



The Torch

The official newsletter for State of Indiana employees

DEC. 2025

Celebrating 2025 accomplishments across State government

Under Governor Mike Braun's leadership, 2025 has been a year of meaningful progress across state government. State employees across agencies delivered major results for Hoosiers while also benefiting from historic new workplace policies championed by the Governor.

Governor Braun signed a landmark executive order expanding paid parental leave for state employees, including expanded paid parental leave for new parents, paid childbirth leave for women recovering from giving birth, as well as paid leave for those grieving from the tragedy of losing a baby. He also launched the state's new Family

First Workplace Pilot Program, allowing eligible employees in three agencies to bring their infants to work during their first six months of life, reflecting his commitment to supporting families and retaining top talent.

This year, state employees helped make the following accomplishments possible:

- INDOT managed more than 1,200 construction projects, resurfaced over 7,600 lane miles, and advanced major initiatives, including the I-65 Safety and Efficiency Project and the Mid-States Corridor.
- IEDC drove economic growth, increasing average wages for supported jobs from \$37 to \$41 an hour.
- DOR processed more than 7 million tax returns, collected \$28.8 billion in revenue, and

maintained strong customer service across thousands of inquiries.

- IOT earned national recognition, placing second in the Government Experience Awards for excellence in digital services.
- INSPD received the Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award for its Indiana Manager Central initiative, which equips managers with training and resources to lead effectively.
- DOC, IDHS, and ISP continued their critical mission of safeguarding Hoosiers across the state.

Together, more than 30,000 state employees have kept Indiana moving forward—strengthening communities, and ensuring government runs efficiently. As we close out 2025, thank you to all State of Indiana employees for your service and commitment. May you enjoy a well-earned holiday season with family and friends.

Greetings from the Governor



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

Got a story?

Submit your story ideas to: spdcommunications@spd.in.gov

Update personal information in PeopleSoft

It's important to update personal information in PeopleSoft each year to ensure that your information accurate and correct. All you have to do is:

- Login to PeopleSoft > Select Employee Self-Service (ESS) > Select Personal Details
- In "Personal Details" you can update your mailing address (please check for accuracy as this is where your W-2 and other important documents are mailed), contact details, emergency contacts, disability status, veteran status, and more.

Events

Canstruction 2026 is almost here!

It's almost time to break out those Canstruction hard hats and start thinking about the 2026 Canstruction competition.

What is Canstruction?

We pit agency against agency looking for the most creative design made entirely of donated cans. It's a fun and creative way to help food pantries restock their shelves after the holidays!

Registration for the 2026 Canstruction competition will open on Jan. 5, 2026. The time to collect and create your Canstruction masterpiece is Jan. 14-28, 2026.

Look for more information coming soon!

[View all entries from 2025 >](#)

Thank you for participating in SECC

The 2025 State Employees' Community Campaign (SECC) wrapped up on Nov. 7. More than 3,000 employees donated through events and recurring donations. Thousands of employees showed up to participate, volunteer, and cheer on their teammates across the State.

Employees brought energy, creativity, and heart to every

Statewide and agency held special event. **Together, we raised over \$1 million and had a great time doing it!**

Thank you to everyone who donated, participated, and helped make this campaign a success.

[View photos from the 2025 SECC Campaign >](#)

Adoption Month at DCS



The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) celebrated National Adoption Month in November! This month highlighted the families who have permanently welcomed children into their lives through adoption and the children still seeking secure, forever families.

On Oct. 31, Governor Mike Braun signed the official proclamation for National Adoption Month with three adoptive families. These families talked about the importance of adoption when they met with Governor Braun and DCS Director Adam Krupp.

[View photos of the event >](#)

[Read the full article on Employee Central >](#)



HOLIDAYS IN INDIANA

Grab the family, find new traditions, and celebrate the holidays to the fullest extent IN Indiana.

[MAKE YOUR SEASON BRIGHT IN INDIANA](#)



Efficiency & Excellence

Complete your Performance Appraisal Self-Assessment by this Sunday, December 7!

This process is an essential piece of evaluating goals, helping employees grow in their careers, identifying strengths and barriers, and rewarding the hard work of State of Indiana employees.

Employees: Use resources like the [Self-Assessment SuccessFactors Job Aid](#) and [Performance Appraisal Process Timeline, Resources & Help](#) document to complete your self-assessment by the December 7 deadline.

Managers: Manager assessments are due January 4, 2026. Use models like ORCA (Objective, Results, Contribution/Challenges, Added value) and SBI (Situation, Behavior, Impact) to document your observations and evaluate performance effectively. Find more details in the [Performance Assessment Guidance for Employees and Managers](#) resource. Remember, do not reveal appraisal ratings until they are approved for release and discussion.

[More details about the Performance Appraisal Process >](#)

Browser and extension updates from IOT

The Indiana Office of Technology removed Firefox from State-managed devices on Nov. 1. Employees who require Firefox for business purposes should submit a ticket to [IOT: Indiana Office of Technology](#).

