



Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

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Real Estate's Sabatino Named Employee of the Year

Andrew Sabatino, parking supervisor for the Real Estate Division's Parking Services Section, has been selected as the Department of Administration's *Employee of the Year* for 2024.

Sabatino was named the winner at a ceremony in the Upper Rotunda of the Capitol on Dec. 11, 2024.

A state employee for nine years, Sabatino makes the weekly parking schedules, manages reserved spaces, trains parking attendants, performs evaluations, and inspects



Andrew Sabatino was named the 2024 *Employee of the Year*. Sabatino (center) celebrated the recognition with Real Estate Director Arlie Hubbard and Operations Manager Gail Delmaar.

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West Virginia State Parks Launches Online Store

West Virginia State Parks now has an official online store.

Launched in late November 2024, the store offers fans of West Virginia's iconic parks an easy way to shop for their favorite gear, featuring everything from cozy crewnecks and water bottles to magnets.

The online store showcases a curated collection of bestselling items from park gift shops, as well as brand-new additions, including the state's official Almost Heaven-branded merchandise.

"We're excited to give folks across the country a convenient way to bring a piece of Almost Heaven into their homes," Gov. Jim Justice said when he announced the online store. "West Virginia State Parks have always been a source of pride for our state, and this new online store is the perfect way to share that pride with the world."

The new merchandise store is an extension of West Virginia State Parks' ongoing mission to inspire love for the outdoors

while promoting the state's natural beauty. Visit wvstateparks.com/shop to explore the collection.



Photos courtesy of West Virginia State Parks

SNEAK PEEK

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Department Celebrates 2024 Agency Successes

As we head into 2025, the Department of Administration is celebrating and building upon the many successes that were realized last year within its agencies and divisions. Below are just a few highlights of the Department's accomplishments:

Aviation Division: Six state aircraft - one airplane and five helicopters - flew a total of 757 flights, transported 273 passengers, and logged 552.7 flight hours in all weather conditions over mountainous terrain without incident or accident. The division also performed 64 flights in response to critical lifesaving search and rescue missions, as well as law enforcement missions including but not limited to aerial transportation of personnel, fleeing suspects, marijuana eradication, and missing persons.

Board of Risk and Insurance Management (BRIM): BRIM received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the 29th consecutive year. BRIM also successfully completed the cyber and property insurance renewals, moved the privacy department into the main offices of BRIM, which reduced BRIM's rent expense, and implemented a streamlined underwriting process to enhance customer service.

Consolidated Public Retirement Board (CPRB): The CPRB received the GFOA Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the 12th consecutive year. The CPRB-administered Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) is funded at 97.6% and the Teachers Retirement System (TRS) is funded at a record high 79.9%. The number of employees registered for self-service more than doubled over the past year, from 6,600 people to more than 13,300. In addition, the CPRB processed approximately 2,500 new retirements, more than 2,200 refunds, and more than 32,300 benefit estimates during 2024. The agency also processed 70,000 retirement payments totaling approximately \$1.46 billion and 2,200

refund payments totaling approximately \$26.3 million during FY2024.

Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO): OEO hosted its annual training conference with 155 state employees in attendance. The office also held quarterly counselor and coordinator meetings to update attendees on new federal EEO case law and updates.

Ethics Commission: In 2024, the Ethics Commission issued 16 advisory opinions and five formal contract exemptions. The agency processed 139 formal individual complaints and responded to 2,086 telephone inquiries and 746 written inquiries. In addition, the commission granted 80 employee exemptions, trained 2,495 public officials and employees, and processed 746 lobbyist spending reports.

Finance Division: The Finance Division completed the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and the State's Single Audit.

Fleet Management (FMD): The Fleet Management Division decommissioned 31 vehicles and reassigned 63 during the year. Approximately 347 vehicles were used by agencies throughout the year. In addition, 573 vehicles were purchased as agency-owned and seven vehicles were leased through FMD. The division also established and began posting yearly vehicle benchmarks on its website. Nine agencies participated in Fleet's driving safety program and 18 new agency fleet coordinators completed fleet training.

