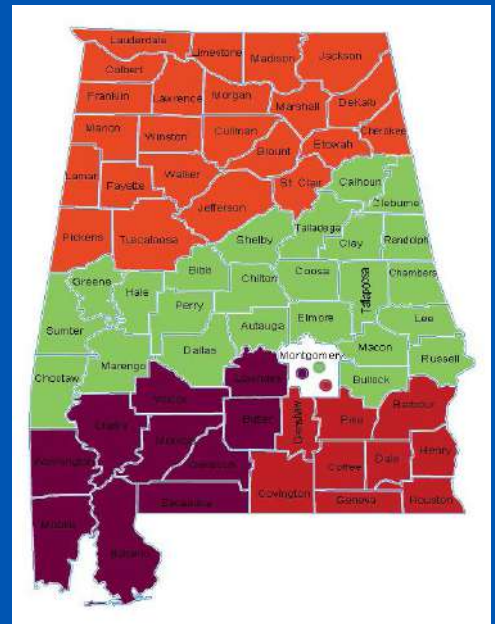
The annual Open Enrollment for the State Employees' Insurance Board (SEIB) is November 1-30 with an effective date of January 1. Open Enrollment is the period of time that state employees can add/change coverage, add/drop dependent coverage, and enroll in Flex. Don't miss the opportunity, we encourage you to take the time to evaluate your current and future coverage needs.

The SEIB offers health coverage options such as a basic medical plan with pharmacy benefits, an optional plan, a supplemental plan, and premium cash option. Stand-alone policies of dental, vision, and cancer coverage are also available.

Besides choosing a health coverage option, you should consider enrollment in a flexible spending account. The Flexible Employees' Benefits Board offers two flexible spending accounts for active state employees - a Health Care Reimbursement Account (HCRA) and a Dependent Care Reimbursement Account (DCRA). Both of these accounts provide notable tax savings.

The SEIB is here to help you find the health coverage option that best suits your health and financial needs. Please let your Benefit Advisor know of any major changes planned for 2021 so they can be of assistance. Keep in mind, retirement could affect the options available.

The SEIB Enrollments staff is available to answer questions about eligibility and documentation requirements, and the SEIB Benefit Advisors are available to discuss your coverage options. To find your Benefit Advisor, please refer to the map to the right. For all other questions, call the SEIB office at 1-866-836-9737.



Orange - Kerry Schlenker
1.866.838.5027
Kerry.Schlenker@alseib.org

Green - Rick Wages
1.866.841.0908
Rick.Wages@alseib.org

Purple - Mary Katherine Carlisle
1.877.500.0581
MaryKatherine.Carlisle@alseib.org

Red - Genie Blake
1.866.841.0978
Genie.Blake@alseib.org

*Thank you to the SEIB for submitting this feature!



Honorable Mention for Employee of the Year: EMA's Facility Services



The Facility Services crew at the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) consists of Karry Honeycutt, Rosemarie Westfall, and Melita Williams. These employees have done exceptional work with keeping a safe environment for AEMA by sanitizing and cleaning the facilities during the ongoing pandemic and AEMA's many State of Emergencies. These three members of the Facility Services crew are described as hygiene warriors. Brian Hastings, Director of AEMA, states, "they have single-handedly allowed AEMA to never skip a beat, and make our State Emergency Operations Center COVID-19 free to support our mission during the busiest and most expensive disaster year since the 2011 tornado outbreak." In March, AEMA and all its employees were declared essential and AEMA has never slowed down because of the professionalism, selflessness, and dedication of the Facility Services staff to keep the entire building and Emergency Operations Center clean and aseptic. They lead by example, always come to work, and everyday expose themselves to the virus by cleaning all common areas and work areas. They are exemplary employees and force multipliers in a COVID-19 environment. Thank you for all your hard work!

Veteran Suicide Initiative



Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs takes a Community Approach to Ending Suicide.

The President’s Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End a National Tragedy of Suicide (PREVENTS) Office and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently announced that 42 states and one U.S. territory signed the PREVENTS state proclamation pledging their prioritization of suicide prevention for Veterans and all citizens in their jurisdictions. Each state pledged promises to promote and amplify the REACH public health campaign that encourages everyone to reach out to vulnerable people and reach out when they need help.

As part of implementing the President’s roadmap, the PREVENTS Office is meeting with state and community leaders in all 50 states and territories. This initiative ensures that best practices for suicide prevention will be identified and applied. The initiative will then coordinate with the state and federal government and promote the public health messages before the initiative concludes in March 2022.

