



The Torch

The official newsletter for State of Indiana employees

August 2026

Greetings from the Governor

- Watch Governor Braun's latest [video message](#) to State employees.
- Sign up for the Governor's weekly newsletter, [here](#).



The Pulse Survey is open: Make your voice heard!

Article by Indiana State Personnel Dept.

The 2026 Pulse Survey is live and open until Friday, August 21, 2026. Administered annually by the Indiana State Personnel Department (INSPD), the survey provides all State employees with an important opportunity to share insights about their work experiences.

By taking part in completing the 2026 Pulse Survey, you provide valuable insights that guide workplace priorities and strengthen the employee experience statewide. Reminder, the Pulse Survey is short, confidential, and impactful. Responses should only take approximately 5 minutes to complete, individual responses are not identifiable, and your feedback



can guide meaningful, ongoing employee engagement efforts on a statewide and agency level.

[Take the Pulse Survey before August 21.](#)

Governor Braun recognizes State employees' dedication with a one-time bonus

In an [email sent to State employees on July 13](#), Governor Mike Braun announced a one-time bonus to eligible State employees to recognize their hard work, service, and contributions.

The recognition bonuses were reflected on the July 29 paycheck.

Eligible executive branch employees received up to \$2,500, according to the following guidelines:

Employee Hire Date Range	Bonus Amount (Full-time)	Bonus Amount (Part-time)
On or before January 13, 2025	\$2,500	\$1,250
January 14, 2025 - July 1, 2025	\$2,000	\$1,000
July 2, 2025 - December 31, 2025	\$1,000	\$500

[View the email bulletin](#) for full details.

The Torch is published monthly by the Indiana State Personnel Department and is available online at on.in.gov/TheTorch.

Want more content?
Check out the State of Indiana on LinkedIn and Facebook and @WorkForIndiana on X and Instagram.

Have a story?
Submit your story ideas to: spdccommunications@spd.in.gov

Tax Amnesty 2026 is happening now

Article by
Indiana Dept.
of Revenue

As a State of Indiana employee, you may have heard of Tax

Amnesty 2026, but do you know what it is? The Indiana Department of Revenue (DOR) is partnering with the United Collection Bureau



(UCB) to offer taxpayers a limited-time opportunity to pay past-due, eligible taxes and receive a waiver of related penalties, interest, and collection fees. Tax Amnesty 2026 runs until Sept. 9, 2026.

Visit the [Tax Amnesty 2026 webpage](#) for more information, including frequently asked questions, a video guide, fact sheets, and contact information if you want to make a payment or set up a payment plan.

August virtual workshops available

Article by Indiana State Personnel Dept.

The Indiana State Personnel Department (INSPD) offers virtual workshops for all State of Indiana employees to engage with resources, skills, and strategies presented by INSPD subject-matter experts. Use the links below to register. On the registration page, select the course name at the top to view the description and learning objectives.

- [Creating an Effective Self-](#)

[Assessment](#): Wednesday, Aug. 19, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

- [Measuring Progress & Utilizing Feedback](#)*: Thursday, Aug. 20, 9 to 10:30 a.m.
 - [Engaging in Effective Feedback](#): Thursday, Aug. 20, 1 to 2:30 p.m.
- *Please complete the [Foundations of Effective Evaluation](#) prerequisite before registering.

Questions? Contact the INSPD Learning and Development team at SPDtraining@spd.in.gov.

New AI submission process & statewide AI Inventory now live

Article by Indiana Office of Technology and Management Performance Hub

The Management Performance Hub (MPH) and Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) have launched a streamlined AI submission process and Indiana's first AI Inventory for state agencies.

Effective August 3, the new **AI Helper** form on ServiceNow replaces all previous AI submission

forms. The single form guides users through one of three paths — AI Readiness Assessment, AI Use Case Questionnaire or Out of Scope Affirmation — based on your selection. The new **AI Inventory** gives state employees enterprise-wide visibility into approved and denied AI technologies through a Power BI transparency portal.

To learn more and link to the AI Helper visit: www.in.gov/mph/AI.

IOT to enable labeling feature

Article by Indiana Office of Technology

The Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) will be enabling a labeling feature to help identify and protect sensitive information in email. Microsoft 365 will begin automatically labeling email messages as **Confidential\Sensitive** anytime sensitive data is detected (such as Social Security numbers, credit card numbers, tax ID, etc.)



This label **does not replace encryption or standard safeguards and policies for handling sensitive data**. Employees are still responsible for following all State of Indiana and agency policies and procedures for safeguarding and handling sensitive data for their role at their agency.

The Confidential\Sensitive label prevents Microsoft Copilot from accessing any messages marked Confidential\Sensitive, and any data contained in it. The label does not change how you send or receive email. Automatic labels may appear after your message has been sent. This feature is only proactively labeling new emails moving forward. This will not go back and retroactively label sensitive content in emails.

Users also have the option to manually use the Confidential/Sensitive label in all M365 productivity apps such as Excel, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc. Using this label prevents Microsoft Copilot from accessing any information contained in that file.

Preventive Care: Your final call to earn rewards before year-end



Article by Indiana State Personnel Dept.

Schedule your appointments now to avoid the end-of-year rush.

Summer is winding down, and now's the perfect time to take care of the [preventive screenings](#) that keep you healthy and earn [Wellness Rewards](#). Regular preventive care screenings can detect issues early, support long-term health, and ensure you're getting the most out of your State Employee Health Plan. Many preventive services are covered at 100% with in-network providers.