General Services Division (GSD): GSD supported the Legislature's project to install crossover structures between the East and West wings and the main Capitol, supported a Dept. of Veterans Assistance project to design and construct a new care facility in Raleigh County, supported West Virginia State University

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PEIA Adopts Plan for Fiscal Year 2026

The Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) Finance Board met last month to discuss and adopt the financial plan for Fiscal Year 2026. The plan will go into effect on July 1, 2025. As part of the changes to this year's plan, PEIA employees can expect some increases. Premiums for state employees will increase by 14%. The agency will also raise premiums by 12% for retirees.

Both state and county employees using PEIA will see an increase of 40% in their out-of-pocket maximum as well as increases in copays. A monthly spousal surcharge for state employees will more than double, from \$147 to \$350.

A copy of these and other changes can be seen in the Finance Board's presentation at https://peia.wv.gov/Forms-Downloads/Documents/Finance_Board/December%205%2c%202024%20-%20%28MAIN%29%20Finance%20Board%20Presentation.pdf. For more information regard-

ing these changes, please visit www.peia.wv.gov or call 1-888-680-7342.



The poster features the PEIA logo on the left, which is a circular seal with 'WEST VIRGINIA' at the top, 'PEIA' in the center, and 'PUBLIC EMPLOYEES INSURANCE AGENCY' at the bottom. To the right of the logo, the text reads: 'West Virginia PEIA & RHBT Finance Board Meeting'. Below this, it says 'Thursday, December 5, 2024, 1:00pm'. At the very bottom, in smaller text, it says 'Canaan Valley Conference Room, 601 57th Street, SE, Charleston, WV 25304'.

Employee Performance Cycle Begins and Ends with New Year

This month, managers will be wrapping up the 2024 performance year (PY24) for employees using the EPA-3, while simultaneously kicking off the 2025 performance year (PY25) through use of the EPA-1.

The Division of Personnel's Organization and Human Resource Development (OHRD) section encourages managers to watch *A Manager's Guide to the EPA-3*, located [here](#), to refresh their knowledge of how to complete the EPA-3 in NEOGOV Perform. OHRD has the following tips to help managers with the process:

- For EPA-3s, gather your notes and data on each employee's performance. Ask employees to do a self-evaluation based on what was in their EPA-1 and sit down with them to have a preliminary talk to assess how they view their own performance. You can use this as part of your own EPA-3 evaluation.
- Sign up for the online course, Employee Performance Appraisal: The Foundation for Performance Management, to learn more about how to partner with your employees to establish meaningful goals; how to write measurable performance expectations; and holding performance discussions.
- Ask employees to meet with you regarding their goals for 2025. Have them discuss the areas they'd like to improve, new duties they might be able to take on, etc. This can be useful when creating your EPA-1 expectations for the upcoming year.

The due date for both EPA-3s for PY24 and EPA-1s for PY25 is March 2, 2025. Any EPA related questions can be directed to epasupport@wv.gov.

Timeline of EPA Events

Dec. 2, 2024 -

EPA-3s opened for Performance Year (PY) 2024 to allow ample time to prepare thorough evaluations

Jan. 1, 2025 -

EPA-1s for PY25 created. Managers should focus on setting specific, actionable goals for the year.

March 2, 2025 - Due date for 2024 EPA-3s

March 2, 2025 - Due date for 2025 EPA-1s

July 2, 2025 -

EPA-2s open for PY25. Use this checkpoint to assess progress and adjust expectations as needed.

Aug. 30, 2025 - Due date for 2025 EPA-2s

Dec. 2, 2025 - EPA-3s opened for PY2025

Travel Card Information Must Be Kept Current at Auditor's Office and with Rental Companies

To ensure that vendors receive proper and timely payment for services, state employees utilizing the statewide vehicle rental contracts should keep their payment information with those entities current. While some travel arrangements can be made using the *wvOASIS* Online Booking Tool, reservations can still be made manually. When booking manually with Enterprise, a GAR number is required. Each GAR number has a corresponding P-Card on file with the Auditor's Office. Agencies should keep their payment information that corresponds to GAR numbers current with the Auditor's Office. Updates will be needed if P-Card holders change and when new cards are issued with new expiration

dates.

