



The Torch

The official newsletter for State of Indiana employees

September 2026

Greetings from the Governor

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



Mileage reimbursement rate increases to \$0.64 per mile

Article by Indiana Dept. of Administration

Good news for state employees who use their personal vehicle for approved state business. The State of Indiana has increased the personal vehicle mileage reimbursement rate from **\$0.49 to \$0.64 per mile**, effective Aug. 7, 2026.

Along with the increased rate, the Indiana Department of Administration (IDOA) and State Budget Agency (SBA) have updated the approach used to determine mileage reimbursement. The new rate is based on an average of PADD 2 Midwest state reimbursement rates and will be reviewed each May. PADD 2 Midwest is a group of midwestern states that the federal government uses to average fuel prices. IDOA and SBA can also make additional adjustments when necessary, giving the state

greater flexibility to respond to changing market conditions.

The transition is designed to be simple for employees. PeopleSoft automatically calculates mileage expenses dated **August 7 or later** at the new \$0.64 rate, so there is nothing additional that employees need to do. Mileage expenses dated August 6 or earlier will continue to use the previous rate, regardless of when the expense report is submitted. The updated approach gives the state more flexibility to respond to changing costs while ensuring employees are appropriately reimbursed for approved travel.

Questions about mileage reimbursement can be directed to IDOA Travel Services at idoatravel@idoa.in.gov or **317-232-4258**, or to the appropriate SBA Budget Analyst.

Special paid leave for State employees affected by severe weather

Governor Mike Braun signed an [executive order](#) granting special paid leave to eligible State of Indiana employees whose homes were destroyed or severely damaged by the recent flooding and severe weather.

Eligible employees may receive up to 15 paid workdays to address their housing needs. The leave is effective retroactively beginning August 11, 2026, and must conclude by September 19, 2026.

[Read full details here.](#)

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: spdcommunications@spd.in.gov

Did you receive an IDHS emergency notification?

Article by Indiana State Personnel Dept.

If you didn't receive the recent storm alert, check your [PeopleSoft](#) contact details or complete your enrollment to ensure you're ready for future emergency notifications. Alerts may be targeted based on your work location, so only employees in an affected area will receive a notification.

Emergency alerts come from 317-233-6115 (calls & texts) and no-reply@everbridge.com (emails).

Full-time state employees:

- You are automatically registered to receive core emergency

messages on your State-issued devices and your personal cell phone.

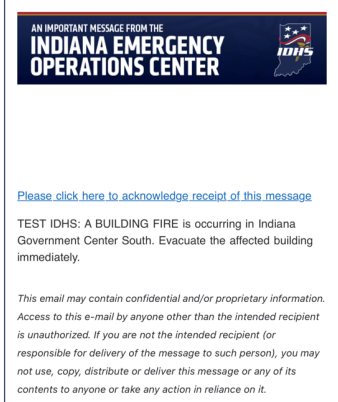
- Contact information is pulled from PeopleSoft, so it's important to keep your phone numbers and email address current. You can update this under the Contact Information section in [PeopleSoft](#).

Part-time or contract employees:

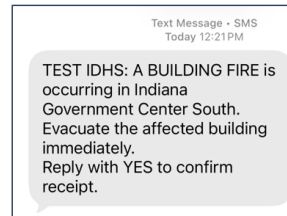
- Annual enrollment is required.
- To enroll, text IGC2026 to 888-777.

The Indiana State Personnel Department

(INSPD) partners with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security's (IDHS) State Emergency Operations Center to send emergency text messages, phone calls, and emails that help keep employees safe during critical situations.



Email alert example



Text alert example

Don't let smart devices create security risks at work

Article by Management Performance Hub

The Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) and Management Performance Hub (MPH) reminds state employees that AI-enabled smart devices, including smart speakers, wearables and voice assistants, **are not approved for use** in the State of Indiana enterprise

environment. This is especially important during sensitive meetings or when handling confidential data.

This reminder reinforces existing requirements under the [2025 Information Technology Resources User Policy \(ITR User Policy\)](#), which outlines rules around unauthorized devices and the use of artificial

intelligence tools. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

Following this policy helps protect agency information, maintain security compliance and safeguard the privacy of Hoosiers. To learn more, [read the full reminder](#) from IOT and MPH.

