



Personnel Board  
A career. A purpose. A life.

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## Report Contents

The content of this report covers the 2021 calendar year (i.e., January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021). This report was submitted to the Citizens Supervisory Commission at their semi-annual meeting held on May 17, 2022.

## Electronic Copies

The electronic version of this report contains hyperlinks to additional information for interested individuals. To obtain an electronic copy of this report, please visit the Personnel Board website at: [www.pbjcal.org](http://www.pbjcal.org).

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# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the employees and the members of the Personnel Board of Jefferson County, I am pleased to present the 2021 Annual Report on the activities of the Personnel Board and its Merit System. During 2020, the Personnel Board had to immediately halt and significantly modify our operations in order to ensure the health and safety of our customers, employees, and the general public as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We learned a tremendous amount from that process and, although the pandemic still impacted many aspects of operations during 2021, we were able to leverage the lessons learned from the preceding year to effectively and safely meet the needs of our Merit System agencies and make up significant ground the services that were paused the prior year.

Although the Personnel Board made significant modifications to strategic plans, processes, and schedules as a result of the pandemic, we did not waiver from our diligent focus on fiscal responsibility. The uncertainty regarding the impact of the pandemic on Merit System agencies' revenues in 2020 resulted in the Personnel Board taking drastic measures to significantly curtail expenses to minimize the impact of our operations on the financial bottom lines of our member agencies (the Personnel Board ended approximately \$1.3 million under budget for fiscal year 2020). Although more was known regarding agency revenues in 2021, the Personnel Board continued to work to reduce expenses while simultaneously undertaking work that had to be postponed during the previous year (e.g., large scale assessment center processes). I am very pleased to announce that the Personnel Board completed fiscal year 2021 more than \$866,000 under budget, with expenses totaling \$9,131,075. In June of 2021, anticipating a return to more normal operations, the Three-Member Personnel Board approved an increased budget of \$10.3 million for fiscal year 2022.

The impact of the pandemic was not limited to operational changes and financials bottom lines. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2021 a record number of Americans voluntarily left their jobs. The Merit System was not immune to this nation-wide trend, as the System experienced a nearly 3.5% drop in total number of classified employees across all member agencies, despite a nearly 23% increase in the number of appointments in 2021 compared to the preceding year. The Personnel Board continued to actively work to assist Merit System agencies in efficiently filling vacant positions, but as was experienced across the country in 2021, the tight labor market impacted the number of applications received for open positions. The Personnel Board is continuing to evaluate and modify its recruitment efforts to help to increase interest in public sector employment and market the Merit System as an employer of choice in the area.

The year 2021 also brought about significant staffing changes at the Personnel Board. After nearly 20 years of dedicated service to the Merit System, Lorren Oliver, retired from his position as Director. The Personnel Board and the Merit System are significantly improved due to his efforts and tremendous leadership and we cannot thank him enough for all that he accomplished. Despite the challenges encountered over the past year and throughout the entirety of the pandemic, the Personnel Board has worked to continue the positive momentum and improvements accomplished under the direction of Mr. Oliver. More details on his lasting impact on the Merit System are presented later in this annual report, along with other tremendous accomplishments of our employees for the year.

Thank you for taking the time to review the contents of this report and for your support and commitment to the Merit System. We will continue to critically evaluate the lessons learned during this challenging year and leverage that knowledge to effectively build for the future as we work to maintain the Personnel Board a model merit system.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Crenshaw, Ph.D.

Acting Director, Personnel Board of Jefferson County

# THE MERIT SYSTEM

The Personnel Board of Jefferson County Merit System includes nearly **7,600 employees** from **22 municipalities and government agencies** who devote their efforts to serving the public. Employees within the Merit System work within in a wide variety of exciting fields and meaningful professions. Working in careers ranging from public safety, city management and information technology, to public works, medical services and engineering, just to name a few, our Merit System employees are making a difference in the communities that they serve.

The Personnel Board is dedicated to effectively supporting the employment needs of our over **700 civil service occupations** and establishing a model civil service system for our communities. Individuals interested in establishing a career in the public service can explore our many exciting opportunities at [JobsQuest.org](http://JobsQuest.org).