The Travel Management Office (TMO) frequently receives decline messages from Enterprise, and because the TMO does not manage P-Card information, any updates must come directly from the agency cardholder. Cardholders needing to update their P-Card information with the State Auditor's Office may do so by contacting Nathan Ellis at 304-205-8533 or Nathan.Ellis@wvsao.gov. The updated information should not be emailed.

For agencies utilizing the Hertz contract, the payee should submit the Guaranteed Credit Card Applicant Program Letter of Agreement following the instructions located at www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/travel/

GCCAPPLICATIONincludingupdatingexisting.pdf.

The Letter of Agreement and its required information must be prepared on agency letterhead. Once Hertz receives the information, the agency will be assigned a new billing ID. Upon completion and submission of the Letter of Agreement to Hertz, the agency will be provided with a new billing number as well as a discount number. The discount number, while not related to billing, may be used by Hertz to search the contract rates for West Virginia.

If you aren't sure if you have current information on file, follow up with the appropriate entities to verify your agency's information.

Tips for Preparing Vehicles for Winter Weather

According to the Department of Transportation, 22% of all vehicle crashes in the U.S., and 16% of the fatalities, are due to severe weather such as rain, snow, sleet, and ice. It's important to prepare your car for treacherous conditions and extremely cold temperatures, and know what to do if you are stranded in a vehicle. When the temperatures start to drop:

- Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive, travel during the day.
- Don't travel alone. Keep others informed of your schedule.
- Stay on main roads and avoid back road shortcuts.
- Top off antifreeze, windshield wiper fluid, gas, oil, and other fluids.
- Make sure your tires have enough tread.
- Keep bagged salt or sand in the trunk for extra traction and to melt ice.
- Clear snow from the top of the car, headlights, and windows.
- Keep a cold weather kit in your trunk that includes a blanket or sleeping bag, gloves, non-perishable snacks, bottled water, a portable snow shovel, first aid kit, flashlight, flare, and cell phone charger. Click [here](#) for a complete list of essentials to keep in your car.

If you're trapped in a vehicle:

- Stay inside. Rescuers are more likely to find you there.



- Run the engine and heater about 10 minutes every hour. Clear any snow from the exhaust pipe to reduce your risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
 - Move around to maintain heat.
 - Use maps, floor mats, and seat covers for insulation.
 - Take turns sleeping. Someone should always be awake to alert rescuers.
 - Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.
 - Turn on the inside light at night so rescue crews can find you.
 - If you're stranded in a remote area, stomp out the words "SOS" or "HELP" in the snow.
- For other winter safety tips, visit [Ready.gov](#).

2024 EOY

Continued from Page 1

parking equipment. In addition, he assists visitors and employees with their parking questions and directs them to where they need to be.

Sabatino was among the *Employee of the Month* recipients who were eligible for the award. Prior to naming the *Employee of the Year*, each monthly recipient received a special gift at the ceremony. A reception was held for the monthly recipients and division directors. Acting Cabinet

Secretary John McHugh extended his appreciation to those selected this year for this coveted monthly recognition but also noted the hard work that is accomplished by all Department of Administration employees.

Congratulations to all 2024 *Employees of the Month* and especially to Sabatino for being selected as the *Employee of the Year*!



Recipients of *Employee of the Month* in 2024 gathered together at the 2024 *Employee of the Year* ceremony.

Front Row: Ashley Huffman (Technology), Acting Cabinet Secretary John McHugh, and Mary Youngblood (Personnel)

Middle Row: Tracy Batman (CPRB), Leslie Gwinn (Finance), and Lindsey Atkins (CPRB)

Back Row: Bradlee Wolfe (Technology), Andrew Sabatino (Real Estate), Trina Sweeney (PEIA), and Jason Hays (Purchasing)

Question of the Month: Department Employees Share Song Titles and Lyrics Describing Their 2024



Thank you to all employees who continue to participate in our *Employee Question of the Month*. Last month, we asked employees to tell us which song title or lyrics described their 2024. The answers did not disappoint.

