



The Torch

The official newsletter for State of Indiana employees

SEPT. 2025

A message from the Governor



Governor Mike Braun delivers over \$70 million in savings, achieves 3:1 ROI in first six months

Just six months into Governor Mike Braun's first term, the Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA) has delivered more than \$72.2 million in cost avoidance, equivalent to 339% of the department's operating budget, and \$37.6 million in direct savings, representing 177% of the budget. These early results reflect a 3:1 return on investment and highlight the administration's fast-track approach to disciplined, results-driven governance.

[Read more about State government savings.](#)

Nominate a retiring employee for a spotlight

Is someone on your team retiring soon? Have they made an amazing impact on the State of Indiana, or have some great stories to tell? Nominate them for a retirement spotlight! Submissions may be featured on the State of Indiana's social media or in publications like the Torch.

[Nominate a retiree.](#)

Share your thoughts on the 2025 Interim Review

Respond to INSPD's Interim Review survey to share your valuable feedback and improve the Interim Review process in 2026. This survey helps them to better understand which tools or resources you found useful while participating in this year's Interim Review.

[Take the Interim Review survey.](#)

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

Mentor Spotlight: Sonia Mendez

Sonia Mendez is a Family Case Manager Supervisor for the Indiana Department of Child Services and was nominated as an outstanding mentor within the State of Indiana.

This is what her nominator said makes her such an excellent mentor: “She has taken the time to listen to me as not only an employee, but as a person, as I have gone through some tough personal times. Sonia is always thinking of ways to make people’s work lives easier and she is always there when you need a helping hand. Sonia is compassionate about her people and her work, and I believe she is a true asset not only to the hotline but to the people that work with her.”

Great job, Sonia!

Nominate your mentor for a shout out

Has someone gone above and beyond guiding you in your career? We want to hear about your mentors and what sets them apart. Tell us about your fondest memories, the best advice they’ve given you, or anything else you’d like to share. To submit a shout out that may be featured on the State of Indiana’s social media pages or in publications like The Torch, fill out the form below. Thank you for your participation!

[Nominate your mentor today!](#)



Run the State at Clifty Falls State Park

There’s one more chance to participate in a [Run the State 5k](#) for 2025 at Clifty Falls State Park on Saturday, Sept. 20. All participants will receive a free Run the State T-shirt, medal, and State Park pin. There is no cost to register, but participants are required to pay \$7 per vehicle at the gate for state park entrance. Clifty Falls will have a 5k and two hike options.

[Register for the Run the State 5k at Clifty Falls State Park.](#)



WHAT'S IN

MEMORIES MADE NATURALLY IN INDIANA

Hiking, boating, cabin stays, mountain biking and more. These are the makings of some of the best summer memories. You can do all these activities and more at an Indiana State Park!

[EXPLORE INDIANA STATE PARKS](#)



Health

Time is running out — earn your 2025 Wellness Rewards

Fall is almost here and if you haven't earned your Wellness Rewards for 2025, make it a point to complete wellness activities before the year is done! Employees and spouses eligible for the ActiveHealth program can earn \$500 each in Wellness Rewards (\$1,000 total). Activities include:



- \$200 for completing an [annual physical](#) (it can take up to 4 weeks for forms to be processed for this reward so get it scheduled today!)
- \$50 per eligible [cancer screening](#)
- \$50 for completing an [eye exam](#)
- \$50 for completing a [dental exam & cleaning](#)
- \$25 for receiving each eligible vaccine (up to \$100)

[See the full list of rewardable wellness activities](#)

[Log in to ActiveHealth to view your Wellness Rewards.](#)

Back-to-school routines for a healthier fall

9amHealth, an employee benefit available to adults on the health plan living with diabetes, can help with care plans that work wherever you may be along your health journey.

9amHealth

Below are some general tips for this time of year:

- **Start the day with a balanced breakfast** — check out this [protein-rich breakfast pita](#) recipe.
- **Get moving together** — with milder weather it's a great time for bike rides, nature walks, and more with the whole family
- **Make time for mindfulness** — stress can cause increased blood sugar, poor sleep, and more but these [stress management tips](#) can help you find a balance

If you would like customized suggestions for your situation, visit join9am.com/indiana to learn more on how to enroll.

Available to all eligible employees and dependents (18+) living with diabetes. Out-of-pocket costs vary based on your insurance plan, co-pays, co-insurance, and deductible. These expenses are HSA/FSA eligible. For questions, please call the number on your insurance card.

ActiveHealth Wellness Webinar: Preventive health for adults



Tuesday, September 16

10 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 3:30 p.m., and 6:30 p.m. ET

[Register for the Wellness Webinar.](#)

Upcoming group coaching sessions

Upcoming sessions include:

- Reduce your risk of hypertension
- Daily success with diabetes
- Success at stress
- Start now, why weight
- Menopause
- Pain management

Sign up for a virtual group coaching session underneath the coaching tab in the [ActiveHealth portal](#).