The Personnel Board of Jefferson County's Merit System includes a wonderfully diverse set of municipal governments, ranging from smaller, **community-minded towns** to **vibrant, bustling cities**. Also included are the Jefferson County Commission and four county-wide agencies providing **critical public services** to our communities.

## Municipalities

Bessemer	Leeds
Birmingham	Midfield
Center Point	Mountain Brook
Fairfield	Pleasant Grove
Fultondale	Tarrant
Gardendale	Trussville
Homewood	Vestavia Hills
Hueytown	Warrior Police
Irondale	

## County-wide Agencies

Jefferson County Commission  
Emergency Management Agency  
General Retirement System  
Jefferson County Department of Health  
Personnel Board of Jefferson County



# MISSION & VALUES

## Mission

The Personnel Board's mission is to establish and facilitate a model merit system that enhances the employment and development of government employees through innovative, efficient, and effective human resources practices that firmly uphold our values, promote fairness and equality, and comply with applicable laws.

## Values

The Personnel Board strives to achieve its mission by adhering to and promoting the following Merit System values:

### Professional Values

Serving professionally with dedication, competence, and efficiency.

### Civic Values

Pursuing public interest with accountability and transparency.

### Ethical Values

Acting equitably, ethically, reliably, and with integrity so as to uphold public trust.

### Human Values

Demonstrating respect, compassion, dignity and fairness in dealings with citizens and fellow public servants.

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Citizens Supervisory Commission

The **Citizens Supervisory Commission (CSC)** was established by Act No. 245 of the Alabama Legislature as the body responsible for appointing members to the Three-Member Personnel Board. Information on the composition of the CSC is presented on page 7.

Three-Member Board

The **Three-Member Board** oversees the overall functioning of the Personnel Board. Their responsibilities include approving the Personnel Board's budget, appointing a director, adopting Merit System Rules & Regulations, and rendering decisions on disciplinary appeals within the Merit System. Additional information on the Three-Member Board can be found on page 8.

Executive Director

The **Executive Director** serves as chief executive officer of the Personnel Board and is responsible for managing and directing the day-to-day operations, establishing an annual budget, and proposing policies and rules to the Three-Member Board.



Staff within the departments of the Personnel Board provide a variety of services to Merit System agencies and carry out the day-to-day responsibilities of the organization. Specific information on the services and responsibilities of each department are provided on pages 10 and 11.



# CITIZENS SUPERVISORY COMMISSION

The Alabama legislature created the **Citizens Supervisory Commission (CSC)**, a group of community leaders, in order to ensure the appointment of an apolitical Three-Member Board to oversee the Merit System in Jefferson County. County Probate Judge James P. Naftel continues to serve as the Chair of the CSC. No changes were made to the composition of the CSC in 2021.

## Members

### **Judge James P. Naftel**

Chair, Presiding Probate Judge

### **Mr. William Barnes**

President/CEO, Birmingham Urban League

### **Mr. Keith A. Brown, J.D.**

President, Jefferson State Community College

### **Mr. Daniel B. Coleman**

President, Birmingham-Southern College

### **Ms. Dorothea Crosby**

President, NAACP Birmingham Branch

### **Ms. Marrienne Hayward**

President, Central Alabama Labor Federation

### **Mr. Vincent Smith**

City of Bessemer Police Department

Municipal Employee Representative

### **Pastor E.O. Jackson**

President, Interdenominational Ministerial

Alliance of Greater Birmingham

### **Mr. Ron Kitchens**

President/CEO, Birmingham Business Alliance,  
Inc.

### **Ms. Bobbie Knight, J.D.**

President, Miles College

### **Dr. Justin Meollinger**

President, Jefferson County Medical Society

### **Ms. Jan Plyler**

President, Jefferson County Council of PTA

### **Dr. Ray L. Watts**

President, University of Alabama at  
Birmingham

### **Dr. Beck Taylor**

President, Samford University

### **Mr. Thomas W. Parchman, III**

Jefferson County Commission-Tax Collector

County Employee Representative

### **Dr. Cynthia Anthony**

President, Lawson State Community College



# THREE-MEMBER BOARD

The **Three-Member Board** serves as the primary governing body overseeing the Merit System of Jefferson County and its members are appointed by the Citizens Supervisory Commission for staggered six-year terms (except when filling unexpired terms of previous place holders).