IOT also plans to restrict managed Chrome extensions, including Grammarly, in the near future. If you need access to specific Chrome add-ins submit a ticket to [IOT: Indiana Office of Technology](#).

State employee holiday schedule

Reminder of upcoming State office holiday closures:

Christmas Day - Thursday, Dec. 25
Washington's Birthday - Friday, Dec. 26
New Year's Day - Thursday, Jan. 1, 2026



[View the 2026 Holiday schedule >](#)

From everyone at the Indiana State Personnel Department, we hope you all have a safe and happy holiday season!

Important - New W-2 reporting requirement

Earlier this year, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act introduced a new provision regarding **premium overtime pay**. This is the additional half-time amount paid on all premium overtime hours, which **may not be subject to federal tax**.

For tax year 2025, State employees will see this amount reported on the **W-2 in Box 14** under a description provided by the payroll system (currently expected to display as **"PREM OT"**).

If you have questions about how to report this on your tax return, please consult your tax advisor.

Act now to receive your W-2 faster

Complete 4 simple steps to receive your W-2 faster and eliminate the risk of getting lost in the mail.

1. Log into PeopleSoft HCM Employee Self-Service
2. Select the Payroll tile
3. Select the W2 and W2c Consent tile
4. Check the Consent box and click Submit

The deadline to consent to an electronic W-2 is December 31.

By consenting:

- You will receive an immediate notification when your W-2 is available.
- You can view (or print) your W-2 from PeopleSoft.
- You can eliminate the expense of mailing your W-2

Contact your agency payroll department with any questions.

Wellness Rewards Program reminders and updates

Reminder to redeem Wellness Rewards by Dec. 31

State employees and spouses enrolled in the State employee health plan in 2025 were eligible to receive up to \$500 in gift cards for completing wellness activities. [Wellness Rewards](#) do not rollover from year-to-year so redeem now to make sure you don't lose the rewards you've earned.

You have until 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 31, 2025, to redeem any wellness rewards earned this year from ActiveHealth. Use the following steps to redeem Wellness Rewards:

1. [Log in to the ActiveHealth portal](#) using your username and password.
2. Click "Rewards" in the top

menu.

3. Click "Redeem My Rewards" under your progress bar.
4. Select the amount you would like to redeem (in increments of \$50) and which vendor you would like to redeem the card through.
5. Follow the prompts to confirm your selection.

New Wellness Rewards Program partner in 2026

For the last seven years, the State has partnered with ActiveHealth to facilitate the Wellness Rewards Program. While ActiveHealth has been a valuable wellness partner, our time with them is coming to an end as we transition to a new

partner.

Starting Jan. 1, 2026, the State will begin a new partnership with Mobile Health Consumer (MHC) in partnership with Anthem. The Wellness Rewards Program portal will transition from ActiveHealth to MHC. MHC will continue the Wellness Rewards Program's initiative of providing an engaging way for anyone on the State employee health plan to participate in and get rewarded for completing wellness activities.

Additional information will be provided in the upcoming weeks to ensure you get the most out of these exciting updates, so stay tuned!

Employee Assistance Program update

The Optum Employee Assistance Program (EAP) website has a new look and URL. The EAP website has changed to [supportfinder.optum.com/Indiana](#). You can sign in or register with an anonymous username. Please note that the former EAP website, liveandworkwell.com, will no longer be in use after December 31, 2025, however, a redirect is in place.

Additionally, the Optum Assist app will end on December 31, 2025. The new website is compatible as a web app on mobile devices and can be added using the instructions listed below.

1. Navigate to the Support Finder website: [supportfinder.optum.com/Indiana](#)
 - For Android: Tap the menu icon (three vertical dots) in the upper-right corner and select Add to Home Screen.
 - For iPhone/iOS: Tap the share

icon (square with an upward-pointing arrow) and select Add to Home Screen.

2. Confirm the installation.
3. An icon for Support Finder will now appear on your home screen for easy access.

The Optum EAP is a free service available to all full-time State employees and their household. Each household member can access eight free face-to-face counseling sessions with a licensed therapist per issue, per year.

Contact Optum EAP

- **Phone:** 800-886-9747 Call for 24/7 support.
- **Website:** [supportfinder.optum.com/Indiana](#) (Sign in or register with an anonymous username.) Access all the Optum EAP online tools and resources.

[Learn more about Optum EAP >](#)

Upcoming Wellness Webinar

The holidays can be a hectic time with travel, shopping, and work draining your energy. As a result, you can miss out on some of the fun.

Wellness Webinar: Reduce holiday stress with mindfulness

Tuesday, December 16
10 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Join ActiveHealth on Tuesday, December 16 to learn how to practice mindfulness and self-care during the busy holiday season.

[Register now for a Wellness Webinar >](#)

