



A MESSAGE FROM SPD DIRECTOR LAURY MORGAN

Dear State of Alabama Employees,

Alabama State Employee Recognition Week took place May 4 – 8 and featured agencies from across the state celebrating the exceptional teams whose work makes a difference in the lives of Alabamians every day. I want to chime in and say I appreciate each and every one of y'all. We couldn't do this without you, so let this newsletter be a celebration of your hard work and dedication to making Alabama a great place to live.

Please stay tuned for changes to SPD's website and job application system. Nearly all state employees use SPD's web-based services at some point in their career, and we're putting special effort into maximizing the positive experience you'll have with them. While more details will come, be prepared for positive changes in the near future. The SPD team and I will keep you informed throughout the process.

Finally, I'd like to say congratulations to our Executive Branch Employee of the Year! We hope you take a moment to read about his many accomplishments in the feature that follows. Please enjoy this edition of Alabama's State Personnel Newsletter and have a great summer!

WHAT'S INSIDE?



State Employee of the Year



Employee Appreciation Week



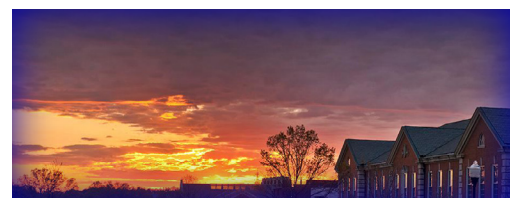
Employee PerksConnection



AlabamaRetire



Ask Personnel



Auburn MPA Program

OUR PURPOSE

- SERVE** | SERVE ALABAMA CITIZENS BY RECRUITING, CULTIVATING, AND SUPPORTING A MISSION-READY WORKFORCE GROUNDED IN MERIT, INTEGRITY, AND PUBLIC TRUST.
- PARTNER** | PARTNER WITH STATE AGENCIES TO PROVIDE TIMELY, EFFICIENT, AND EFFECTIVE SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS.
- STRENGTHEN** | STRENGTHEN STATE GOVERNMENT THROUGH RESPONSIVE, ADAPTABLE, AND STRATEGIC PERSONNEL PRACTICES.
- ATTRACT** | ATTRACT TOP TALENT TO STATE SERVICE BY DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING COMPETITIVE AND MEANINGFUL CAREER PATHWAYS.

COMING UP!

JUNE 19
JUNETEENTH
STATE HOLIDAY

JUNE 21
SUMMER SOLSTICE

JULY 03
FOURTH OF JULY OBSERVED
STATE HOLIDAY

JULY 04
INDEPENDENCE DAY

OCT. 31
WELLNESS SCREENING DEADLINE



EXECUTIVE BRANCH EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR LIEUTENANT BILL FREEMAN

Congratulations to DCNR's Lieutenant Bill Freeman!

Lt. Freeman currently serves in a leadership role within the Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation (R3) Section of DCNR where he drives efforts critical to the future of conservation in Alabama. His programs consistently expand access and participation, particularly among new and underserved audiences. In FY 2024–25, he played a key role in delivering 94 Campus Conservation Program events across 19 colleges and universities, many of which introduced participants to the outdoors for the first time.

Lt. Bill Freeman's impact is both measurable and deeply personal. In a single year, his work helped engage 6,604 college students, contributed to 14,501 Hunter Education certifications, and reached 14,775 individuals through aquatic education programs. He has mentored individuals who now return as partners, professionals, and advocates for conservation. Since 2014, Lt. Freeman has consistently turned outreach into long-term impact, building not just participants, but future leaders who strengthen the mission of our department.

What sets Lt. Freeman apart is his ability to turn these programs into lasting relationships. Many of the former students he once mentored stay in contact with him. These are individuals who now work in conservation or related fields and call him not just to reconnect, but to ask how they can give back and partner with the ADCNR. Many of these individuals also attribute their career path to Lt. Freeman's guidance. This sustained, full-circle engagement is a direct reflection of his influence and the trust he builds with those he serves.

Lt. Bill Freeman exemplifies the very best of public service. His leadership has strengthened our programs, expanded our reach, and, most importantly, changed lives.

