Fellow state employees,

Months ago, we began an in-depth review of the State of Indiana employee experience, examining compensation, flexibility, employee wellness and how we recognize your contributions. Just as employers across the country have embarked on such a process, we have studied how the workplace and employee needs and wants have changed.

We are committed to providing executive-branch employees with a workplace where they can collaborate to find the best solutions to our challenges, where their contributions are recognized and celebrated, where their wellness is a priority, and where they are well compensated and provided with workplace flexibility.

I’m happy to share with you today that, after months of study and listening to feedback from agency leaders and employees from across state government, we are announcing the first set of state work policy changes. These were developed to adjust benefits for our No. 1 resource – you – and continue attracting others like you. We are quickly implementing the first round of changes, effective March 7. They include:

- Flexible work arrangements
- Education reimbursement
- Referral bonuses
- WHOLE Employee policy
- Community Service Leave
- New Employee Leave Time
- Re-Employing Retired State Employees
- Bridge to Retirement Program

Read Governor Eric J. Holcomb’s Letter to employees >

For more information, visit www.in.gov/spd/policies-and-procedures/nextlevelstatework.
National Problem Gambling
Awareness Month

March is recognized as National Problem Gambling Awareness Month. The Hoosier Lottery shares public awareness messaging including:

- Set a budget and stick to it
- Play for entertainment
- Use money you can afford to spend
- Understand the odds and know your game
- Maintain balance in your life

Most people who play the lottery do so responsibly and for entertainment. There is, however, a small percentage of the population whose gambling behaviors become damaging to themselves, their family, and/or their workplace.

The Hoosier lottery offers a Positive Play toolkit online at HoosierLottery.com that includes:

- Fun and informative videos on odds, gaming myths, and setting spending limits
- Positive Play quiz to test your responsible gaming knowledge
- Track Your Play Spend Calculator to review your spending habits
- Financial Literacy course

There are several resources available to those who think they, or someone they know, have a problem with gambling:

- Call the Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-994-8448
- Text INGAMB to 53342
- Chat by visiting HoosierLottery.com and use the CHAT link at the top of the screen.

Visit HoosierLottery.com/positive-play to learn more about our Positive Play program.

Family Medical Leave (FML)
Recertification Process Changes for Fiscal Year 22/23

The next few months are full of exciting updates improving our PeopleSoft system. Some activities currently performed in PeopleSoft are being adjusted around the launch of an integrated HR/Payroll system in PeopleSoft 9.2. The annual process for re-certifying ongoing FML requests for the new fiscal year is one of those being adjusted.

If your family member’s FML situation is expected to continue into the next fiscal year, you must visit the health care provider to have a new Certification of Health Care Provider form completed and then submit a request with the documentation in PeopleSoft at least 30 calendar days before July 1.

All FML recertification requests to begin on July 1, 2022, for the 22/23 fiscal year, will be processed in May and June using PeopleSoft HCM 9.2.

There will be no change in the request and approval process for any FML needed for use in the current fiscal year which ends June 30, 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact the Indiana State Personnel Department, Employee Relations Division at 1-855-773-4647 Option 4.

Last chance to take the Pulse Survey
The Pulse Survey is open through March 7.

There are only a few days left to complete the Pulse Survey!

The Pulse Survey is confidential and we highly encourage you to take the survey and share your experience working with the State of Indiana.

Thank you for your dedication and hard work!
INSPD Employee, Jerry Williams begins his 22nd Year of drawings for The Torch

Jerry Williams is the receptionist for the Indiana State Personnel Department. He has worked for Indiana State Government 30 years, and he has been drawing for the Torch for 22 years. His first drawing appeared in January 2001.

Q: When did you start drawing? When I was a baby, Mom said she’d put me in a highchair and stick a pen and paper in my hand and I would draw! I learned how to color from her. You color using circular motions this way colors blend evenly and smoothly together.

Later on in high school, the local bank in Greenfield held a contest and wanted artists to submit Veterans’ Day posters and I won first place. I also did an ink drawing of the Greenfield Public Library which won a red ribbon in a high school art show.

