

HIRING & EMPLOYMENT MONITORING REPORT

OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR THE AGENCIES OF THE ILLINOIS GOVERNOR

SECOND QUARTER | 2023



UPDATES

The Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor (OEIG) provides this report each quarter on its hiring-related work.

This quarter, the OEIG held a training conference for all employees, including Hiring & Employment Monitoring (HEM) Division staff. The conference included presentations on the OEIG's 20th anniversary, transgender issues, the union grievance process, investigative

interview techniques, managing the OEIG's increased complaint and revolving door workloads, electronic records management, and workplace communication skills.

OEIG staff also presented "Ethics Officer 101" at the Executive Ethics Commission's (EEC) Ethics Officer Conference on May 2, 2023.

This quarter, HEM hired a new Analyst, Koen Varley.

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HEM Compliance Reviews

Between April 1 and June 30, 2023, HEM's work included the following compliance activities.

Actions Taken During the Second Quarter 2023	Count
Hiring-related reviews opened	14
Complaints referred to HEM	6
Hiring sequences monitored	3
Desk audits completed	12
Hiring reviews transferred to the OEIG Investigative Division	0
Hiring reviews administratively closed	0
Advisories issued	13

HEM Exempt List Reviews

The following chart represents the Exempt List reviews conducted by HEM this quarter.

HEM Exempt List Reviews	Count
Exempt appointment notifications/certifications received and reviewed for positions on the Exempt List	77 (No objections)
Exempt position description clarifications received and reviewed	47 (No objections)
Exempt List addition requests received this quarter	7
Exempt List addition requests approved this quarter	11
Agency withdrawal of Exempt List requests this quarter	2
Exempt List deletion requests received this quarter	2
Exempt List deletion requests approved this quarter	3
Exempt List pending requests*	1

* Two Exempt List addition requests that were counted as pending in the First Quarter 2023 HEM Report were discussed among the relevant entities; HEM considers these matters closed.

Exempt List Additions and Deletions by Agency - Second Quarter 2023		
Agency/Entity	Working Title	OEIG Determination
Commission on Equity and Inclusion	Deputy Director for the Business Enterprise Program	Approved Addition
Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority	Program Analyst Director B	Approved Addition
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services	Director of Operations for Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Initiative	Approved Addition
Illinois Department of Human Services	Senior Policy Advisor – Division of Family and Community Services	Approved Addition
Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice	Labor Relations Administrator (SPSA)	Approved Addition
Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice	Labor Relations Administrator (PSA)	Approved Deletion
Illinois Department of Labor	Deputy Chief Legal Counsel for Administration	Approved Addition
Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security	Chief Legal Counsel (SPSA)	Approved Addition
Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security	Chief Legal Counsel (non-Code)	Approved Deletion
Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security	Deputy Legal Counsel – Homeland Security	Approved Addition
Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security	Deputy Director of Office of Emergency Management (SPSA)	Approved Addition
Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security	Deputy Director of Office of Emergency Management (non-Code)	Approved Deletion
Illinois Prisoner Review Board	Staff Attorney	Approved Addition
Illinois State Police	Illinois Forensic Science Commission Executive Director	Approved Addition

HEM Exempt PSC Reviews

The following chart represents the exempt personal services contract (PSC) reviews conducted by HEM this quarter.

HEM Exempt PSC Reviews	Count
Exempt PSCs received for review	3
Exempt PSCs approved or not objected to this quarter	4

Approved Exempt PSCs by Agency - Second Quarter 2023	
Agency/Entity	Position Title
Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services	IMPACT Project Director
Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice	Chief of Psychiatry
Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board	Public Information and Legislative Consultant
Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs	Labor Relations Administrator

Political Contact Reporting

This quarter, HEM received 1 Political Contact report, summarized below.

- The report stated that a staff person for an Illinois State Senator contacted the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) inquiring about the veteran hiring preference for a position/classification. In response, Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS) Compliance staff reminded the agency to only provide publicly available information on the IDOT seasonal employment hiring process.

HEM Advisories

The following chart lists out the Advisories issued this quarter that resulted in HEM finding that the agency's selection for the position was merit-based and justifiable without any recommendations.

Advisories with No Recommendations – Second Quarter 2023			
Advisory	Agency	Position Title	Type of Review
23-HEM-0007	REV	Clerical Trainee	Desk Audit
22-HEM-0051	REV	Assistant General Counsel	Complaint Referral
22-HEM-0076	IDHR	Office Associate	Desk Audit
23-HEM-0006	IDOT	Assistant Chief Counsel	Desk Audit
23-HEM-0014	ISP	Administrative Assistant	Desk Audit
23-HEM-0012	IEMA	Benefits Representative	Desk Audit
23-HEM-0001	DCEO	Economic Development Representative Specialist & Public Administration Intern	Desk Audit
23-HEM-0011	IDFPR	Office Administrator IV	Desk Audit
23-HEM-0019	ALPLM	Painter	Desk Audit

HEM Advisory Summaries

Advisories that included a HEM recommendation are summarized below. In some cases, HEM requested a formal response from the agency, which is also summarized.