In September 2020, the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs joined a nationwide effort to prevent suicide. The Mayor’s and Governor’s Challenges to Prevent Suicide among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families bring together communities all over the country to support our nation’s heroes. They are sponsored by the VA and the Department of Health and Human Services’ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

“Suicide is a national public health challenge that causes immeasurable pain among individuals, families, and communities across the county,” said Governor Kay Ivey. “Our veterans have made insurmountable sacrifices to

protect our country and our freedom. We will stand with our veterans and commit to doing everything we can to prevent veteran suicide.”

Suicide is a complex national public health issue that affects communities nationwide, with more than 45,000 American adults, including more than 6,000 veterans, dying by suicide every year. The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs is proud to work with the VA and SAMHSA in finding innovative ways to deliver support and care to service members and veterans whenever and wherever they need it.

“The national tragedy of suicide is a serious public health concern and one that is preventable. It affects everyone. The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs is working hard to end service member and veteran suicide by engaging a wide range of partners from different sectors,” said Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner, Kent Davis. “It is our responsibility to take care of the people who have made monumental sacrifices for our freedom. We look forward to working with our

partners over the next year on this important issue.”

The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs utilizes the public health approach by combining community-based prevention strategies and evidence-based clinical interventions to empower action and support service members and veterans in Alabama.

Service members or veterans who are in crisis or having thoughts of suicide, and those who know a service member or veteran in crisis, can call the Military and Veterans Crisis Line for confidential support available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Call 1-800-273-8255 and press 1, text 838255 or, chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat.

*Thank you to the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs for writing and submitting this feature for the Personnel Newsletter!



EMPLOYEES’ SUGGESTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM REMINDER

Don’t forget to submit your cost-saving ideas to the Employees’ Suggestion Incentive Board for the opportunity to earn a CASH AWARD up to \$5,000! You can find the rules and submission form on the State Personnel Department website, www.personnel.alabama.gov, under

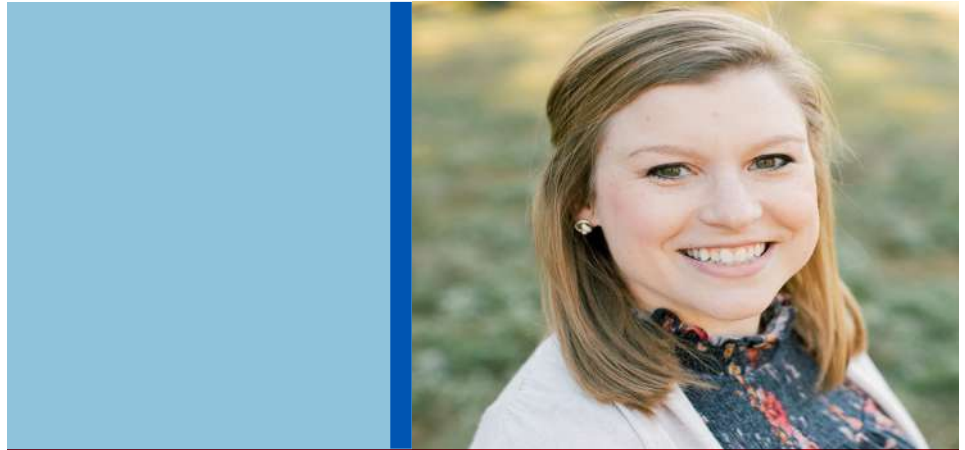
the “Employees” button, then “Online Options.”

Please remember that your completed submission form must include approval from your appointing authority in order for your suggestion to be considered for an award.



Subscribe to State Personnel's new YouTube channel!

State Personnel recently created a [YouTube channel](#) to increase our social media presence. There are already videos posted on our channel for viewing. We currently have many "how to" videos that include: how to apply for a job on the personnel website, how to fill out your employment profile, how to change your name or email address, how to reset your password, and how to register with the Alabama Online Employment System. Additionally, we have the benefits portions of our State Government Orientation on our page. It doesn't hurt to check in on our YouTube channel to see when we have new content. If there is content you would like to see on our YouTube channel please email us at newsletter@personnel.alabama.gov. Do not forget to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram for updates on testing, job announcements, and more!



Honorable Mention - Emily Vanderford

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Ms. Vanderford works with Alabama State Parks for the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR). One of Ms. Vanderford's biggest accomplishments this past year was leading the effort to design and implement the new online reservation system for all of the state parks. She wrote the Request for Proposals used to choose the vendor for the State that would bring the State Parks system into the 20th century. Once the vendor was chosen, she worked to provide all information needed by the vendor to develop the system. This included organizing and detailing all of the rental units numbering, compiling millions

of pieces of client data, and creating a reporting mechanism that each park could use to handle financial reporting. Christopher Blankenship, Commissioner of ADCNR, states, "her work ethic and level of caring about a job well done are credits to both Emily and the Department and provide for a good role model for our other employees." Additionally, Edward Pollos, Deputy Commissioner of ADCNR, states, "Emily epitomizes leadership, and the State Parks system and the citizens of the State of Alabama have been made better from it." Thank you Ms. Vanderford for all your hard work!