I started drawing for The Torch (originally named the Interchange) in 2001. Jeff Sullivan, who was over the Interchange, saw some of my high school drawings and he published my drawing of the New Year’s baby and Father time in January of that year.

Department of Revenue Employee of the Year modernizes permitting website

Out of 38 Employees of the Month, only one could be crowned the Employee of the Year.

“It’s as hard as it sounds,” Department of Revenue (DOR) Commissioner Bob Grennes said during the announcement at the All-Agency meeting in January. “Every single one of those individuals have made a significant contribution.”

In the end, Steph Vale (Barranco) received the honor mostly for her work on the ProMiles/Motor Carrier Services Oversize/Overweight Permitting System project, Grennes said. Turning this labor-intensive process into self service was a huge stride for the Motor Carrier Division of DOR.
2022 Canstruction Recap

Canstruction 2022 brought State of Indiana employees together in phenomenal ways: In total, 51 teams put heads together to collect cans and create their unique Canstructions; and overall, we collected 24,268 cans, plus even more in boxed goods!

“I’m touched by how many state employees embraced giving through this initiative,” says Indiana State Personnel Department (INSPD) Director and Canstruction judge, Matt Brown. “A lot of people in need will be fed as a direct result of state employee generosity.”

Thanks to your donations and your Canstruction ingenuity, this year, INSPD received photos of structures including everything from cranes on a construction site and wild duck hunts, to agency logos and the state flag. And more than a few of your Canstructions made us laugh out loud.

Article Submitted by Kaitlyn Wampler - INSPD Communications

2022 Canstruction “Best Structure” AND “Most Cans Collected” winner - Indiana State Fair Commission, collecting 2,864 cans for their re-Canstruction of the Indiana Farmers Coliseum!

DOC Wabash - “Team WVCF” collected 1,626 cans for their Converse High Top

DCS - “MadCo Fo’ Sho” collected 2,653 cans for their 2022 Dumpster Fire

Have you used LinkedIn Learning to develop your career? Meet personal goals?

We want to hear about your progress! Email spdcommunications@spd.in.gov to share your story.
March is Social Work Month, and this year’s theme, provided by the National Association of Social Workers, is “The Time is Right for Social Work.” The title emphasizes the growing need for social workers as society grapples with ongoing social crises.

Social workers are the professionals who aid communities and people in meeting their needs and enhancing their overall well-being. They help the vulnerable and oppressed.

The Department of Child Services (DCS) is one agency that takes the time during March to celebrate its workers as they continue to fight for the safety of children and families across Indiana.

DCS encourages its staff to recognize one another for their hard work by participating in a virtual Hall of Fame. Employees can submit a peer’s name and an example of how spectacular they are and have it posted on the DCS intranet site for the entire agency to see. The department also utilizes a compliment tag activity, which allows staff to pass along a graphic via email to personally thank a peer for their hard work.

You can join DCS in recognizing Social Work Month! You might not realize how many social workers you come into contact with — educators, health care workers, childcare facility staff and so many more. Each plays a role in making this world a safer and better place. Give the social workers in your life a big thank you this month and every month. We are lucky to have them!

Article contributed by DCS Communications
"A health coach is somebody in your corner who’s there for the sole purpose of helping you be well"

I wasn’t looking for a health coach...
I was just looking for the most efficient way to the reduced health premium. One year I saw that one of the ways to get the price break on health insurance was to have meetings with a health coach and that’s how I found out about it.

So, I didn’t go into that seeking it, believing in it, or understanding what its value was. But it quickly changed in that I saw the value and the substance in meeting with my health coach.

It’s not just exercise, it’s not just diet, it’s not just mental wellness, and it’s not just morbidity avoidance. It wasn’t any one of those things. It was making small practical changes that would impact every one of them.

... I’ve gotten hard data showing tremendous benefit from exercise and health coaching.

Article Submitted by Kaitlyn Wampler - INSPD Communications

Are you a wellness champion?