- Turn Back Time by Cher
- Take This Job and Shove It
- Drivin' My Life Away
- Always on Time
- "I'm broke, but I'm happy/I'm poor, but I'm kind"
- I Would if I Could by Ernest and Lainey Wilson

- "Don't you know that I'm still standing better than I ever did? Looking like a true survivor, feeling like a little kid"
- "Layin' on the highway I saw my mind/In tiny little pieces thrown from side to side/My heart was shattered along with my pride/Guess you can't keep 'em on the wild ride"
- Time for Me to Fly
- Save Me by Jelly Roll
- All Eyes on Me by Bo Burnham
- I'm Still Standing by Elton John

- Because He Lives, I Can Face Tomorrow
- Another One Bites the Dust
- Here We Go Again by David Guetta and Oliver Tree
- Riding the Storm Out by REO Speedwagon
- Zombified by Falling in Reverse
- Wrecking Ball
- Living in a Box by Living in a Box
- These are the Days by Van Morrison

For a look at the complete responses, visit the Administration Station.

DEPT. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Continued from Page 2

in selecting a designer for a new laboratory facility at the Institute campus, and provided project management support for the Department of Arts, Culture and History's projects to install murals in the main Capitol rotunda and the outdoor exhibit at the West Virginia Science and Culture Center. In addition, GSD completed the update to the exterior lighting of the west lawn of the main Capitol, continued improvements to antiquated HVAC systems by completing Phase II of fan coil unit replacement in the main Capitol, and continued education and emphasis on policy compliance with goals to reduce consumption as a no-cost method to reduce the state's energy footprint. GSD also managed a variety of large projects to renovate, repair, and improve buildings that included the Lot 98 East campus warehouse project, the Building 4 renovation project, and an elevator modernization project.

Division of Personnel (DOP): The DOP merged the staffing services and personnel transaction sections to create a Staffing and Recruitment section. This change allowed for a reduction of an assistant director position through attrition and provided an opportunity to expand services. The Classification and Compensation Unit completed three national compensation surveys for the National Compensation Association of State Governments. The unit also worked with the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation to increase the pay for uniformed officers, as well as for those at facilities that have a critical vacancy rate; worked with the Office of Inspector General to establish special hiring rates for the Health Facilities Surveyor and Nurse Facility Surveyor series and provide a special plan of implementation and retention incentives; and worked with the West Virginia Lottery to create the Lottery Technical Support Quality Assurance Analyst class series, to reclassify positions, and provide a special plan of implementation.

Prosecuting Attorneys Institute (PAI): During 2024, PAI appointed 373 special prosecutors. The agency also offered 47 training sessions for 248 prosecutors and 218 law enforcement officers.

Public Defender Services (PDS): A total of 37,953 vouchers for the compensation of court-appointed counsel were processed

in the amount of \$33,357,957. Vouchers are processed within five to 10 days after submission to the agency. In furtherance of the agency's mission to ensure a holistic defense, the 10 parental mentors in the Public Defender Corporations made referrals in 204 cases, of which 55 were marked as closed and 27 resulted in reunification; and the seven recovery coaches in the Public Defender Corporations made referrals in 316 cases, in which 181 clients were approved for treatment and 356 clients successfully completed programs. The agency's Habeas Corpus Division opened 14 new cases and closed eight cases. The Appellate Advocacy Division was appointed to 27 new cases and closed 24 older cases. The agency's Criminal Law Research Center organized and hosted the 2024 Indigent Defence Conference, at which 191 attorneys were present.

Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA): PEIA hosted seven benefit fairs around the state and hosted monthly "PEIA 101" courses to educate agency benefit coordinators. The agency also expanded coverage to include UHC network facilities for substance abuse disorders and eating disorders, and expanded the coverage for Applied Behavioral Analysis benefits and removed the \$30,000 benefit cap. In addition, PEIA removed the additional \$500 copay for injuries resulting from high-risk behavior and removed the time frame limitations for treatment of dental accidents under health coverage.

Real Estate Division: The Division completed an annual report on its properties and presented it to the Legislature.

West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT): WVOT migrated the DNR Elkins operations center to the executive domain and pushed more than 450 major updates to executive personal computers. The agency also implemented multi-factor authentication for PEIA to satisfy federal requirements. In addition, WVOT responded to more than 170,000 cyber events that included malware attempts, scripting attacks, bad programming practices, ransomware attempts, and reported cyber incidents.