## Place 1: Judge L. Kenneth Moore

Judge Moore has served on the Three-Member Board since 2006 and in 2021 he was re-appointed for another term as the Board Chair. Judge Moore is a graduate of Auburn University where he received his Juris Doctorate from Samford University. He has had a long career in public service, including serving in the administrations of Governor Albert Brewer and Senator John Sparkman. Currently, Judge Moore serves as Municipal Judge for Hueytown, Criminal Prosecutor for the City of Adamsville, and sits as the Alabama State Bar Commissioner for the Bessemer Cut-off. Along with his public service work, Judge Moore also maintains a private law practice in Bessemer.

## Place 2: Ms. Jacqueline Smoke

Ms. Smoke was elected to Associate Member Place #2 in 2017. She is a graduate of the University of Alabama, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering and a Juris Doctorate. Ms. Smoke's career has included extensive experience in engineering operations with Alabama Power and Bessemer Utilities and a diverse law career that includes working within the Tuscaloosa and Jefferson County District Attorney's offices, the Montgomery County Probate Court, and private law firms. She also manages her own civil and criminal law practice, with a major focus on consumer protection and product safety, appellate cases, and probate matters.

## Place 3: Mr. Guin Robinson

Mr. Robinson was elected to the Board in 2018 as Associate Member Place #3. He is currently the Dean of Economic Development for Jefferson State Community College. During his career he has been extensively involved in community and professional organizations having served as Executive Director of Region 2020, Chair of the Birmingham Regional Transit Authority and Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, and as a Board Member for the Alabama Historical Commission, Children's Aid Society, Kid One, and the United Way of Central Alabama, among others. Mr. Robinson was also the first full-time mayor of Pell City, Alabama. He has a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration from Auburn University and a Master's in Education Leadership from UAB.



# DEPARTMENTS & SERVICES

The Personnel Board is comprised of multiple departments that provide vital services to our member agencies. Presented is an overview of our departments and their primary functions.

**A**dministration is responsible for executive oversight of all Personnel Board functions and operations, and for developing and ensuring organizational compliance with laws, rules, and organizational policies. Additionally, the department is responsible for creating financial operating policies and procedures; establishing and monitoring organizational contractual agreements; preparing the annual operating budget and developing budgets for major initiatives; and processing payroll for Board employees.

**A**pplicant Services is responsible for developing recruiting and marketing strategies that encourage individuals to consider careers in the public sector and promote the Merit System as an employer of choice in Jefferson County. The department is committed to providing equal opportunity in the recruitment process regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity) or veteran status to the full extent protected by the law. Work within this department includes announcing the acceptance of applications for Merit System jobs, implementing targeted recruiting efforts for hard to fill positions, reviewing and screening applications, receiving requests to fill vacancies from our member agencies, and issuing certification lists containing application information for individuals eligible for hiring consideration.

**I**nformation Services consists of three business units focused on the information technology and information management needs of the Personnel Board and the Merit System - Business Systems & Reporting, Information Technology, and Application Development. Information Services serves as a technical hub for the Personnel Board and the central operations unit responsible for processing personnel actions, maintaining employee history, troubleshooting functional system issues, training and assisting system users, creating management reports, maintaining systems authorization, calculating seniority and eligibility, network system maintenance and support, and web-based and desktop application development. The department also provides technical assistance to our member agencies that use the Board's information systems.

**T** **Training & Organizational Development** provides opportunities for employees to develop their personal and professional knowledge, skills, and abilities through a wide array of training and development offerings. In all, the department offers over 50 training programs in both technical and non-technical areas for Merit System employees. Courses include, among many others, topics such as leadership, management, process improvement, communications, customer service, computer skills, diversity, ethics, and legal issues. These training opportunities are always free of charge to employees of the Merit System. Additionally, the department oversees the employee performance management process and provides customized training based on the individual needs of our Merit System customers.