The Invest In Your Health team is recruiting individuals to serve as Wellness Champions throughout the state. If you have a passion for personal health and wellness, a desire to help others, and strong organization and communication skills, we encourage you to become a Wellness Champion and take part in raising awareness and engagement in healthy practices at your worksite!

Wellness champions will have three areas of focus:

1. **Reading content** – Ashley Martin, INSPD Wellness Consultant, sends monthly newsletters with resources and information to the wellness champion group. Champions need to read this information so they can share it with their agencies.

2. **Sharing content** – the monthly information can be shared on internal agency websites, agency newsletters, agency emails, or through other internal communications.

3. **Create events** – Speak with agency leaders about how often and what type of wellness events they would prefer. Ashley shares ideas for challenges that fit the monthly health theme with each newsletter. Events can also be healthy pitch-ins, walking groups, healthy meeting breaks etc.

If this sounds like you, mail Ashley Martin at asmartin@spd.in.gov!

View the Wellness Champion description

“Are you a wellness champion?”

I wasn’t looking for a health coach...
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... I’ve gotten hard data showing tremendous benefit from exercise and health coaching.

Article Submitted by Kaitlyn Wampler - INSPD Communications
Get moving on your 2023 premium discount

March 15 is the LAST DAY to start the fitness tracking option

With Spring just a few weeks away, now is a great time to make a fresh start and get active after the long winter.

It’s also the perfect opportunity to get moving on earning your 2023 premium discount! Employees and spouses enrolled in an Indiana State Personnel Department (INSPD) health plan can choose to complete any of the following activities to earn the 2023 Premium Discount.

• **Fitness Tracking** – Meet the goal of 10,000 daily steps or 30 minutes of physical activity through a synced device on at least 200 separate days. Get started by syncing a fitness device with your ActiveHealth account. Only activity that occurs after you have synced your fitness device will be tracked and credited. The deadline to start this option is March 15.

• **Health Education and Health Coaching** – Complete two individual health coaching sessions (in-person or virtually) through ActiveHealth AND reach Level 3 through online education and challenges through the ActiveHealth Portal. Get started by visiting [www.myactivehealth.com/StateofIndiana](http://www.myactivehealth.com/StateofIndiana). The deadline to start this option is July 1.

• **Group Coaching** – Complete four group coaching sessions in the same series through ActiveHealth. New group coaching sessions will be regularly added to the ActiveHealth portal throughout the year. Get started by signing up for a group coaching series at [myactivehealth.com/stateofindiana](http://myactivehealth.com/stateofindiana). The deadline to start this option is August 15.

The choice is up to you, but you should get started right away!

March 15 is the last day to start on the fitness tracking option. No matter which option you choose, the deadline to complete the activity is Sept. 30, 2022.

Want to know more? [InvestInYourHealthIndiana.com](http://InvestInYourHealthIndiana.com) is YOUR go-to for all things related to health and wellness for state employees. Check the site often for helpful information on how to make healthy living a priority each and every day.
Eating a balanced diet – on a budget

While healthy food can be expensive, there are many ways you can save money and still eat right.

**Cook at home.** The average American household spends about $3,000 a year dining out.¹ Try and make it a habit to cook at home. Some people find it best to meal prep for the entire week on the weekends, while others cook one meal each day.

**Stick to your list.** It’s very easy to make impulse buys — and drive up that grocery bill. As a general rule, shop the whole foods aisle first.

**Buy frozen or canned fruits and vegetables.** They can be healthy alternatives to fresh produce. Be sure to select those that come in water, not syrup. Read the label to avoid added sugar or salt and skip items with added butter or cream sauces.

**Grow a garden.** If you can, growing your own greens is a great way to save. Even if you don’t have a yard -- many fruits, vegetables, and herbs can grow in pots on patios or balconies. You can try a community garden, too.

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**Wellness Webinar Series**

**Staying healthy on a budget.** Keeping a healthy lifestyle doesn’t need to be pricey. Get helpful tips for meal planning and low-cost exercise ideas.