Honorable Mention - P. Mark Sullivan

Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs



Mr. Sullivan is the Manager of the Appeals and Review Division (A&R) for the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA). When the global pandemic hit our State, Mr. Sullivan was given the assignment to serve as ADVA's liaison and watch-stander in the state's emergency operations center. As our state's veteran's home and veterans service offices were impacted by COVID-19, Mr. Sullivan ensured these facilities had extra supplies and that there was enough staff to continue vital services to veterans. Additionally, he devised a means where A&R could continue to provide services to veterans by phone or computer even when the offices were closed.

Mr. Sullivan assisted in moving A&R to an unused space while the building their office normally operated from was shut down. Through his efforts, A&R was able to quickly and safely resume full services again. He also devised an innovative way of conducting virtual hearings for veterans with appeals before the U.S. Board of Veterans Appeals so that their clients would not have to travel and expose themselves to COVID-19 risks.

Before COVID-19, Mr. Sullivan handled major changes within A&R which include: transfer of the ADVA Training Manager from A&R to the headquarters, oversaw and guided the integration of a fourth Claims Auditor into the A&R staff, and provided initial training, and published a valuable article for veterans in "Facts and Findings" magazine. Thank you Mr. Sullivan for all you have done!

EMPOWER RETIREMENT

DUST OFF YOUR RETIREMENT TO-DO LIST.

Most of us are spending more time at home than expected in 2020 - and the more motivated among us have used some of that time to do things like organize closets, declutter a junk drawer, and even clean out the garage. If you've been on your own organizing spree, be sure to include your retirement account on your to-do list. Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

-Check your contribution level - Are you contributing enough to your account to reach your retirement income goals? According to one commonly used rule of thumb, we'll need to replace at least 70% of our pre-retirement income to maintain a similar lifestyle after we leave the workplace.¹ Boosting your contribution amount now can help you get closer to that goal.

-Review your asset allocation - Do you have the right balance of risk and return in your mix of investments based

on your planned retirement date? As you approach retirement, you may want to shift to a more conservative mix of investments to lower the risk level of the assets that you'll soon rely on for your retirement income.^{2,3}

-Designate or update your beneficiary - Have you chosen a beneficiary - and is that choice up to date? Your beneficiary is the person who will inherit the assets in your account in the event of your death. When you designate a beneficiary, the assets from your account may not have to go through a prolonged and costly probate process.

Keep your contact detail up to date - Is your contact information current? Confirm that the plan has your correct phone number, mailing address and email address. And if you haven't logged into your account online for a while, why not update your password while you're at it?

¹ empower-retirement.com, "Maximize Your Contributions," March 2016.
² Investing involves risk, including possible loss of principal.
³ Asset allocation, diversification, dollar-cost averaging and/or rebalancing do not ensure a profit or protect against loss.



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Do you have questions about any of these items or want suggestions on other things to do to get your retirement account organized? Visit AlabamaRetire.com, or call 877-313-2262. Remember, you can also talk with your Retirement Plan Advisor.



Honorable Mention - Dr. Jayne Meyer Alabama Department of Education

Dr. Meyer is the Director of Educator Preparation of the Alabama Department of Education (ALSDE). Dr. Meyer started her career at ALSDE in 1973, as a First-Year Teacher Program Specialist. She worked in the Federal Programs from 1975 - 1980 as a Specialist. She became an Education Specialist II in 1980 and became an Administrator and Teacher Coordinator in 1985. She later became Director of Teacher Education now known as Educator Preparation.

Dr. Meyer has been a participant in the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) activities since 1980. After being trained in 1993 for service as a Board of Examiners (BOE) member and serving as a BOE member and chairperson, she was appointed in 1994 to the Unit Accreditation Board (UAB), an entity similar in many ways to CAEP's Accreditation Council (AC). When CAEP was created, Dr. Meyer was appointed to serve on the AC. Her commitment to serving NCATE and now CAEP is evidenced by attendance at 50 consecutive meetings of the UAB and the AC, in addition to fulfilling the responsibilities of membership on several ad hoc committees and task forces. In October, Dr. Meyer was elected to membership on the AC's Executive Committee. Congratulations Dr. Meyer and thank you for dedicated service to the ALSDE and the State!