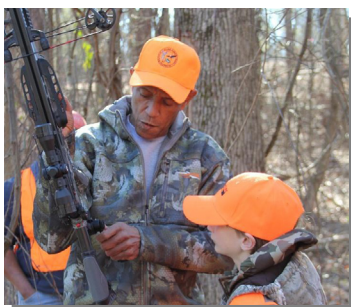
– DCNR Commissioner Christopher Blankenship



Lt. Freeman (right) with
SPD Director Laury Morgan



Lt. Freeman (right) with DCNR
Commissioner Christopher Blankenship



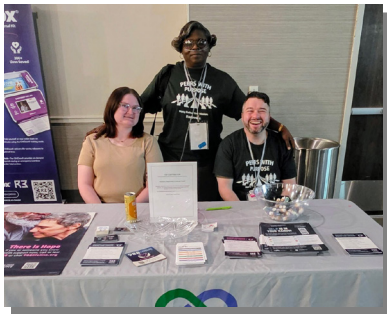
Photos provided by DCNR



STATE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION WEEK | MAY 4-8

Thank you to all agencies participating in recognizing the wonderful work of Alabama's state employees Here are just some of the festivities from across the state.

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH



ALABAMA DEPT. OF HUMAN RESOURCES



AL. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE & INDUSTRIES



(continued on next page)

STATE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION WEEK (continued)

AL. OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



AL. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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THE RETIREMENT BUCKET LIST: PLANNING FOR YOUR BEST YEARS