**E** **mployee Services** is comprised of Classification & Compensation and Employee Relations. Classification & Compensation is responsible for ensuring that employees are properly assigned to job classes and that job classes are appropriately assigned to salary grades. The department administers the annual classification survey, conducts job audits, reviews independent contractor services, and collects and analyzes labor market data to ensure the competitive positioning of Merit System jobs. Employee Relations is tasked with ensuring that the Rules and Regulations of the Personnel Board and the Enabling Act are adhered to in the administration of the grievance and disciplinary appeals processes. Employee Relations team members interact daily with employees, supervisors, and department heads to provide guidance on the interpretation and application of the Rules and Regulations. Additionally, Employee Relations facilitates the administrative hearing process, a quasi-judicial forum where disciplinary appeals are heard by a third-party Hearing Officer, who renders a report and recommendation to the Three-Member Board for final decision.

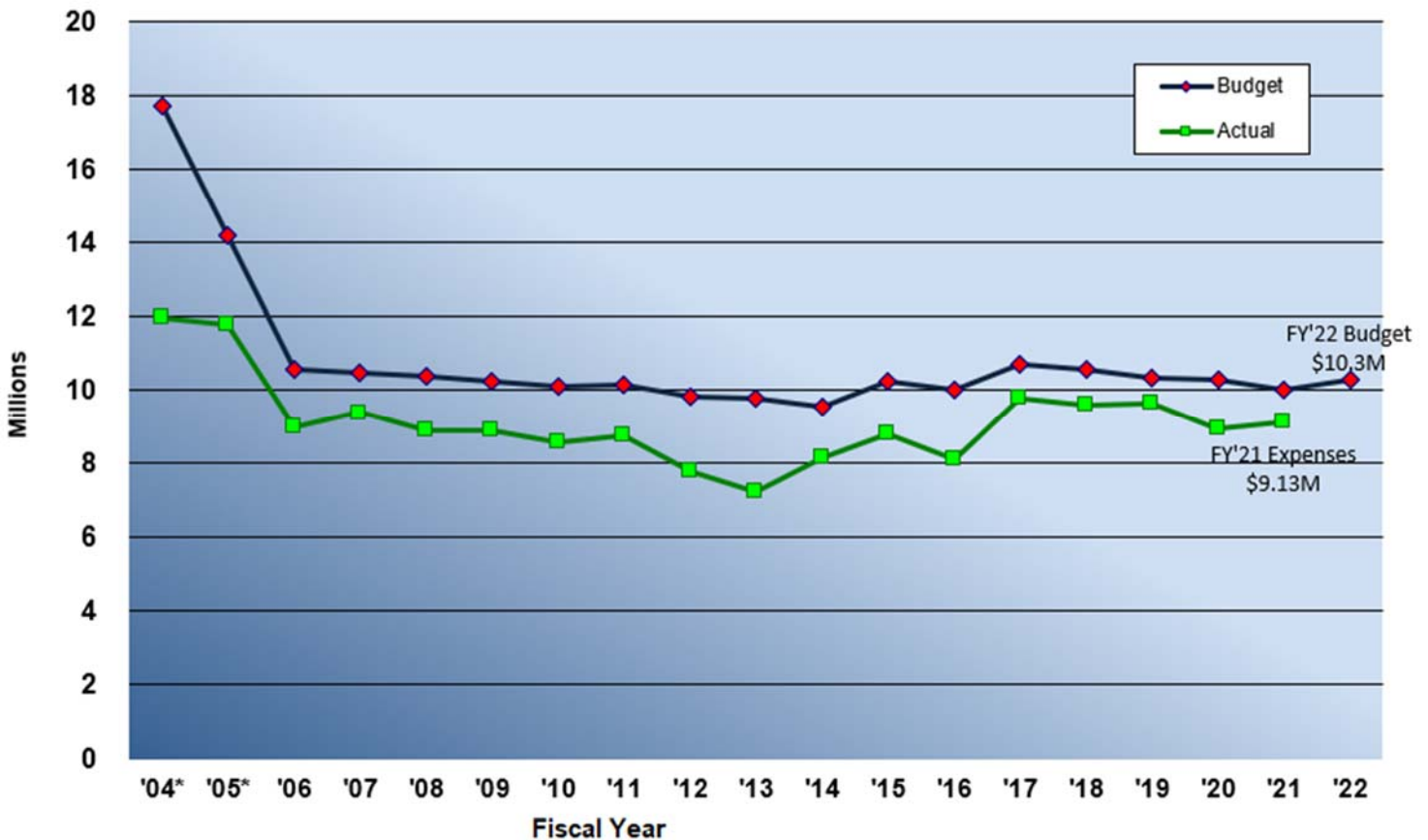
**E** **mployment Testing** facilitates the hiring of well-qualified and successful employees into Merit System positions through the development and administration of valid and legally defensible employee selection processes. To accomplish this, Employment Testing performs thorough job analyses on Merit System jobs; develops selection tests that are fair, valid, and that relate to the job; and establishes eligible registers for use by Merit System agencies for the hiring of top talent. The types of selection systems developed and administered include structured interviews, computer-based skills assessments, high-fidelity job simulations, work samples, and assessment centers. The division strives to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of large-scale test administrations by leveraging technology to enhance and facilitate the test administration and candidate evaluation process.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

