

Program Title: Louisiana Retiree Rehire Database

State: Louisiana

Contact Person: Rainette Stephens

Title: Staffing Division Administrator

Agency: Louisiana Department of State Civil Service

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 94111, Capitol Station, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9111

Telephone: 225-342-8540

Fax: 225-342-2386

Email: rainette.stephens@la.gov

What are we going to do when the baby boomers retire? This question is on the minds of many managers and Human Resources personnel alike. In order to help address this concern, the Louisiana Department of State Civil Service implemented a Retiree Rehire Database in 2007. This proactive project was the first to provide centralized access to all departments statewide for retiree information. In order to make this database successful, the Louisiana Department of State Civil Service had to reach out to retirees. In collaboration with the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS), Civil Service has been able to attain that goal through several means. LASERS has incorporated database enrollment forms in the packet of retirement forms, continued to promote the database at meetings, and written about it in their quarterly newsletter. The exposure has provided 154 registrations to the database as of March 25, 2008. As more retirees choose a working retirement, we expect the enrollment and use of this database will grow in the future.

1. Across the nation, the business community is worried about what will happen when the generation of baby boomers retires. Without their expertise, many wonder how businesses and government will be able to keep up in a competitive work environment. The State of Louisiana has already started to address the retirement issue. In 2006, approximately 3.2% of Louisiana state employees retired. The State has also seen the percentage of its employees eligible for retirement rise. The number of employees over the age of 50 has increased by 40.4% over the last 10 years.

Louisiana is one of many governmental institutions facing this situation. Louisiana is unique, however, in the way it is responding to it. In 2006, the Louisiana Department of State Civil Service began developing a database program that would help bring retired employees (with their knowledge and expertise) back to the workplace. The Louisiana Retiree Rehire Database allows the Department of State Civil Service to provide state agencies with a pool of former state employees who desire full or part-time employment after retirement.

2. The database was implemented on March 22, 2007.

3. The program was designed to meet the needs of two groups: the retirees interested in working for the state again, and the agencies looking for employees who possess valuable experience. The Retiree Rehire Database has been successful in meeting those needs because of its flexibility. On the employment-seeking side, retirees are able to choose an area of interest or expertise from a list of approximately 20 occupational groups. The retirees have the opportunity to work in positions where their skills and abilities are fully utilized. On the employer

side, the database provides agencies with a targeted group of individuals who expressed interest in full time, part time, or project work as needed. In many instances, retirees return to an agency and serve in a knowledge transfer capacity. Agencies are able to capture knowledge and share it with new staff members in the workplace.

4. The Louisiana Department of State Civil Service has worked with the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS) to make this database a success. Prior to implementation, LASERS wrote about the database in their Quarterly Membership Newsletter. Additionally, LASERS incorporated the database enrollment form into the retirement packets. Their support allows Civil Service to target the program to the precise market the State would like to engage. Another benefit of this database is the potential to reduce time-to-fill and cost-to-hire for some positions.

The database is also easy to access and use and offers great search functionality. The database is located on a portal designed specifically for Human Resources personnel. Users with varying levels of computer literacy feel comfortable using the database and are able to gather the information they need.

5. The database was developed in-house by a team of Civil Service staff. They completed the project within the scope of their regular duties. Therefore, no additional costs were incurred during its development.

6. It continues to be a cost-effective program because it is maintained by Civil Service Information Systems staff as a part of their regular duties. The operational costs, therefore, are virtually non-existent.

7. The database is maintained within the scope of the regular duties of the Information Technology staff. Their salaries are funded by interagency transfers from user agencies.

8. California was the first state to implement a centralized annuitant database. Louisiana was the first to make it available for use by all State departments.

9. Although Louisiana was the second state to implement a centralized annuitant database, Louisiana was the first state to allow access to all of our user agencies upon implementation. While Louisiana's database is accessible to all of its user agencies, California only allows access to departments under the State and Consumer Agency. If agencies are in that group, they are allowed to sign up for the database on a 6-month trial basis.

Other than user access, there are other differences between California's and Louisiana's retiree rehire databases. In California, the state limits the number of hours an annuitant can work per year. In Louisiana, however, the state limits the amount of money a retiree can earn by working part time for the state. If the retiree chooses to go back to work full time, then their retirement benefits are suspended for the duration of their full time employment.

10. In order to measure the use of the database, Human Resources Directors throughout the state were surveyed. The Workforce Planning Survey was conducted by Louisiana State Civil Service in December 2007. According to the survey, eighty percent of respondents indicated they had already explored the database. Fifty-three percent indicated they used the database to search for

possible rehire applicants, and twenty-three percent of respondents rehired a registered retiree.

11. As of March 25, 2008, the database had 154 retired state employees enrolled. The rate of growth is exciting as this database and subsequent initiatives are new ways of doing business in the State of Louisiana. The Department of State Civil Service considers this program to be successful and looks forward to its future expansion.