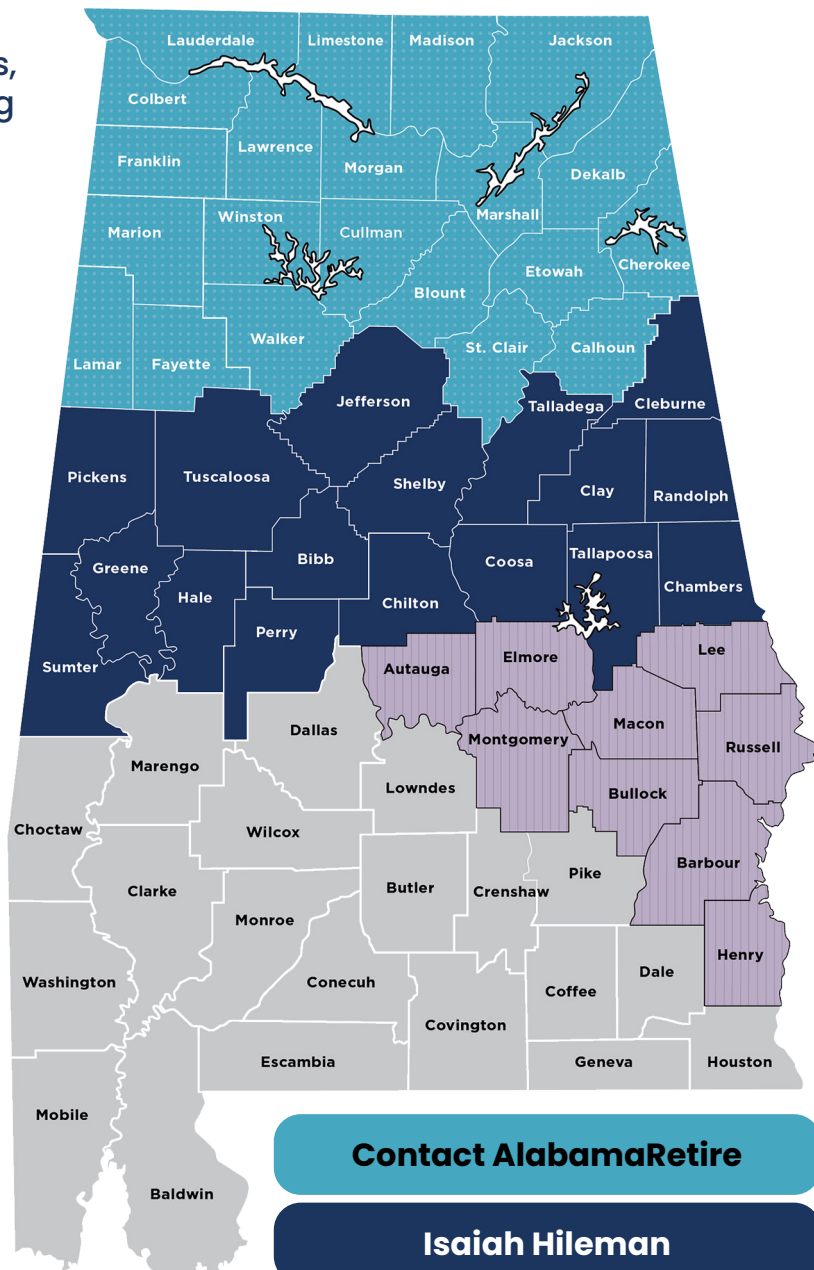
**ALABAMA**RETIRE
STATE PERSONNEL BOARD

Retirement planning often starts with a number: how much you have saved and whether you are on track. But when you shift from asking, “Am I saving enough?” to “What do I want my days to look like?” your plan can become more personal and more meaningful. Defining what matters most can give your savings a clearer purpose, and that purpose can help you stay consistent.

Tools and guidance can help bring your plan to life. Your AlabamaRetire Deferred Compensation Plan’s online tools can help show how different retirement ages, withdrawal strategies, and time horizons may affect how long your savings could last.

Log in to your account at AlabamaRetire.com and use your retirement income tools to see how your priorities may translate into monthly income. For a more accurate picture, consider adding other potential income sources, such as Social Security, a pension, or other retirement savings. Then explore a few “what if” scenarios, such as adjusting your retirement age, changing your withdrawal strategy, or planning for larger expenses earlier in retirement.

You may also consider speaking with a Retirement Plan Advisor for additional support. Your Retirement Plan Advisor can help you think through tradeoffs, review your strategy, and identify next steps based on your goals. A one-on-one conversation can help you connect your goals to your savings, talk through tradeoffs, and build a plan that supports the lifestyle you have in mind. You can schedule a meeting at alabamaretire.empowermytime.com.

**Contact AlabamaRetire****Isaiah Hileman****Nick McKay****Trace Jordan**

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ASK PERSONNEL | ABOUT PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

QUICK FACTS

- 8 Weeks for females for birth, stillbirth, or miscarriage
- 2 Weeks for males for birth, stillbirth, or miscarriage
- 8 Weeks for for adoption of a child three years of age or younger
- 100% of employee's base pay

Employee must have 12 consecutive months of employment immediately preceding the occurrence of the qualifying event in order to be eligible for PPL.

Qualifying Events

PPL may be used for birth, stillbirth, miscarriage, or adoption of a child three years of age or younger.

For birth, stillbirth, or miscarriage, a female employee is eligible for 8 weeks of PPL and the male employee is eligible for 2 weeks of PPL.

For adoption of child three years of age or younger, the employee is eligible for 8 weeks of PPL regardless of sex. If both parents are eligible employees and work for a qualified employer, one parent will be eligible for 8 weeks while the other parent would only be entitled to 2 weeks.

Job Security

When the employee returns from their approved PPL, they shall be restored to the position they held at the time of the qualifying event or restored to an equivalent position with equivalent seniority, status, employment benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment, including any fringe benefits and service credit that the employee received or was entitled to prior to the commencement of PPL.

Pay

PPL is paid at 100% of eligible employee's base pay.

Benefits

Any health care benefits that the employee had at the time of the qualifying event are maintained for the duration of the PPL as if the employee has been continuously employed.

Flexibility

PPL may be used intermittently, on a reduced schedule, or consecutively.*

*PPL taken intermittently or on a reduced schedule for bonding purposes shall be agreed to by the appointing authority prior to the start of the PPL.