OrthoIndy webinar: Hip and Knee Replacement in 2025



Tuesday, September 9

6 - 8 p.m. ET

[Register for the OrthoIndy Webinar.](#)

Events

The State Employees' Community Campaign launches this month!

The 2025-2026 State Employees' Community Campaign (SECC) kicks off in just one week! All State employees have the opportunity to get involved with their community and donate to the causes that matter to them.



Make a pledge

All State employees are invited to work together to reach the \$1.5 million fundraising goal and make this campaign season one to remember. Every contribution, big or small, makes an impact! You can:

- Make a **one-time donation**
- Become a **Champion donor** by giving the equivalent of 30 minutes per paycheck through a recurring donation
- Become a **Torchbearer** by giving the equivalent of one hour per paycheck through a recurring donation (updated for 2025)

SECC Giving Portal

The SECC giving portal will be open from **Thursday, Sept. 11, through Friday, Nov. 7**. During this time you will be able to sign up for payroll deductions, renew your Champion or Torchbearer status, or make a one-time donation.

Featured weekly events

To make giving fun, SECC gives you the chance to participate and connect with your colleagues through a variety of featured events that support important causes. Mark your calendars for these upcoming featured weekly events.

- **Sept. 11:** Charity Fair at the Statehouse Market
- **Sept. 12:** State Employees' Paddle Battle XVII
- **Sept. 18:** Cornhole Tournament
- **Sept. 23, 24, & 26:** Pickleball Tournament
- **Oct. 2 & 9:** 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament
- **Oct. 16:** Virtual Trivia
- **Oct. 21-23:** Virtual Silent Auction
- **Oct 25-Nov. 2:** Virtual 5k
- **Week of Nov. 3*:** Lip Sync Battle

**Exact date TBD*

Silent Auction donations

DWD is collecting donations for this year's virtual silent auction. Experiences like sports tickets, zoo passes, show tickets, etc. and gift cards to restaurants, retail stores and more are especially desired. High quality artwork created by employees (photography, pottery, paintings, etc.) tends to be popular as well. State employees should not solicit donations from private businesses but may donate items/tickets already in their possession or purchased for the auction. **Please contact Brittney Hill at bhill@dwd.in.gov by Sept. 19 if you are interested in submitting a donation.** All donations should be submitted by October 1. You'll receive instructions via email for how to submit your donation. Thank you!



[View all DNR special events >](#)

DNR Indiana Department of Natural Resources



[View all Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites events >](#)

 **INDIANA STATE MUSEUM**
AND HISTORIC SITES

Events

Seats available for INSPD's in-person Pre-Retirement Seminar

Tuesday, September 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The Pre-Retirement Seminar, sponsored by the Indiana State Personnel Department (INSPD), is designed to assist State employees with advance retirement planning. This seminar will provide information useful in making informed retirement decisions and employees are recommended to attend if they are planning to retire within the next rolling calendar year.

The virtual option for this seminar is full. However, there are spots still available for the in-person seminar which will be held at the Indiana Government Center-South Auditorium.

A sound retirement requires careful planning, and this seminar will cover a variety of relevant topics, including:

- Indiana Public Retirement System (INPRS).
- Social Security information and options.
- Insurance – options for continuing both life and health insurance.
- Benefits obtainable through Social Security and Medicare.
- Hoosier START – saving for your future retirement and replacing your income in retirement.

[Find more important details about the Pre-Retirement Seminar.](#)

[Register for the in-person Pre-Retirement Seminar.](#)

Submit your abstract for GIS Day

[The Indiana Geographic Information Office \(IGIO\)](#) is bringing GIS Day to the Indiana Government Center South on **November 18, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (ET)**. You can be a part of this event whether you are using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to improve public health, streamline transportation, support emergency response, or enhance environmental planning. Your work matters, and it deserves a spotlight. The IGIO is inviting State employees, students, and GIS professionals to [submit abstracts](#) for presentations and demos **by September 12**.

Join the IGIO for a full day of learning, networking, and discovery. Celebrate the power of maps, data, and collaboration by [submitting your abstract](#) today to share the incredible work happening across Indiana.



Unlock Potential: Powering Excellence with Performance Management

Join the Indiana State Personnel Department's Workforce Strategy and Performance team for an all-day, in-person workshop on **Tuesday, Sept. 30 from 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. in Indiana Government Center-South**.

Network with other current and future managers and attend:

- A keynote speaker
- A panel discussion
- Breakout rooms with sessions like:
 - Setting Performance Goals & Expectations,
 - SuccessFactors Demonstration & Best Practices,
 - Engaging in Effective Feedback,
 - And more!



Employees may attend this workshop on State time but should verify with their manager that operational needs allow them to attend.

[Register for the performance management workshop.](#)