ASK PERSONNEL



We hope you find our new Ask Personnel column helpful and informative! We are answering state employees' most asked questions and would love your feedback. To submit a question to be featured in our next Ask Personnel column, please email newsletter@personnel.alabama.gov.

01 If a position I am applying for requires a typing certificate, where can I go to take the test?

If you wish to be considered for positions that require typing, we must receive a "Certificate of Proficiency" which describes your typing skill level. Certificates of Proficiency are accepted from proficiency test administrators at Alabama Career Centers and business education teachers in Alabama public and private middle schools, accredited business schools, trade schools, and two-year and four-year colleges. You can visit the AlabamaWorks! website and type in your zip code to find a career center near you. You must make arrangements for the administrator of your test to send your Certificate of Proficiency directly to State Personnel. Certificates of Proficiency submitted by candidates will not be accepted.

02 I submitted an application online and realized I needed to add and/or change information on my application, but it won't let me reapply online. How do I amend my application?

If you have already submitted your application online and have not yet been placed on the register, you will need to mail or fax an updated application to our office. If you have already been placed on the register and need to update your address, contact information, or location availability, you will need to send written notification to the State Personnel Department. Be sure to include your full name, social security number, and the class title/code of the job(s) in question.

Additional education or work experience cannot be considered after your name has been placed on a register. However, you are allowed to re-apply nine months after being placed on a continuous register. At that point, you may submit any additional education and experience on your new application. You can fax it to us at 334-242-1110 or mail it to 64 North Union Street, Suite 300, Montgomery, AL 36130.

Honorable Mention - Renee Sanders Alabama Securities Commission



Ms. Sanders manages the financial and personnel functions for the Alabama Securities Commission (ASC). Ms. Sanders has been a state employee for over 30 years! Also known as the "CFO" of the Commission, she has overseen six legal compliance audits and thirteen sunset audits. More than one Chief Examiner has stated that Renee is the model of efficiency and accuracy for agency financial managers. She has been known to track down employees in order to confirm property tags, receipts, and other documentation in order to ensure ASC maintains appropriate ratings. As Ms. Sanders duties expanded, and through the many years she has been with the ASC, she has developed significant expertise. Amanda Senn, Chief Deputy Director of the ASC, states, "what makes Renee even more exceptional is the fact that she wears two hats," she manages the financial functions as well as the personnel-related responsibilities. When the pandemic brought many challenges to the State, Ms. Sanders made sure to instill the following principles in ASC employees: never forget to wash your hands after touching anything, proper mask etiquette, and sanitize every surface. She has also tackled various employee leave questions pertaining to COVID-19, and she did so with aplomb. Thank you Renee for all you do for ASC and the State!

Alabama Historical Commission - Holiday Open House

SAVE THE DATE

**Holiday
Open
House**

GOAT HILL MUSEUM STORE
CIRCLE OF FLAGS AT THE ALABAMA STATE CAPITOL
THURSDAY - FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 19-20, 2020
8AM - 4:30PM

PerksConnect



It's State of Alabama employees such as yourself that make our success possible. We want to express our appreciation for your ongoing commitment by bringing to you this exciting member benefit filled with everyday discount offerings throughout the community and across the nation.

As a State of Alabama employee, you now have access to thousands of merchant discounts right in your neighborhood and across the county. Shop online with the nation's top retailers and save money on travel, entertainment, food and dining, and much more! You can also save money by purchasing one of more than 100 discounted gift cards or find discounts on more than 400,000 hotels and resorts worldwide.

-Discounted Event Tickets - Ticket Monster specializes in entertainment, offering exclusive savings of up to 50% on tickets to sports, concerts, movies, theme parks, ski resorts, zoos, aquariums, tours, and much more!

-Travel - Find discounts on more than 400,000 hotels and resorts worldwide.

-Discounted Gift Cards - Save up to 13% on select, already discounted gift cards.

-National Offers - Save when shopping with GE, Samsung, Tire Buyer, Dell, Dish Network TV, Direct TV, HP, Lenovo, and more!

-Local Offers - Over 300,000 local deals nationwide!

Registration is simple and FREE. Simply go to alabama.perksconnection.com, pick the region closest to you and complete the short form. You can start saving immediately!

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ABOUT US

The Alabama Merit System law created the Personnel Department to be administered by a Personnel Director who answers to an independent board. The Board currently consists of five members who serve staggered six-year terms. Two members are appointed by the Governor, one by the Lieutenant Governor, one by the Speaker of the House, and one member is an elected classified State employee who is subject to all Merit System rules and regulations.

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