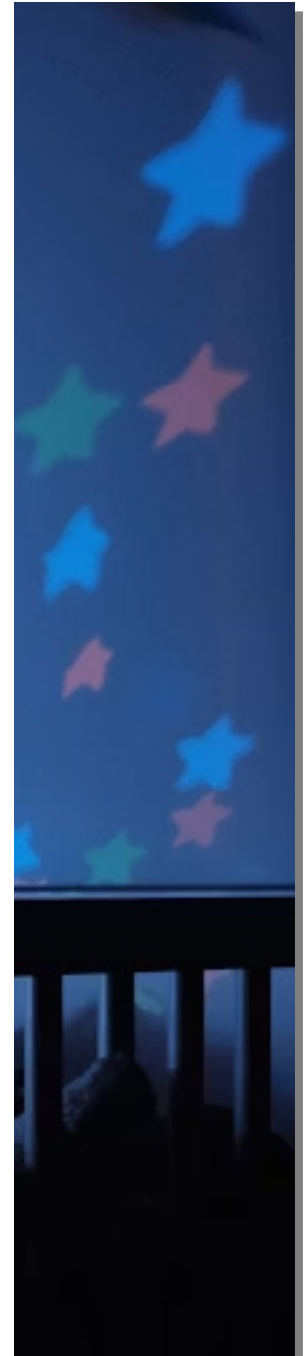
Important Notes:

The qualifying event must occur on or after July 1, 2025. The employee must have 12 consecutive months of employment immediately preceding the occurrence of the qualifying event in order to be eligible for PPL.

Employee may only receive one occurrence of PPL during a 365-day period regardless of if the employee experiences more than one qualifying event in a 365-day period. The 365-day period begins on the first use of PPL or the day of the qualifying event, whichever occurs first.

PPL must run concurrently with FMLA leave if the employee is eligible and has FMLA available.

The employee shall agree in writing with the appointing authority that they will not separate from employment for a period of at least 8 weeks following the conclusion of PPL and any other leave taken in connection with the qualifying event.



Questions? Check our FAQs online or speak with your agency's personnel office.

EMPLOYEES' SUGGESTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM (ESIP)

Submit your cost-saving ideas to the Employees' Suggestion Incentive Board for the opportunity to earn a cash reward of up to \$5,000!

You can find the rules and submission form on the State Personnel Department website, under the "Employees" button, then click "Online Options."

Please remember that your completed submission form must include approval from your appointing authority and a cost-saving estimate for your suggestion to be considered for an award.

SPD LEADERSHIP

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Laury Morgan

Dep. Director
Amanda Mercado

STATE PERSONNEL BOARD

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Evan M. Thornton
David R. Mellon
Carolyn Fair
Phil Webb

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Matthew Estes
Lexie SoloRio

FOLLOW SPD ON:

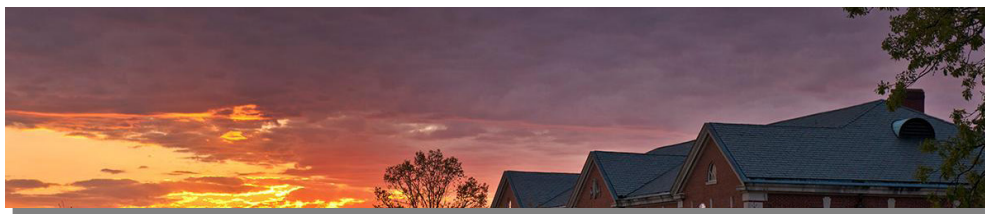


personnel.alabama.gov

CONTACT US:

[newsletter@
personnel.alabama.gov](mailto:newsletter@personnel.alabama.gov)

AUBURN UNIVERSITY OFFERING FULLY ONLINE MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DEGREE



Auburn University is offering public service professionals a new pathway to advance their careers through its fully online Master of Public Administration (MPA) program. Designed with working professionals in mind, the program combines academic rigor, national recognition, and the flexibility of asynchronous online learning. The program is designed to meet the evolving needs of public service professionals across Alabama. This flexible, accessible format allows students to gain the same NASPAA-accredited, rigorous education as our on-campus program—while balancing their careers and personal commitments.

The Auburn Online MPA is designed for professionals with three or more years of experience in public service. You'll engage with fellow practitioners from across the country, exchanging real-world insights while making meaningful connections between theory and practice. The 33-credit hour program utilizes a flexible online platform that allows you to balance your education with your career, giving you the tools to move forward without putting your life on pause.

CELEBRATION OF AMERICA'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY HELD ON CAPITOL GROUNDS

State employees and other Alabamians joined at the Alabama State Capitol to celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America.