Supporting Northwest Indiana storm recovery

Article by Indiana State Personnel Dept.

In the wake of recent severe storms, several local organizations are providing essential support to families across Lake and Porter counties. If you're looking for ways to help, here are trusted nonprofits offering food, shelter, and recovery services.

[Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Gary](#) provides direct assistance to residents displaced by the storms, including emergency food, clothing, and help navigating housing options. All donations to

the Catholic Charities Disaster Relief Fund go directly to supporting local families as they recover.

[The Food Bank of Northwest Indiana](#) is coordinating with partners across Lake and Porter counties to expand food distribution sites and adjust its schedule, ensuring families can access food close to home during ongoing recovery efforts.

[The American Red Cross of Indiana](#) remains on the ground, offering shelter, care, comfort, and essential

support to individuals and families affected by the storms as they begin the long process of rebuilding.

[The Salvation Army](#) is providing vital support to storm affected residents through emergency feeding operations, cleanup kit distribution, and emotional and spiritual care. Since response efforts began, volunteers have served more than 7,000 meals and continue to meet evolving community needs through partnerships with local schools, restaurants, and civic organizations.

Time is running out — earn your 2026 Wellness Rewards

Article by Indiana State Personnel Dept.

You have just a few months left this year to earn your Wellness Rewards, so make it a point to complete wellness activities now!

Through the Wellness Rewards Program, employees and spouses on the State employee health plan can each earn up to \$500 in gift card rewards by completing wellness activities.

With more than [20 rewardable activities](#) to choose from,

the program allows you to customize your wellness journey. [Log in to Mobile Health Consumer to get started.](#)

Visit the [Wellness Rewards Program](#) and the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) webpages to learn more.



IOT's system status spotlight



Article by Indiana Office of Technology (IOT)

Did you know there's a System Status spotlight on the IOT website? Visit in.gov/iot to check

for reported outages & known issues.

If the spotlight is **green**, this means no outage has been reported or confirmed. If users are experiencing issues, they should contact the IOT Helpdesk at 317-234-4357 or by submitting a ticket online through the ServiceNow employee center.

If the spotlight is **red** or **yellow**, this confirms a service outage or interruption is currently being investigated and corrected. No further action is needed by users.

OrthoIndy lunch & learn webinar: Total Hip & Knee Surgery Recovery & Expectations

State employees are invited to join OrthoIndy's Dr. Cross for an upcoming [webinar focused on hip and knee replacement options](#). The session will be held Friday, Oct. 2, from noon to 1 p.m., offering a clear, accessible overview of total joint care, what to expect before and after surgery, and how to determine whether these procedures may be right for you.

As the State's preferred orthopedic provider, OrthoIndy delivers high-quality specialty care supported by consistent outcomes, transparent pricing, and patient centered service. If you have been considering orthopedic treatment

or are simply interested in learning more about joint health, this is an excellent opportunity to hear directly from a trusted expert.

The virtual webinar will take place through Microsoft Teams.

- [Register here](#)



Michael Cross, MD
Board Certified and Fellowship Trained Orthopedic Total Joint Physician

Practice Focus

- Total hip and knee replacements
- Avascular necrosis of the hip or knee
- Quad tendon ruptures

Please join us for a webinar about

Total Hip & Knee Surgery Recovery & Expectations

presented by Dr. Cross

Friday, October 2nd
Noon - 1 p.m.



Scan the QR code to register for this event.

ORTHOINDY

JOINT REPLACEMENT

Efficiency & Excellence

Your INPRS account gets personal

Article by Indiana Public Retirement System

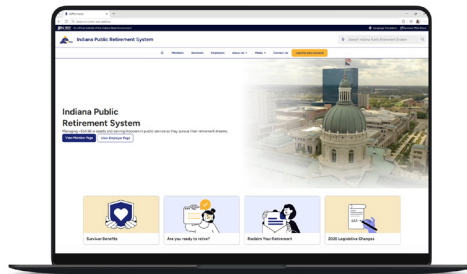
The Indiana Public Retirement System (INPRS) has launched its new retirement account experience featuring an enhanced member dashboard designed to make retirement planning easier and more personalized.

Members can now access a simplified navigation while logged in to their accounts and view details like their years of service, average salary, retirement eligibility, and plan information.

These upgrades also make it easier

for members to find answers to common questions and gain access to important retirement education resources.

Log on to your new, personalized member dashboard at myINPRSretirement.org.



IDEM OLQ reaches major milestone



Article by Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management

The Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management's (IDEM) Office of Land Quality (OLQ) has reached a major milestone by helping close or remove more than 500 aging underground storage tanks across Indiana. Through strong outreach during inspections, cleanups, and training, OLQ staff have guided owners through the state's innovative reimbursement program which removes financial barriers and accelerates closures

that prevent future leaks and protect Hoosier communities.

Since the program launched in 2023, OLQ has supported more than \$20 million in approved closure projects, ensuring older, higher-risk tanks are safely retired before they can cause environmental harm. Thanks to OLQ's persistent leadership and collaboration with tank owners, Indiana is making measurable progress in safeguarding groundwater, soil, & public health.

IDEM earns Gold award from EPA

Article by Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management

Congratulations to the Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management's (IDEM) Drinking Water Branch for earning Gold recognition from the U.S. EPA for data tracking and quality performance.



The team oversees more than 4,000 public water systems and provides accessible, transparent data for each system through [IDEM's Drinking Water Viewer website](#).

The site system information, monitoring results, and compliance updates anytime to stay informed about their local drinking water. Indiana's drinking water data is submitted to U.S. EPA every calendar quarter. The U.S. EPA evaluates data quality based on factors such as accurate locational data, timely reporting of violations, and use of updated software tools.

IDEM's strong performance across these criteria earned this year's Gold award among medium primacy agencies.

Events

SECC kicks off on September 10!



Article by Indiana State Personnel Dept.

The 2026-27 [State Employees' Community Campaign](#) (SECC), the annual charity campaign administered by State employees, runs from Thursday, Sept. 10 through Friday, Nov. 6. SECC allows state employees to contribute to **any 501 (c)(3) charity** through a one-time contribution or the convenience of payroll deductions.



Make a pledge

All State employees are invited to work together to reach the \$1.4 million fundraising goal and to make this giving season one to

remember. Every contribution, big or small, makes an impact on communities across Indiana. Once the campaign begins, you can make a pledge to **any charity of your choice** through the [SECC Giving Portal](#) the following ways:

- Make a **one-time donation**.
- Sign up for **payroll deductions**.
- **Become a Champion** donor by giving the equivalent of 30 minutes per paycheck through a recurring donation.
- **Become a Torchbearer** donor by giving the equivalent of one hour per paycheck through a recurring donation.

Weekly agency sponsors

Here's a look at this year's sponsor agencies, along with their featured event and charity:

Kickoff events

- Charity Fair at the Statehouse Market (Sept. 10)
- Paddle Battle (Sept. 11)

Dept. of Homeland Security

- Cornhole Tournament (Sept. 17), Hoosier Burn Camp

Dept. of Administration

- [Pickleball Tournament](#) (Sept. 21, 22, 24), Boys & Girls Club of IN

Dept. of Local Gov't Finance

- [Basketball Tournament](#) (Oct. 1 & Oct. 8), Gleaner's Food Bank

Bureau of Motor Vehicles

- [Lip Sync Battle](#) (Oct. 20-23), Riley Children's Foundation

Indiana State Personnel Dept.

- [Virtual Photo Scavenger Hunt](#) (Oct. 26-Nov. 2), Coburn Place

Department of Natural Resources

- [Virtual Trivia](#) (Nov. 5), Karl Kelley Memorial Youth Camp

Indiana Archaeology Month

Article by Dept. of Natural Resources

September is the 31st anniversary of a statewide celebration of archaeology in Indiana. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology coordinates the event to encourage learning about Indiana archaeology, archaeological sites in the state, and the laws that protect them. Universities, museums, organizations, and individuals around the state host a variety of archaeology programs and activities.

This year, the [Indiana Archaeology](#)

[Month poster](#) highlights Vincennes and its rich multicultural heritage as a frontier capital. Copies of the free poster can be picked up in person at the DNR Central Office lobby in the Indiana Government Center- South complex from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. A limit of five posters can be mailed. Requests for mail delivery may be sent to dhpaconnect@dnr.IN.gov.

Find out more about Indiana Archaeology Month at on.IN.gov/archaeologymonth.