**March 15, 2022 | 10:00 AM, 12:30 PM and 4:30 PM, ET**

http://go.activehealth.com/wellness-webinars

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Rolanda’s well-being tips:
Eating on a budget? You can enjoy nutritious foods without breaking the bank.

**Use recipes with common ingredients.** Cook a whole chicken and try using it in several dishes. Add the chicken to vegetable stir fry one night and fajitas another night.

**Find ways to stretch a recipe or freeze it.** For example, make a large batch of white bean chili that can last throughout the week, or freeze the leftovers to have later.

**Cut back on costly meats in your meals.** Build your meal around brown rice, wheat pasta or other grains. Stir fries and pasta dishes are a great way build a tasty dish around with a small amount of meat, poultry or fish. Try vegetarian protein sources, like beans, nuts, and eggs.

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**Arroz con Pollo**
Try this classic rice and chicken dish which is healthy for you and your budget. Get more recipes at: MyActiveHealth.com > Resources > Learning Center.

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**Eat better. Save more.**
Who says eating healthy has to be expensive? With a little planning, you can eat well and still save money. Here are some tips that can help.

**Plan ahead.**
Before heading to the grocery store, plan meals for the week. Check to see what foods you already have in your home. Make a list of items you do need to get and when you can, buy in bulk.

**Get the best price.**
Sign up for a loyalty card for savings at stores where you shop. Check the grocery store app, circulars and in-store flyers for sales and coupons. Buy generic or store brands.

**Focus on low-cost foods.**
Certain foods are typically low-cost options all year round. Try beans, carrots, greens or potatoes.

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For more tips on how to manage your well-being, visit MyActiveHealth.com

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Amid the Omicron COVID-19 variant surge, the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) joined with local health departments, the Indiana National Guard (INNG) and other organizations throughout the state to help test for the highly transmissible virus – and vaccinate against it.

From the historic Indianapolis Motor Speedway to fire stations to gas stations, mobile vaccine units were something of a fixture in communities from “the Region” all the way to the Wabash Valley. But a series of clinics in Elkhart showcased the collaboration and commitment to helping people that was central to combating the pandemic, and that series of events, which was aimed at assisting people in vulnerable populations, ended up being a literal “shot in the arm” for adults and children – at a time it was needed most.

“There is a huge demand from the Hispanic community for COVID-19 vaccination and testing resources in our county, but they are currently not available or accessible on a regular basis,” said Northern Indiana Hispanic Health Coalition (NIHHC) executive director Liliana Quintero. Referring to a January clinic that saw 329 vaccines and 123 COVID tests administered in only six hours, Quintero said such events mitigate community challenges.

“This clinic is a direct response to the barriers we are facing as a community including, bilingual staff, weekend services to accommodate factory workers, and a place that is recognized and welcoming to the Hispanic community,” she said. The Jan. 22 event at Elkhart’s Concord Event Center saw IDOH partner with NIHHC, INNG, and the Elkhart County Health Department (ECHD) to address those needs and provide testing and vaccination opportunities community members otherwise might not have had.

“What we have seen is difficulty in transportation to the site, schedule, getting vaccinated for the whole family,” said Andrew Wilson of the IDOH Emergency Preparedness division.

A vaccination clinic in Elkhart provided first, second and booster COVID-19 vaccine doses in January. By mid-February, four such clinics had been organized. Weekend operations helped eliminate some of the barriers vulnerable populations face in getting vaccinated.

Story by Brent Brown, Indiana Department of Health

Government Women in Technology Annual Summit

Did you know there is a Government Women in Technology (GWIT) affinity group at the state?

GWIT is a professional networking group, founded in 2019, and boasts over 130 members with nearly 30 agencies represented.

State employees are invited to attend the annual Government Women in Technology Summit on March 9. The exciting line up features state and national speakers and panel discussions.

