

HR Weekly Podcast
February 5, 2014

Today is February 5, 2014, and welcome to the HR Weekly Podcast from the State Human Resources Division. This week's topic discusses a recent article in *Governing Magazine*, entitled *The Public Employee "Silver Tsunami" Looms for Governments*, and the resources the State Human Resources Division provides to support state agencies' Workforce Planning efforts.

In the December 2013 issue of *Governing Magazine*, Mike Maciag discussed the looming retirements of many public employees as well as the wider issue of employees choosing to leave public service. According to Mr. Maciag, agencies risk losing decades of expertise as baby boomers who have put off retirement begin to leave their agencies. If agencies are not prepared, Mr. Maciag warns they risk losing decades of knowledge which may impact their ability to serve the public effectively. Of particular concern are those employees who work in public safety positions since they often have lower retirement ages than other public employees. Another sector with the potential for high turnover is information technology, or IT. According to Mr. Maciag, the battle for IT talent is being felt by both the private and public sectors and will likely continue for some time.

Mr. Maciag further points out that a majority of a department's or agency's leadership may be comprised of people of the same age. As a result, many people may retire in a very short time period leaving no one to train the next round of leaders.

On the bright side, Mr. Maciag notes that agencies are probably going to experience a steady stream of retirements rather than the "tsunami" predicted previously. This change may provide agencies with more time to prepare for the loss of these employees.

In a recent IPMA-HR presentation on "State Government Workforce Planning," it was predicted that states will face the loss of younger workers as well as retirees. Like the private sector, public sector employees may become more transient with the idea of working for a single employer for an entire career becoming a thing of the past. To remain effective, agencies will have to adapt to this changing workforce environment.

The State Human Resources Division provides several resources to assist state agencies in their Workforce Planning efforts. Recently, the State Human Resources Division has expanded and enhanced the support provided. These enhancements include:

- Updating the Workforce Planning portion of the State Human Resources Division Website,
- Improved and Updated Workforce Planning Data,
- Conducting a survey of state agencies to determine current agency Workforce Planning efforts, and
- An increased focus on Workforce Planning at HR Advisory Meetings.

The results of the survey, which was sent to agency HR Directors on January 15, 2014, will be discussed during an upcoming HR Advisory Meeting.

If you have questions about this topic, please contact your HR consultant at 803-896-5300. Thank you.