



CONNECTICUT **CREATES** report

Opportunities for the Government of Connecticut to improve service quality, delivery, and equity for residents and businesses, mitigate retirement risks, and reduce costs.

2021

Over the past 3 years, the total number of state troopers has decreased from 1,100 to 923 currently and is projected to drop by another 100 due to the upcoming retirement surge. Compared to peer states, the State's trooper levels are low, given their population and highway miles. As previously noted, to address the retirement and service continuity risks for CSP, the State should focus on increasing trooper levels and capacity by expanding cadet class sizes and civilianizing non-enforcement activities.

In addition to trooper capacity, DESPP faces several challenges that limit the agency's efficiency:

- Statutes that expand trooper responsibilities to non-protective service roles.
- Duplicative functions performed by other departments, thereby limiting agency capacity.
- Limited funding to digitizing reports and payments.

- Dilapidated barracks and agency facilities which require significant investment to renovate and maintain.
- Senior management turnover for both sworn-in and civilian roles

The primary role of state troopers is to enforce state laws and provide essential policing services to rural regions. However, statutes have expanded trooper roles beyond policing services (e.g., clerical duties and supervision for MMA events), limiting trooper capacity. Additionally, the agency shares responsibilities with other State departments in performing the same functions (e.g., overseeing weigh stations with DMV). To better utilize troopers in their limited capacity, the agency should reform police responsibilities to ensure that they can be fulfilled by only protective-service personnel. All non-protective services should be shifted to the appropriate department or civilianized.

Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)

DEEP is responsible for a range of interrelated functions across environmental quality, environmental conservation, and energy. Environmental quality involves ensuring the protection of the natural environment and health of the State. This includes activities such as regulating emissions, managing waste materials, monitoring the State's environment, issuing permits, conducting inspections, and responding to emergencies.

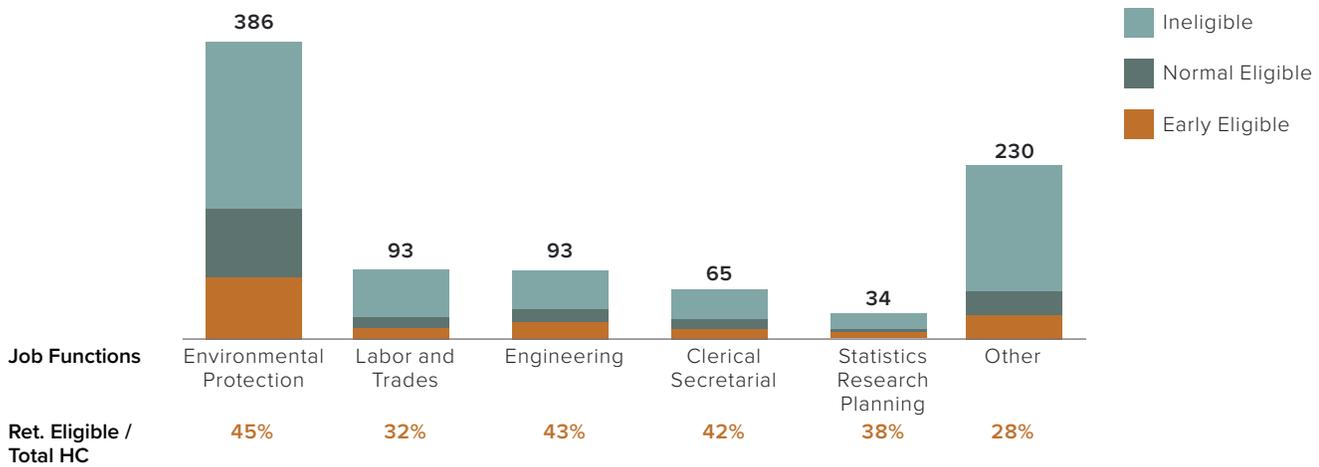
Environmental conservation involves providing outdoor recreational opportunities and managing the State's natural resources, including fish, wildlife, and forests, through regulation, management, research, and education. Energy activities include developing policy and management programs that promote energy efficiency, develop energy infrastructure and alternative power, and regulate utilities. The agency is expanding its efforts to address the

accelerating and emerging challenges with our changing climate and in response Governor Lamont's Executive Order 01 regarding climate.

DEEP's \$146 million budget for the agency comes from a mix of state, federal, and other sources. As of January 2021, the agency employs 898 people, in addition to many seasonal workers in the State's parks. More than 350 of DEEP's employees are retirement-eligible in 2022. This includes large numbers of employees in environmental analysts and engineering roles. Thus, DEEP will face a loss of specialized technical knowledge that will be difficult to backfill, and this creates risks to residents and the environment. For example, the loss of staff with specialized training could create a potential safety risk by limiting the agency's capability to respond to chemical spills or coordinate the management of infrastructure during floods.



DEEP | 39% of agency personnel eligible for retirement



DEEP has several opportunities to improve its operational efficiency. The agency can continue to streamline and consolidate existing services across programs where possible. For example, improving coordination of asset maintenance and land management across the agency will lead to better outcomes and potential operational savings. The agency can also increase its use of public-private partnerships to draw on private capital and capability to achieve public ends. Additionally, further simplification of regulatory requirements, such as on environmental permitting, will ensure that the agency can balance efforts across regulation, enforcement, and other activities, although legislative action will be required.

There are several challenges the agency will experience in achieving these opportunities. First, implementing operations efficiencies will require additional resources so as not to compromise ongoing business needs. Second, the loss of experienced and trained seasonal employees –

will impede our ability to respond to increasing demand for outdoor recreational opportunities. DEEP heavily relies on seasonal employees during the summer, many who take on robust responsibilities such as managing a campground or conducting wildlife research. If DEEP cannot adjust hourly pay in order to attract qualified staff, it may have to close parks or services at a time when attendance is increasing. The inability to adjust pay for experienced seasonal workers is an example of how inflexibility in the State’s workforce management can impact the services it provides to residents.

Third, DEEP also faces challenges in retaining younger employees: the agency has seen an increase in attrition among employees with fewer than five years of work experience, as they are attracted to higher-paying jobs in the private sector that offer less restrictive career paths. This situation further exacerbates the challenge of proper succession planning.