



STATE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION DAY

Resource Guide



Wednesday, May 8, 2024

ABOUT NASPE



The National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE), a non-profit organization, was established in 1977 to enhance communication and the exchange of information among personnel executives across the country.

NASPE provides educational resources for its members and a forum to share best practices in state human resource management through meetings, publications, surveys, and online discussion forums.

NASPE's mission is to provide a collaborative forum for State HR leaders to share effective leading practices.

NASPE is an affiliate organization of The Council of State Governments (CSG).

BACKGROUND & GOALS

State Employee Recognition Day was initiated in 2001 under the leadership of then NASPE President Donna Traywick and then South Carolina Governor Jim Hodges in partnership with the National Governors Association (NGA). NASPE and NGA joined forces to ask the governors and state human resources officers to coordinate their efforts during National Public Service Recognition Week to recognize the important contributions of state employees. Since then, response to the initiative has grown significantly as states report some kind of recognition event for their employees.

State Employee Recognition Day is an excellent opportunity to express appreciation to state employees at a time when their dedication is even more valued and appreciated. Recognition is a powerful motivator, and it contributes to higher employee morale, increases organizational productivity, and aids in recruitment and retention.

State Employee Recognition Day is also an excellent time to spotlight the achievements and contributions of state employees in the workplace and in our communities. The image of state employees is strengthened when citizens see people they know, who happen to be state employees, working to better their communities. Publicizing the good things state employees are doing can go a long way in educating the public and making employees feel appreciated and valued.

NASPE's State Employee Recognition Day Guide provides specific information on preparing for and implementing the day in your state. States may start planning early in order to take an active role in recognizing those who do a great job for state government every day! In a time when state government budgets are tight, special activities may seem too expensive, but there are several low cost activities that states can do. Included in this packet are suggested activities and events, sample language for social media and recording scripts, and templates for proclamations, press releases and agency letters.

States will be celebrating May 8 with awards, radio interviews, newspaper articles, and various other celebrations. Many governors will be releasing proclamations and press alerts in late April or early May declaring May 8 as State Employee Recognition Day. Please take time on this day to show appreciation to your state employees for their dedication to public service.

QUICK FACTS

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State Employee Recognition Day was initiated by NASPE in May 2001 in an effort to enhance the image of state public service.



The 2024 State Employee Recognition Day will be held May 8.



State Employee Recognition Day will be held in conjunction with Public Employee Recognition Week, May 5-11, 2024.



There are approximately three million state government employees across the country.



Many states have proclamations signed by the Governor proclaiming a Public Employee Recognition Day.



NASPE is dedicated to enhancing the image of state public service.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

STATE-LEVEL

- Place Governor's Proclamation on state website and e-mail with message from agency director attached.
- Establish a Governor's Award or other state-level recognition award.
- Place a prominent message on state website and ask agency directors to put an encouraging message or letter to employees on their website.
- Establish a joint legislative resolution.
- Offer discounts at state-run facilities and gift shops.
- Offer discounts from major chain merchants or malls across the state.
- Write a press release.
- Video a public service announcements featuring Governor or prominent business people thanking employees.
- Request Governor to work along side a state employee or group of employees on May 10 or some time during the week.
- Record radio public service announcement featuring the Governor, State HR Director or other official.
- Write letters to the editor of state's major newspapers.
- Hang banners with an encouraging message to state employees.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