As mentioned in the previous year’s annual report, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Personnel Board made significant modifications to many aspects of its services, including the manner in which certain services were facilitated and the schedules on which they were provided. Additionally, the Board made concerted efforts to contain its costs due to uncertainty regarding the impact the pandemic may have on agency revenues. The result was a very significant decrease in overall expenses for the year. Many of those same cost containing measures were continued in fiscal year (FY) 2021; however, the Board’s services, schedules, and costs did begin to move toward pre-COVID levels. As a result, the Personnel Board experienced a \$173,701 increase (approximately 1.9%) in overall expenses in FY2021 compared to the previous year; however, FY2021 expenses were still significantly lower (approximately 5.3%) than the annual pre-COVID expenses. Additionally, the Board was approximately \$866,000 under budget for the year.

In June of 2021, the Director also presented to the Three-Member Board the proposed organizational budget for fiscal year 2022. The Three-Member Board voted unanimously to approve the proposed budget in the amount of \$10.3 million, an increase of over \$278,000 compared to the FY2021 budget, and \$23,000 less than the FY2020 budget. The chart below presents a year-by-year tracking of the Personnel Board’s budgets and actual expenditures since fiscal year 2004.

## Year-by-Year Budget & Expenses



\* Indicates fiscal years in which the Personnel Board was under Federal Receivership.

The Personnel Board FY2021 expenses were \$9,131,075, a total of \$866,690 under budget. The table to the right provides a breakdown of FY2021 expenditures.

## Fiscal Year 2021 Expenditures

Personnel Costs	\$5,745,857
Employee Benefits	\$1,534,465
Legislative Allowance (Board Members' compensation)	\$2,500
Advertising	\$39,615
Systems Maintenance (includes hosting fees)	\$474,762
Travel (volunteer assessor travel & recruiting travel)	\$2,649
Legal Expenses	\$249,987
Other Professional Services (exam & transcription services)	\$253,815
Insurance Premiums	\$35,923
Rental-Facilities (hotel accommodations for volunteer assessors)	\$9,600
Office Supplies	\$50,005
Computer Equipment and Software	\$50,844
Hospitality (meals for volunteer assessors and training special events)	\$2,495
Rent (rental of office space in 2121 building)	\$635,363
Other (includes telephone expenses, copier rentals, etc.)	\$43,193
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,131,075</b>

## Expense Allocation

Agency	Percentage
Birmingham	36.5%
Jefferson County*	29.7%
Bessemer	6.0%
Health Dept	5.4%
Homewood	3.7%
Vestavia Hills	3.4%
Mountain Brook	2.8%
Trussville	2.6%
Irondale	1.6%
Gardendale	1.6%
Hueytown	1.5%
Leeds	1.0%
Tarrant	0.9%
Fultondale	0.9%
Midfield	0.6%
Pleasant Grove	0.5%
Fairfield	0.5%
Center Point	0.5%
Warrior	0.3%