DOP's First Semester Program Open for Registration

The Division of Personnel's Organization and Human Resource Development (OHRD) section is pleased to announce that registration is now open for its 2025 First Semester Program Schedule, including virtual training and face-to-face/classroom sessions.

Through its training sessions, OHRD strives to develop leaders at all levels by facilitating learning, guiding change efforts, and improving individual, team, and organizational performance.

January's sessions include Discipline and Documentation, Conflict Management, Time Management, and Onboarding Employees.

For a complete list of courses, including detailed course descriptions, schedules, and requirements, visit <https://personnel.wv.gov/ohrd/news-and-announcements/Pages/20251stSemester.aspx> or go directly to the State of West Virginia Learning Center (CourseMill) for registration.

Contact OHRD at dop.registrar@wv.gov if you have any questions or a class you need is full.



west virginia
DIVISION OF PERSONNEL

Welcome! ... The Department of Administration is pleased to welcome **Gabriel Cobb** (Aviation); **Michael Phelix, Brian Thomas, and Chad Turley** (General Services); **Brandon Perdue** (Personnel); **John McGinn** (Public Defender Services); and **Samuel Booker, John Lalli, and Tony Riley** (Technology).

Best Wishes ... to **Timothy Abraham** and **Angela Harper** (CPRB), **Wesley White** (Grievance), and **Shannon Parkins** (PEIA), who recently resigned from our department.

Happy Retirement! ... After years of hard work and dedication, we would like to wish **Lionel Adams** (CPRB), **Mark Doyle** and **Rosa McFarland** (Public Defender Services), and **Tim Hyatt** and **Danny Pauley** (Technology) the very best during their retirements.

Holidays ... West Virginia state government will be closed on Jan. 1, 2025, in observance of New Year's Day and Jan. 20, 2025, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Inauguration ... Governor-elect Patrick Morrisey will be sworn into office on Jan. 13, 2025, at 11 a.m. on the state Capitol steps.

Got News? ... Share YOUR good news with all of your department co-workers! Email Samantha.S.Knapp@wv.gov with detailed information so we may include it in the next issue of the newsletter.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in JANUARY

Below is a list of Department of Administration employees celebrating their birthdays during the month of January:

Shawn Coleman.....Aviation	Kim Nuckles.....OEO
Stephen Panaro.....BRIM	Joni Blankenship.....PEIA
Tonya Pugh.....BRIM	Elisabeth Arthur.....Personnel
Virginia Goff.....CPRB	Amy Hayes.....Personnel
Deana Gose.....CPRB	Lindsey Bailey.....Pub.Def.Srvs.
Alyssa Jones.....CPRB	Lee Carper.....Pub.Def.Srvs.
Kimberly Pauley.....CPRB	Elizabeth Hatfield.....Pub.Def.Srvs.
Nora Shanklin.....CPRB	Emily Hatfield.....Pub.Def.Srvs.
John Ellem.....Ethics	Wendy Pettry.....Purchasing
Jonathan Barrett.....Gen.Srvs.	Regina Reynolds.....Real Estate
Gregory Carrier.....Gen.Srvs.	Scott Birchfield.....WVOT
Tyrone Clark.....Gen.Srvs.	Mary Burkey.....WVOT
James Jobe.....Gen.Srvs.	Tina Christian.....WVOT
David Lawrence.....Gen.Srvs.	David Douglas.....WVOT
Bill Lawson.....Gen.Srvs.	David Fitzwater.....WVOT
Eric Loftis.....Gen.Srvs.	Richard Gauldin.....WVOT
James McCoy.....Gen.Srvs.	Brian Hatcher.....WVOT
Kenneth Meadows.....Gen.Srvs.	Travis Hysell.....WVOT
James Morrow.....Gen.Srvs.	John Lalli.....WVOT
Mark Nelson.....Gen.Srvs.	Lisa Maurer.....WVOT
Eric Pardue.....Gen.Srvs.	Jose Molinar.....WVOT
Baxter Parsons.....Gen.Srvs.	Tina Snyder.....WVOT
Leonard Spencer.....Gen.Srvs.	Danny Stover.....WVOT
Kari Westfall.....Gen.Srvs.	Christopher Thornton.....WVOT
Lara Bissett.....Grievance	

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