Depending on eligibility, employees and spouses can each earn:

- \$200 for an [annual physical](#)

- \$50 for a [vision exam](#)
- \$50 for a [dental exam & cleaning](#)
- \$50 for a [cancer screening](#)
- \$25 per [vaccine](#), up to \$100 total

Your preventive care activity isn't considered complete until it appears in the Mobile Health Consumer portal. While most screenings are processed automatically through your insurance, the annual physical requires a submitted form that can take up to four weeks to show in the portal. Complete everything early to ensure your rewards are credited before the December 31 deadline.

[Learn more about preventive care screenings.](#)

Final two events in Run the State 5K & Hike Series



Get out and get moving at the last two events in the 2026 [Run the State 5K & Hike Series](#)!



This Spring, State employees and family members participated in 5K & hike events at Indiana Dunes State Park, Patoka Lake, and White River State Park. The series wraps up with 5K & hike events at **Ouabache State Park on Sept. 19**, and **Charlestown State Park on Oct. 3**. Registration is now open for both events!

Visit the [Run the State 5K & Hike Series webpage](#) for details and registration information.

NEW Joint and Survivor payment option

Article by Indiana Public Retirement System



Effective July 1, 2026, Excise, Gaming & Conservation

members retiring after July 1, 2026, may elect a new benefit payment option, the Joint and Survivor option, which gives

members three different ways to split retirement funds, allowing a survivor to receive either 100%, two-thirds (2/3), or one-half of the retirement benefit upon the member's death. You can make this choice either when you apply for retirement or the DROP.

To weigh your options, call

INPRS to request an estimate at 844-464-6777 to see how the Joint & Survivor payment options break down individually for you. If you die before retirement, and you elected the DROP, your designated survivor may receive survivor benefits. To learn more, visit www.in.gov/inprs.

GSI program wraps up with awards ceremony

Article by the Indiana State Personnel Dept.

This month, the State proudly bid farewell to the 2026 Governor's Summer Internship (GSI) cohort. Throughout their time with the State, interns gained meaningful experience and hands-on insight through the projects and initiatives they supported within their agencies. In addition, interns participated in a variety of enriching opportunities, including visits with Governor Braun, Inspector General Prentice, and Chief Justice Rush. They also attended events such as an Agency Leadership Panel, a Professional Development Workshop, a Poster Presentation showcase, and an Awards Ceremony recognizing the impact of their work over the summer.

[Read full story and view the intern award winners.](#)



2026 Summer Interns pose with the Inspector General.

IDEM Celebrates 40 Years of Environmental Protection in Indiana

Article by Indiana Dept. of
Environmental Management



On July 1, 1986, the Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management (IDEM) was established to create comprehensive oversight of air, land, and water quality in Indiana.

Gov. Braun issued a proclamation declaring July 1, 2026, as "A Day Honoring IDEM's 40th Anniversary." On July 14, IDEM hosted a celebration for agency employees featuring a video montage of pictures throughout the agency's history, a trivia game and other fun activities. Employees throughout

the state were presented with a commemorative medallion, travel mug and lanyard featuring the 40th anniversary logo.

Only 12 current IDEM employees have been with the agency since its first year. Names with an *

are featured in the photo below.

*Steve Lengerich; *Roxann Sanders; Ruby Keslar; *Mike Miles; *Michael Mosier; Marty Maupin; *Kim Whittington; *Brenda Stephanoff; *Mark Stoddard; *Kim Mayo; Glynda Oakes; and *Shyamala Raman.



Events

Indiana State Fair opens Friday, August 7

Article by Indiana State
Fairgrounds & Event Center

The countdown is on. The 2026 Indiana State Fair opens Friday, August 7, and runs through August 23, closed Mondays, at the Indiana State Fairgrounds & Event Center. This year's baseball-themed Fair, presented in partnership with the Indianapolis Indians, is packed with new experiences and returning favorites.

Be among the first to ride the new train attraction, enjoy the thrilling Big Top Circus presented

by Bee Window, catch live performances on the new Hoosier Lottery Free Stage, step back in time with Rewind: A VHS Revival, and sample creative new flavors at the Taste of the Fair.

The Fair is open Tuesday-Thursday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday & Saturday from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m., and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.



Start planning your visit and experience the Greatest 15 Days of Summer:

www.indianastatefair.com

Indiana Grants Management Collaborative updates

Article by Indiana Grants Management
Collaborative

The Indiana Grants Management Collaborative (INGMC) is a forum for grants management professionals to network, exchange ideas, share best practices, and improve the management of state and federal grants across the state.

The INGMC is excited to announce

that this year's fall quarterly session will feature an in-person presentation given by special guest Jason LeBeau from the US Department of Justice on Grant Fraud Awareness! The session will be held on **September 24, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the Indiana Government Center South Auditorium.** [Click here](#) if you are interested in attending the presentation in-person. The

session will also be available virtually for those unable to attend in person.

Interested in the INGMC?

- [INGMC Viva Engage](#): Connect with other grants management professionals.
- [INGMC landing page](#): See what the collaborative can do for you.
- [INGMC interest form](#): Sign up for the newsletter.

LAST CALL: Certified Public Manager® training starting this September

Article by Ball State

Indiana's Certified Public Manager® program, offered through Ball State's Bowen Center for Public Affairs, provides supervisory (Phase 1) and leadership (Phase 2) training for Indiana state, local, and nonprofit managers. Enrollment eligibility closes soon for these three courses

across the state:

- Fort Wayne (Thursday): Starts Sept. 10, 2026
- Fishers (Friday): Starts Sept. 11, 2026
- Valparaiso (Tuesday): Starts Sept. 15, 2026

Indiana CPM is a nationally

accredited program, and the curriculum has been fully updated to reflect current managerial best practices in time management, process improvement, emotional intelligence, fiscal stewardship, change leadership, strategizing, innovation, and others. Visit the [Indiana CPM website](#) for any additional questions and to complete the digital application.