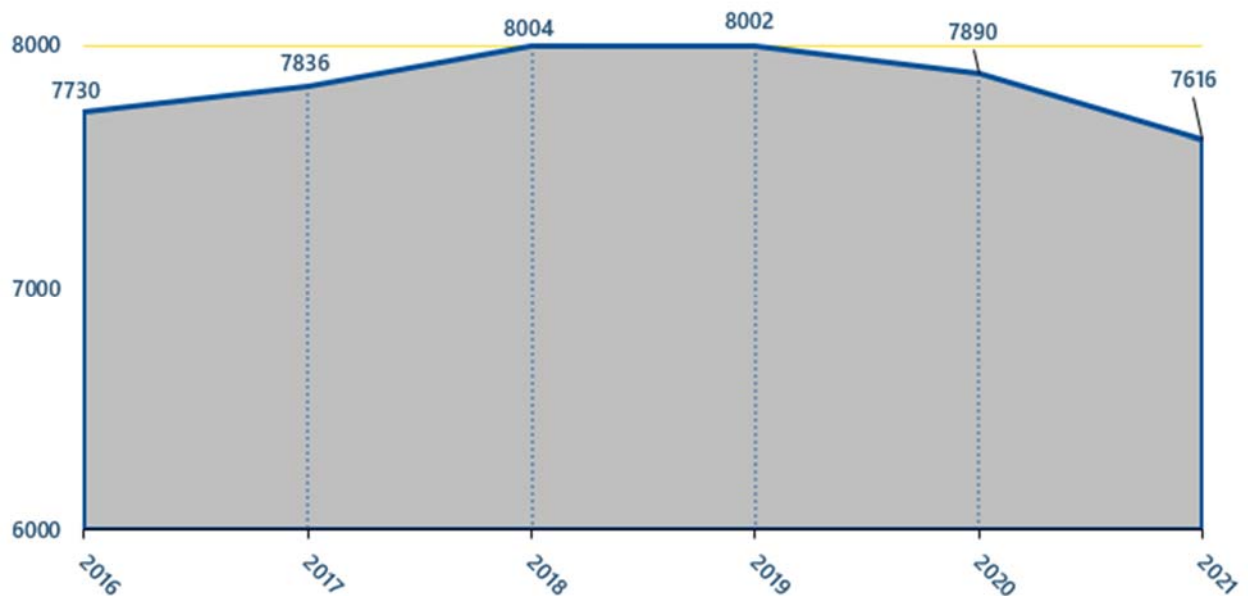
\*Includes JCSO, EMA and GRS (Pension Board)

The Personnel Board's expenses throughout the fiscal year are paid by the Jefferson County Commission. At the conclusion of the fiscal year, Jefferson County submits to the Personnel Board the itemized expenses for Board operations. The Executive Director certifies the expenditures and the allocation of expenses to be billed to the member agencies, based on each agency's number of classified employees, and submits the information to the Three-Member Board for approval. Presented to the left are the percentages of Personnel Board expenses allocated to each agency for fiscal year 2021.