AGENCY-LEVEL

- Thank each employee personally. If you can't thank them in person, draft a hand-written note, send an e-mail, or make a phone call.
- Write a letter of recommendation or commendation to be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- Post on "recognition board" bulletin board, newsletter, and/or website.
- Offer a dress-down day to state employees.
- Display a "Hall of Fame" - collection of photos of recognized employees displayed in a prominent place
- Display a "Post a Praise" - collection of messages of encouragement, praise, gratitude, or just some kind words for a colleague.
- Contact your local newspaper and provide them with a news article or suggested story idea on State Employee Recognition Day. Ask them to feature one or two of your employees using quotes or pictures. If you have a public information officer, involve them in the project.
- Hold a recognition breakfast, lunch, ice cream party or pizza party. Have supervisors and managers set up, serve, and clean up.
- Hold a drawing for a restaurant gift certificate.
- Award a "traveling trophy" that is given to a different employee each year.
- Arrange for a state employee night at a local sport or cultural facility.
- Award certificates or plaques.
- Provide mugs, pens, t-shirts, planners, portfolios, etc. with a team or agency logo.
- Send flowers.
- Give gift cards for nation-wide companies or local merchant.
- Invite a local dignitary or motivational speaker for an event at the office.
- Choose an off-site location and plan a "change of venue" work locations with lunch, games and prizes donated by local merchants.
- Sponsor a snack-related event, featuring cake, popcorn, or candy and include a written message of thanks to employees for their dedicated service.
- Invite your customers or employees of "sister" agencies to visit your offices for an after-work drop in to get to know each other better.
- Challenge another division or agency to a softball game or other sporting event and invite agency employees and families.
- Produce a special edition of your employee newsletter and include the Governor's proclamation, thank you remarks from your agency director and others, messages of congratulations, and photos of recognition events.
- Feature state employees on the state website for their community work or excellence on the job.
- Offer a month of free parking.

SAMPLES & TEMPLATES

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA CAPTIONS

- Out state employees - giving their personal best!
- Great people doing great jobs - thank you state employees!
- You're simply the best! Thank you state employees!
- Dedicated, inspired, committed, caring and compassionate - thank you state employees!
- Great nation, great state, great staff! Thank you state employees for your dedication to public service.
- Public employees: At work, at home, in the community...Role models of Service
- Making government better for everyone, everyday. Thank you state employees.
- Thank you for making a difference!
- State employees - making a difference every day.
- Excellence in action - state employees!
- Public employees - Making a difference every day in every way.
- Public employees go the distance for you.
- Inspired by today, leading for tomorrow. Thank you state employees.

SAMPLE QUOTES

- "Recognition is not a scarce resource. You can't use it up or run out of it. Its only limit is how long you're willing to go without doing it." - Susan M. Heathfield
- "Appreciation is a wonderful thing: It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well." - Voltaire
- "Acknowledging the good that you already have in your life is the foundation for all abundance." - Eckhart Tolle
- "The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated."
- William James
- "Recognition is the greatest motivator." - Gerard C. Eakedale

SAMPLES & TEMPLATES

SAMPLE SCRIPTS FOR RECORDINGS

15-second sample script - Public employees perform hundreds of jobs to help the citizens in our state. Show your appreciation for their service during Public Service Recognition Week, May 5th through 11th.

15-second sample script - State employees make valuable contributions to our communities every day. Show your appreciation and recognize their hard work on State Employee Recognition Day, May 8th.

30-second script - State employees are the unsung heroes who keep our communities running smoothly. Their dedication and hard work often go unrecognized, but we can change that. Let's take a moment to recognize and appreciate their contributions, and show them that their efforts do not go unnoticed. Show your appreciation for their service during Public Service Recognition Week, May 5th through 11th.

30-second sample script - State Employee Recognition Day is an important day for us to show our appreciation for the hardworking individuals who make valuable contributions to our communities every day. We recognize the dedication and commitment of state employees and thank them for their service. On May 8th, let's take a moment to show our gratitude and appreciation for all that they do.

1-minute sample script - State employees are the backbone of our communities, serving in a wide range of roles that keep our state running smoothly. From healthcare workers to road maintenance crews, they work tirelessly to ensure that we all have the resources we need to thrive. While their contributions are often overlooked, they make a tremendous difference in the lives of millions of people every day. That's why it's important to take a moment to recognize and appreciate their efforts. Please join communities across the nation in celebrating State Employee Recognition Day, May 8th during Public Service Recognition Week, May 5th through 11th. A simple thank you showing your appreciation can go a long way in boosting morale and encouraging these essential workers to continue their important work.