22-HEM-0004

HEM conducted a desk audit review of the hiring file for the Older American Services Program Manager at the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA). While HEM concluded that the selection decision was merit-based and justifiable, HEM followed up with the Interview Proctor regarding several instances in which an interviewer (Interviewer A) did not properly document his initial candidate scores.

The Proctor confirmed that anytime Interviewer A modified one of his initial scores based on further discussion with the other interviewers, as permitted by the Comprehensive Employment Plan (CEP), Interviewer A simultaneously adjusted his initial score to match the new score. HEM recommended that IDoA ensure interviewers accurately document both their original and adjusted scores, as both are important components of the interview sequence record. The Proctor indicated that Interviewer A is no longer an IDoA employee; however, HEM determined that Interviewer A now works for another State agency. Therefore, HEM also noted that CMS should share HEM's Advisory with Interviewer A's current agency to ensure appropriate awareness of and training on this issue.

While HEM did not request a response to this Advisory, IDoA responded, stating that as a practice, a member of IDoA's Human Resources (HR) team is always present for interviews and going forward, IDoA will ensure that the HR participant reminds interviewers of the proper candidate scoring procedures. IDoA also stated that CMS confirmed HEM's Advisory had been shared with Interviewer A's current agency of employment, which asked Interviewer A to retake interviewer training. HEM confirmed that Interviewer A completed the training in June 2023.

21-HEM-0052

In response to a complaint referral, HEM reviewed the hiring sequence for the Deputy Chief Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) at the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). While HEM did not object to the hire, HEM made several recommendations. In discussing the screening process with both the CMS Hiring Lead and the DCFS Subject Matter Expert (SME), HEM found that the SME had missed some of the applicants' information during the SME review, that the SME was not consistently applying the preferred qualifications, and that the application questions could have been more detailed for both applicants and reviewers to understand the preferred experience. HEM recommended that CMS Hiring Leads and agency HR staff be sure that application questions are specific and well-defined, either by providing examples or requesting the specific type and amount of experience required or preferred. HEM noted that well-crafted questions better allow reviewers to consistently evaluate and apply the applicants' responses and resumes to the required and preferred experience. HEM also noted that it has seen improvement in application questions across agency requisitions as time has passed and expertise grown.

Additionally, HEM underscored the need for a SME to be consistent in their evaluation to help ensure it does not appear as though they are trying to influence the outcome of the sequence. HEM noted that a SME's modification of application scores affects the order in which applicants receive interview invitations as well as the final candidate scores and rankings, since the application score is combined with the interview score. HEM recommended the following:

- If there is a question about the intention of an application question, then the SME should define the experience required or preferred at the outset and ensure that every applicant is evaluated against those same criteria, making note of it in their SuccessFactors comments.
- The SME should ensure that they are reviewing all components of the application – application question responses, resume, and cover letter, if applicable – and consistently for all applicants.
- HEM also recommended that SMEs utilize a spreadsheet or some other tracker to organize how the SME has evaluated each candidate and whether all components of the application have been reviewed to ensure that applicants are being evaluated in the same manner.

HEM acknowledged that this was an early SuccessFactors sequence, and the SME's first review in that role. Since then, CMS has provided SME training, available on OneNet. HEM recommended that CMS consider providing additional training workshops for SMEs and that all SMEs review the CMS training materials prior to conducting a review, particularly when new to the role. The agencies requested an extension in responding to the recommendations.

23-HEM-0002

HEM conducted a desk audit review of the hiring file for a temporary/seasonal Conservation/Historic Preservation Worker in the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Office of Land Management. The position was filled without interviews and offered to the applicant with the highest validated application score, pursuant to Standardized Hiring Plan E. While HEM agreed with the selection decision, HEM found that the position description utilized in the hiring sequence was more than six years old when the position was posted and did not include all of the requirements that were used as application/screening questions. As a result, HEM recommended that IDNR review and update the position description as necessary prior to posting future seasonal Conservation/Historic Preservation Worker opportunities.

23-HEM-0023

HEM conducted a desk audit review of the hiring file for the Agency EEO Officer, FMLA, ADA, and Workers' Compensation Coordinator at the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). While HEM found that the selection decision was merit-based and justifiable, HEM made one recommendation regarding how SMEs document their notes. Specifically, HEM recommended that the agency ensure that the results of the SME review are appropriately documented in SuccessFactors, including identifying the specific preferred qualification(s) for which an applicant is losing points; and explaining why the applicant does not meet the preferred qualification(s).