Date: Wednesday, March 9
Time: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
GWIT Summit Teams event link: https://on.in.gov/2022GWITsummit

Note: Employees are encouraged to attend the Summit, however, it cannot be done on state time. Please check with your supervisor on being able to flex this time.

“Government Women in Technology Annual Summit”

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Note: Employees are encouraged to attend the Summit, however, it cannot be done on state time. Please check with your supervisor on being able to flex this time.
It’s time to enter the Historic Preservation Photo Contest

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (DHPA) is sponsoring the Historic Preservation Month photo contest again in 2022. The subject of entry photos must be in Indiana, be at least 50 years old, and be something that was designed/built by people. It can be a building that’s been restored to perfection or one that needs some love. The idea is to show the value of historic preservation. Photos of exclusively natural elements are not eligible.

For the complete rules and guidelines and the required entry form, go to www.in.gov/dnr/historic-preservation/public-outreach/historic-preservation-month/photo-contest

The photos should be JPEG files (less than 10MB). Each photo and the required entry form should be emailed to aborland@dnr.in.gov as attachments. Photographers can submit up to three photos, but submit only one photo and entry form per respective email.

Disability Awareness Month

March is #DisabilityAwarenessMonth!

This month is meant to draw awareness to the different ways that people with and without disabilities come together to create strong, diverse communities and promote the equity and inclusion of those with disabilities. The Indiana Civil Rights Commission exists to help any Hoosier who believes they have been discriminated against due to a protected class, including disability.

Visit our social media pages @INCivilRights or our website in.gov/icrc for more information on Disability Awareness Month and upcoming events. #ICRCDisabilityAwareness

Microsoft 365 Learning - Planner

Organize tasks, increase focus, and improve efficiency with Microsoft Planner! Microsoft Planner is a simple, visual way to organize your teamwork. With Planner, your team can assign tasks, add due dates, communicate about projects, and easily view charts of the team’s progress.

To learn more about Microsoft Planner, get started with this training.

For more information on available trainings and resources, contact Elisa Phillips at ephillips@iot.in.gov.

Article contributed by IOT
“Major Taylor: Fastest Cyclist in the World”

The Torch

Good background on Major Taylor is available at:

- www.majortaylorindy.org
- www.majortaylorassociation.org/who.shtml
- majortaylorclub.com/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=645935&module_id=265047
- cascade.org/learn-major-taylor-project/history-marshall-major-taylor-fastest-man-world

“Major Taylor: Fastest Cyclist in the World,” an interactive experience examining the life and career of champion bicycle racer and Indianapolis native Marshall “Major” Taylor, will open March 5 and run through Oct. 23 at the Indiana State Museum. The exhibit is free with paid museum admission.

Major Taylor’s bicycle, which will be part of the exhibit.

The experience will take visitors into the training room to learn how Taylor developed his speed and agility through a regimen of exercise and diet. They will discover the pervasive racism that Taylor battled on and off the track – including being denied food and accommodations – and hear from great contemporary cyclists Justin Williams and Indiana University graduate Rahsaan Bahati about how Taylor’s story has the power to inspire a new generation of Black riders.

Taylor was born in Marion County in 1878. He earned his nickname because he wore a military uniform when he performed tricks and stunts outside an Indianapolis bike shop to attract business. He was a world-class bicycle rider while still in his teens but moved to Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1895 to escape Indianapolis’s “whites only” tracks.

In 1898, Taylor won 29 races, finished second nine times and third 11 times, and by that time had racked up seven world records. In 1899 and 1900, he won the world sprint championships. He was only the second Black man to win a championship in any sport. (Boxer George “Little Chocolate” Dixon was first.) From 1901-1903, he had 113 first-place finishes and was second 48 times.

Kisha Tandy, the state museum’s curator of social history, is the curator for “Major Taylor: Fastest Cyclist in the World.” She said the remarkable story of this champion cyclist and trailblazer “should inspire us to talk and think about who rides bicycles, test our athletic skills, tinker with bike design and mechanics or just discover the joy of riding free and going where we like.”