SAMPLES & TEMPLATES

PROCLAMATION TEMPLATE

WHEREAS, [STATE or COMMONWEALTH] citizens are served every single day by public servants at the state, county and city levels; and

WHEREAS, these unsung heroes do the work that keeps our nation working. Their tireless efforts are especially critical today and have been throughout the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, many public employees not only do jobs, but hold licenses, and take oaths; and

WHEREAS, many public servants, including military personnel, law enforcement officers, transportation workers, healthcare professionals, and others, risk their lives each day in service to the people of the [STATE or COMMONWEALTH]; and

WHEREAS, public servants also include state government's teachers, nurses, scientists, clerks, investigators, and safety inspectors, laborers, computer technicians, social workers, and countless other occupations; and

WHEREAS, day in and day out they provide the diverse services demanded by [STATE or COMMONWEALTH] citizens and businesses with efficiency and integrity; and

WHEREAS, without these public servants at every level, continuity would be impossible in a democracy that regularly changes its leaders and elected officials;

NOW THEREFORE, I, [GOVERNOR] of [STATE OR COMMONWEALTH], do hereby proclaim May 5-11, 2024 to be

PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION WEEK

and May 8, 2024 to be

STATE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION DAY

SAMPLES & TEMPLATES

PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

[Your State's Name] Celebrates State Employee Recognition Day

[City, State] - May 8, 2024 - Today, [STATE OR COMMONWEALTH] is proud to celebrate State Employee Recognition Day, a day dedicated to honoring the hard work and dedication of all state employees.

[GOVERNOR] stated, "I am honored to recognize the contributions of our state employees, who work tirelessly to serve our citizens and make [STATE OR COMMONWEALTH] a better place to live. They are the backbone of our state government, and their commitment to public service is truly commendable."

State Employee Recognition Day is an opportunity for all citizens of [STATE OR COMMONWEALTH] to show their appreciation for the valuable services that state employees provide. From maintaining roads and bridges to ensuring public safety, from providing vital health care services to protecting our natural resources, state employees are on the front lines of serving our communities every day.

State employees also play a critical role in responding to emergencies, from natural disasters to public health crises. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, state employees have gone above and beyond to provide essential services and support to our citizens. Their dedication and resilience have been a shining example of what it means to be a public servant.

On State Employee Recognition Day, we encourage all citizens to take a moment to thank a state employee for their hard work and dedication. Whether it's a simple thank you or a thoughtful note, your words of appreciation can go a long way in recognizing the important contributions that state employees make to our communities.

Today, we honor the contributions of all state employees, and we thank them for their unwavering commitment to public service. Happy State Employee Recognition Day, [STATE OR COMMONWEALTH]!

SAMPLES & TEMPLATES

LETTER TO AGENCY HR DIRECTORS TEMPLATE

Dear [Agency Director's Name]:

[STATE OR COMMONWEALTH] will join states across the nation in celebrating Public Service Recognition Week during the week of May 5-11, 2024. Public Service Recognition Week is set aside annually to honor public employees and to educate the public about the many ways government workers make life better for all Americans.

Again this year during Public Service Recognition Week, the governors and state human resources offices of all states will coordinate their efforts on Wednesday, May 8, 2023, to celebrate the important contributions of state employees.

The Office of the Governor and the [State Office of Human Resources] are spearheading [STATE OR COMMONWEALTH's] state-level celebration that will focus on recognizing all employees of state government for the invaluable contributions they make to the quality of life in our state. We will promote public awareness via a proclamation by [GOVERNOR] and other types of promotions.

This year we are asking each state agency to plan at least one activity to recognize the employees within your agency sometime during the week of May 5-11, preferably on May 8. These recognition events do not have to relate to employee cost savings efforts, although you may certainly include these kinds of recognitions if you wish.

[ADD IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS]

We look forward to hearing about your agency's recognition events, and we appreciate your joining us in expressing appreciation to your agency's employees and to the thousands of other dedicated men and women who devote their careers to serving the people of [STATE OR COMMONWEALTH].

Please feel free to contact our office if you have questions or need additional information regarding this initiative.

Sincerely,
[STATE HR DIRECTOR]



Additional Resources



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE PERSONNEL EXECUTIVES

www.naspe.net/SERD

PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

<https://ourpublicservice.org/our-solutions/recognition/public-service-recognition-week/>