Investigative Division

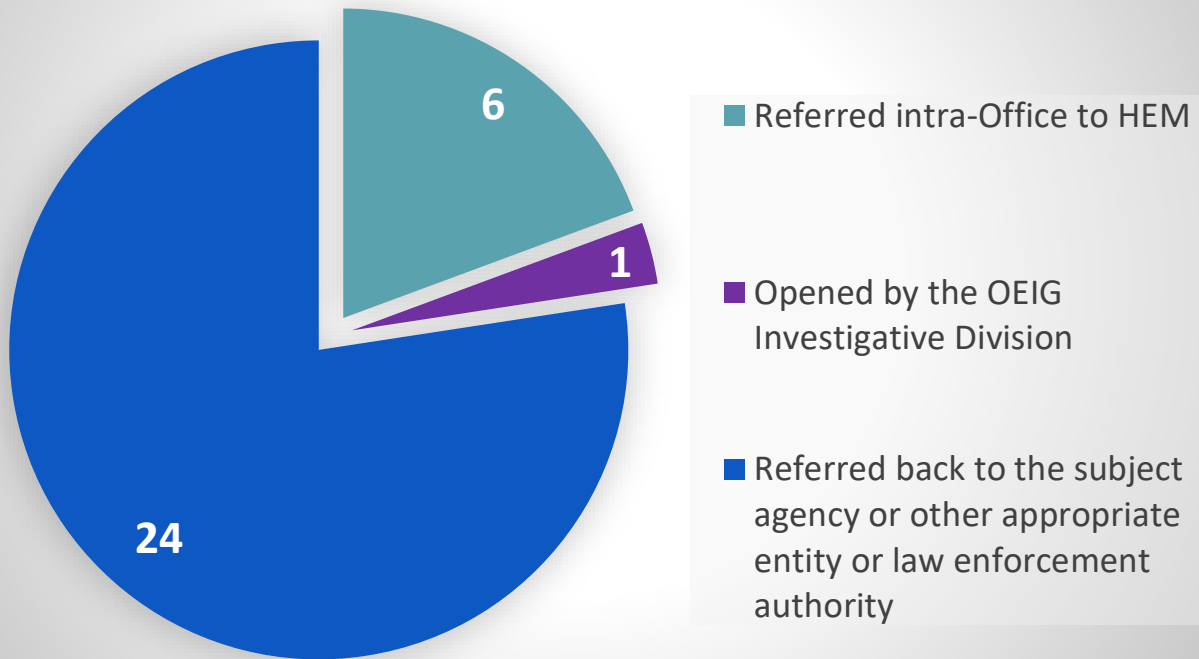
The OEIG's Investigative Division typically receives over 2,500 complaints every fiscal year from members of the public, State employees, contractors, bidders, and anonymous sources. The OEIG evaluates all new complaints to determine the appropriate action, including opening an investigation, referring the allegations to the appropriate entity, or making a referral to HEM. In addition, the OEIG also has the authority to self-initiate an investigation based on information discovered in other investigations or available via public sources. Cases may also be transferred to the Investigative Division from HEM when a HEM review reveals evidence of intentional wrongdoing that requires a more in-depth inquiry or evidence of unlawful political discrimination.

Hiring-Related Complaints

For the second quarter of 2023, the OEIG received 23 hiring-related complaints.

The following chart reflects the actions that were also taken with regard to hiring-related complaints during this quarter.

Actions Taken on Hiring-related Complaints Second Quarter 2023



Hiring-Related Investigations

The following are the Investigative Division’s numbers at the close of this quarter.

Hiring-related Investigations	Count
Hiring-related investigations pending at the close of the quarter	10
Hiring-related investigations closed this quarter	2
Founded reports related to hiring issued this quarter	0
Founded reports related to hiring made available to the public this quarter	1

This quarter, the Executive Ethics Commission (EEC) made one OEIG founded report related to hiring available to the public, which is summarized below. The redacted report, as well as previous publicly released reports, are available at www.inspectorgeneral.illinois.gov.

Case No. 21-00329

The OEIG investigated a complaint alleging that a Chief Stationary Engineer at the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Illinois School for the Visually Impaired (ISVI) falsely stated on his employment application that he was a high school graduate.

Based on the investigation, the OEIG learned that the subject had held multiple positions at ISVI, including three that required “knowledge, skill and mental development equivalent to completion of high school.” IDHS had four employment applications on file for the subject, and each asked if the subject was a high school graduate and the number of years of high school completed. All four applications reflect that the subject graduated high school and completed four years of high school or 12 years of school. Each application had a certification that all the information on the application was true and accurate and each application had signatures in the subject’s name. During his OEIG interview, the subject admitted that they were all his applications, they indicated a false number of years of school completed, and he did not graduate from high school.

The OEIG concluded that the subject knowingly provided false information on his State employment applications, in violation of IDHS policy, the Illinois Administrative Code, and the State Code of Conduct. In response to this report, IDHS terminated the subject’s employment.