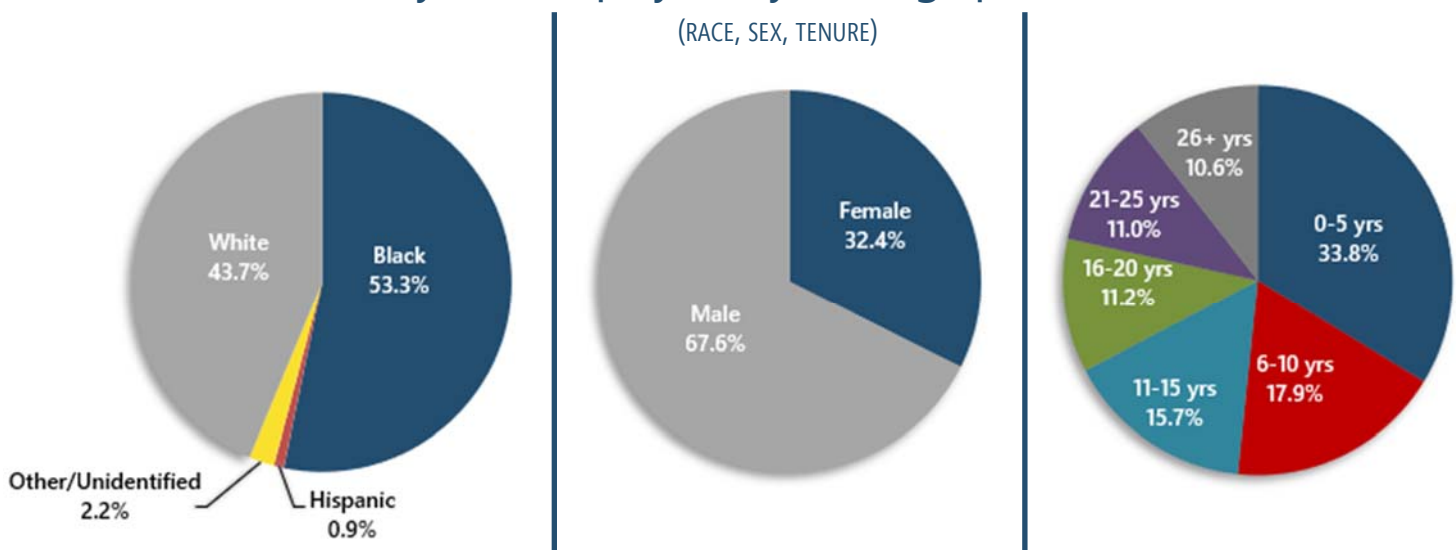
# WORKFORCE & DEMOGRAPHICS

The Merit System employs a diverse population of highly qualified public servants ensuring the safety of our citizens and the continuity of our governments. These dedicated employees strive to provide excellent service to our communities and citizens. In 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, a record number of Americans voluntarily left their jobs. The Merit System was not immune to this nation-wide trend. Despite a 23% increase in the number of Merit System appointments in 2021, compared to the preceding year, the Merit System experienced a nearly 3.5% drop in total number of classified employees. The 7,616 classified employees was the lowest end-of-year total since 2015. Presented within this section is a summary of the total number and demographics of our Merit System employees.

### Merit System Employees by Year Breakdown



### Merit System Employees by Demographic Breakdown





## Merit System Agency Employment Totals & Demographics

Merit System Agency	Total	Sex		Race		
		Female	Male	Black	White	Other/ Undisclosed
Bessemer	456	110	346	319	122	15
Birmingham	2761	797	1964	1874	822	65
Center Point	40	15	25	21	17	2
Department of Health	406	315	91	266	102	38
Emergency Mgt. Agency	6	3	3	0	6	0
Fairfield	40	7	33	33	5	2
Fultondale	66	15	51	11	55	0
Gardendale	120	21	99	10	107	3
General Retirement System	4	3	1	0	4	0
Homewood	280	47	233	60	213	7
Hueytown	111	26	85	21	87	3
Irondale	124	25	99	26	94	4
Jefferson County	2235	900	1335	1244	935	56
Leeds	77	9	68	11	62	4
Midfield	37	9	28	28	9	0
Mountain Brook	195	27	168	25	164	6
Personnel Board	58	33	25	31	26	1
Pleasant Grove	44	8	36	6	36	2
Tarrant	71	21	50	34	33	4
Trussville	208	44	164	14	188	6
Vestavia Hills	258	33	225	21	225	12
Warrior	19	2	17	1	18	0
<b>Merit System</b>	<b>7616</b>	<b>2470</b>	<b>5146</b>	<b>4056</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>230</b>

# RECRUITING & APPLICATIONS

Among the most significant responsibilities of the Personnel Board is attracting high quality talent to the Merit System and facilitating the hiring of well-qualified employees. In an effort to effectively meet the needs of the Merit System, the Personnel Board develops recruiting and marketing strategies that encourage individuals to consider careers in the public sector and promote the Merit System as an employer of choice in Jefferson County.