“Major Taylor: Fastest Cyclist in the World” is made possible with the generous support of Institute of Museum and Library Services, OneAmerica Foundation, OrthoIndy Foundation, Barnes & Thornburg LLP and Indiana Humanities.
Early detection is the best protect
Learn about screening for colorectal cancer

Nothing is as valuable as your health. That’s why it is important to take time for preventive screenings. Tests for colorectal cancer and other conditions can find problems even before they cause symptoms. Detecting a disease early, when it may be easier to treat, can help you stay as healthy as possible.¹

**What is colorectal cancer?**
Colorectal cancer usually starts as a precancerous growth, called a polyp, inside the colon or rectum. Over time, some polyps may turn into cancer.
Colon cancer doesn’t usually cause symptoms early on, so you should have regular checkups when your doctor recommends, depending on your risk factors.² These include:³

- Aging
- Having type 2 diabetes
- Being Black or a Jewish person of Eastern European heritage
- Having a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or polyps
- Having a history of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)

Talk with your doctor about how often you should be screened, and when you should start.
What is colorectal cancer screening?
Some screenings for colorectal cancer can be done at home following instructions from your doctor. For most kinds of screenings, you’ll need to follow a specific diet for a day or two ahead of time, so your colon is empty.

If you have a colonoscopy, your doctor will remove polyps, which are small growths that can become cancerous, and take possible tissue samples. These will be sent to a lab to be examined by a pathologist.

How can I lower my risk?
Some risk factors, like your age, medical history, or heritage, are things you can’t control. But there are other things you can do to lower your risk for colon cancer:

- **Eat a plant-based diet.** A diet high in vegetables, fruits, and whole grains lowers your risk of colorectal cancer. Eating a lot of red meat or processed meat raises your risk.

- **Stay physically active.** This reduces your risk.

- **Stay at a healthy weight.** Being very overweight or obese increases the risk of colon cancer, especially in men.

Even small changes to your lifestyle can help lower your risk of colorectal cancer and many other conditions. We are here to support you. For more information on preventive care, visit [anthem.com/preventive-care](https://anthem.com/preventive-care).

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Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of: In Colorado: Rocky Mountain Hospital and Medical Service, Inc. HMO products underwritten by HMO Colorado, Inc. Copies of Colorado network access plans are available on request from member services or can be obtained by going to anthem.com/co/networkaccess. In Connecticut: Anthem Health Plans, Inc. In Georgia: Blue Cross Blue Shield Healthcare Plan of Georgia, Inc. In Indiana: Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. In Kentucky: Anthem Health Plans of Kentucky. Inc. In Maine: Anthem Health Plans of Maine, Inc. In Missouri (excluding 30 counties in the Kansas City area): RightCHOICE® Managed Care, Inc. (RIT), Healthy Alliance® Life Insurance Company (HALIC), and HMO Missouri, Inc. RIT and certain affiliates administer non-HMO products underwritten by HALIC and HMO Missouri, Inc. RIT and certain affiliates only provide administrative services for self-funded plans and do not underwrite benefits. In Nevada: Rocky Mountain Hospital and Medical Service, Inc. HMO products underwritten by HMO Colorado, Inc., dba HMO Nevada. In New Hampshire: Anthem Health Plans of New Hampshire, Inc. HMO plans are administered by Anthem Health Plans of New Hampshire, Inc. and underwritten by Matthew Thornton Health Plan, Inc. In Ohio: Community Insurance Company. In Virginia: Anthem Health Plans of Virginia, Inc. transacts as Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Virginia, and its service area is all of Virginia except for the City of Fairfax, the Town of Vienna, and the area east of State Route 123. In Wisconsin: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Wisconsin (BCBSWI) underwrites or administers PPO and indemnity policies and underwrites the out of network benefits in POS policies offered by Compcare Health Services Insurance Corporation (Compcare) or Wisconsin Collaborative Insurance Corporation (WCIC). Compcare underwrites or administers HMO or POS policies; WCIC underwrites or administers Well Priority HMO or POS policies. Independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Anthem is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc.