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NORTH CAROLINA OFFICE OF STATE HUMAN RESOURCES

# 2025-2029 Strategic Plan

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## INTRODUCTION

The North Carolina Office of State Human Resources (OSHR) Strategic Plan for 2025–2029 presents a strategic roadmap for transforming human resources across state government. Grounded in the governor's priorities and shaped through inclusive engagement with OSHR staff, agency leaders, and stakeholders, this plan reflects a shared commitment to modernizing HR systems, enhancing employee and applicant experience, and strengthening public service delivery.

At its core, the strategy focuses on improving the full employee lifecycle, from recruitment and onboarding to career development and retention. OSHR will simplify access to state employment services, streamline hiring processes, and implement the Workday platform to meet the expectations of today's workforce. By expanding recruitment support and optimizing HR systems, we aim to reduce overall time-to-hire while filling critical vacancies more efficiently.

The plan also prioritizes professional growth and workforce development. We will create structured career pathways, increase access to internships and fellowships, and elevate the state's employer brand through targeted communications and benefit enhancements. These efforts are designed to attract top talent, support current employees, and build a resilient, inclusive workplace culture.

As a trusted HR partner, OSHR will continue to provide expert guidance, policy leadership, and compliance oversight. Through data-driven decision-making, continuous improvement, and collaborative engagement, we will empower agencies to meet evolving workforce needs and deliver exceptional public service.

# Mission, Vision, & Values

## Mission

The North Carolina Office of State Human Resources partners with and provides expertise to state agencies and programs to recruit, support, and retain a public service workforce.

## Vision

Elevating public service.

## Values

**Innovation & Creativity.** OSHR embraces forward-thinking solutions to modernize HR systems and recruitment. We will adopt user-friendly tools and explore AI to streamline processes and meet evolving applicant expectations.

**Professionalism**. We uphold HR excellence by providing oversight and guidance to ensure agency compliance with statutes, policies, and best practices across the state.

**Teamwork & Collaboration**. OSHR fosters strong partnerships within our team and with agencies statewide. Through joint problem-solving and best practice roundtables, we address critical vacancies and strengthen collaboration.

**Objectivity**. We prioritize data-driven decision-making, using metrics like time-to-fill to identify bottlenecks and implement strategies that improve hiring outcomes without compromising quality.

**Continuous Improvement & Development**. OSHR drives ongoing improvement through proactive outreach and feedback. We evaluate HR IT systems to enhance user experience and strengthen the employee life cycle for better recruitment and retention.

**Leading People (Supervisors Only).** Supervisors play a key role in employee growth and engagement. OSHR supports them by delivering targeted training, career pathways, and leadership development to build the next generation of public servants.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & MEASURES OF SUCCESS

### Success Metrics

OSHR is prioritizing three key success indicators that, together, drive a more responsive, people-centered HR system:

1. **Time to Hire**: Tracks the days from offer acceptance to employee start date. Shortening this window improves onboarding efficiency and ensures quicker deployment of talent.
2. **Hard-to-fill position Vacancy Rate**: Measures the percentage of job openings for roles that are consistently difficult to recruit for and remain unfilled over an extended period.
3. **Voluntary Turnover Rate**: Percentage of employees who leave by choice. Lowering this rate signals improved engagement, retention, and workplace satisfaction.

### **Goal 1:** Strengthen recruitment and improve ease of access to state employment services to meet the state's workforce needs.

| | **Measures** |
|---|---|
| **Objective:** Simplify and modernize state HR practices and policies to transform the state's recruitment, application, and hiring processes and reduce time to hire for posted positions.<br>• Review all recruitment related policies by the end of FY 2025-26 and begin process of updates as needed. | Outcomes<br>• Reduce time to fill from over 180 days to 90 days.<br><br>Outputs/ Milestones<br>• Increase the number of "career access" opportunities by 25% year-over-year through 2029.<br>• Track the number of applicants per posting (baseline metric). |
| **Objective:** Increase presence and access to state employment and employee services in rural North Carolina.<br>• Open WNC OSHR offices before the end of CY 2025 and an ENC office before the end of CY 2027. | |
| **Objective:** Expand OSHR's recruitment support services through Temp Solutions to better assist agencies and the Governor's Office with key recruitment needs and statewide initiatives. | |
| **Objective:** Expand early career access through internships, fellowships, and apprenticeships to increase the state workforce pipeline, aid in filling hard to staff positions, and bolster opportunities for underserved/ underrepresented populations. | |
| **Objective:** Launch and support Phase I of Workday, the new statewide hiring platform, to make hiring frictionless for both applicants and agencies. | |
| **Objective:** Promote public service as a meaningful and impactful career to strengthen the state's employer brand and attract more applicants to state employment. | |

**Goal 2:** Transform state HR through modernization, innovation, and strategic collaboration.

| | **Measures** |
|---|---|
| **Objective:** Modernize HR policies, practices and branding to meet evolving workforce needs and allow agencies to hire the most qualified applicants quickly.<br>• Complete Chapter 126 rewrite and SL 2025-134 policy updates.<br>• Simplify and streamline HR forms and processes to reduce administrative burden and ease hiring, reallocations, and other HR actions.<br>• Rebrand OSHR to reflect a strategic, service-oriented agency ready to partner with internal and external stakeholders. | Outcomes<br>• Improved compliance with HR policies.<br>• 90% of programs rated "effective" or "highly effective" based on evaluation criteria.<br><br>Outputs<br>• Submit proposed Chapter 126 rewrite in March 2026.<br>• Track the number of HR policies updated to increase flexibility, simplicity.<br>• Increase participation in OSHR-led initiatives, trainings, or consultations.<br>• Update and simplify 75% of forms (e.g., Form SAL, Form BON) by January 2027.<br>• Complete the OSHR rebranding project, including website updates, templates, and style guide by December 2025. |
| **Objective:** Implement and optimize HR systems to improve efficiency and user experience.<br>• Lead successful transition to full implementation of Workday and consolidate all primary HR processes into one system.<br>• Monitor and enhance HR IT systems for security, usability, and statewide alignment.<br>• Explore Agentic and Generative AI applications to improve customer experience and prepare for future workforce needs. | |
| **Objective:** Advance data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement.<br>• Review HR vendor contracts for cost savings and value to the end user to deliver responsive and efficient HR services.<br>• Standardize HR data and develop dashboards that support agency HR processes.<br>• Conduct regular program evaluations, to ensure effectiveness and relevance.<br>• Evaluate current classification structures and pay strategies to ensure competitive, equitable, and market-responsive salaries.<br>• Establish feedback loops and outreach initiatives to inform policy and practice. | |
| **Objective:** Strengthen agency engagement, training, and compliance support.<br>• Provide training aligned with updated statutes and systems.<br>• Provide resources to support streamlined, consistent HR activities across agencies.<br>• Offer guidance and monitor compliance on HR policies and practices. | |

**Goal 3:** Retain and support current employees by fostering a collaborative, inclusive, and resilient workplace culture – within OSHR and across state entities.

| | **Measures** |
|---|---|
| **Objective:** Develop recognition programs and feedback loops for OSHR staff and as models for statewide implementation. | Outcomes<br>• Improve employee engagement & satisfaction index *year-over-year through June 2029.*<br>• Increase adoption rate of collaborative & wellness practices *(% of agencies adopting 1 or more practices in 12 months).*<br><br>Outputs<br>• Increase the number of OSHR employees who participate in career growth and professional development opportunities.<br>• Establish internal employee appreciation and wellness initiatives.<br>• Develop an employee engagement and satisfaction survey by June 2026. |
| **Objective:** Develop and promote career growth pathways and learning opportunities for state employees, managers, and supervisors. | |
| **Objective:** Expand flexible work strategies and benefits options that support work-life harmony and improve employee satisfaction and retention —both within OSHR and through guidance to other agencies. | |
| **Objective:** Explore and integrate wellness resources and workload management strategies into daily operations. | |
| **Objective:** Establish communication protocols and systems that reduce silos and improve cross-functional information sharing & decision-making. | |

## Priority Questions

1. What are the key "trouble spots" in the time-to-fill and time-to-hire data, and what are the specific root causes (e.g., agency-specific challenges, system inefficiencies, policy hurdles) behind these delays?

2. What are the expectations and needs of modern applicants, and what specific tools or processes, either embedded in Workday or integrated with it, will best meet those expectations?

3. How effective and efficient are OSHR's current programs and initiatives from an agency's perspective, and what adjustments are needed to better support agencies, particularly those with critical vacancies?

4. What is the current level of employee engagement and satisfaction with the state as an employer, and what are the most impactful benefits, leave, and retirement offerings to meet employees' and applicants' needs?

5. How can AI be leveraged to facilitate and improve state HR practices without compromising data security or user experience, and what specific applications should be piloted?

6. How can the state implement and encourage use of a statewide exit survey to better understand the reasons employees leave state service?

7. How can the state implement a recurring statewide employee viewpoint survey to understand employee needs and preferences and inform agency culture and decision-making?