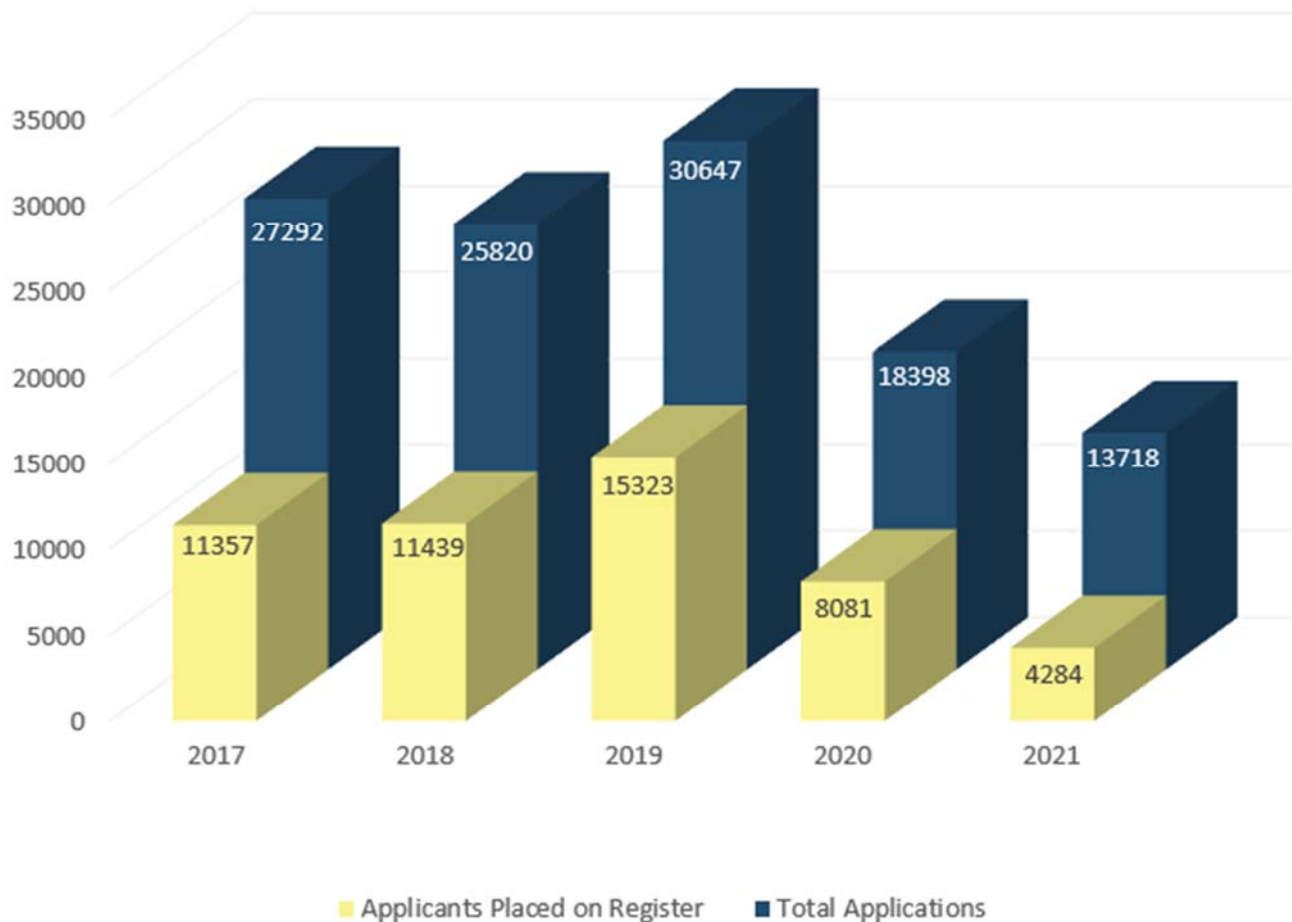
As was also the case in the preceding year, the COVID-19 pandemic and a highly competitive employment market presented recruiting challenges during 2021. The Personnel Board modified a number of its recruiting strategies for the year and worked to include a mix of recruiting activities to attract talent. While some recruiting activities did begin to return to normal, many of the in-person activities in which the Board typically engages, such as attending as many as 50 career events and hosting the annual First Responders Night with the Birmingham Barons at Regions Field, remained unavailable due to public health concerns. Despite these limitations, the Personnel Board continued to provide representatives at many virtually-held events with college and university career placement offices, state career centers, and several local non-profit organizations.

In addition to the virtual and in-person career fairs, the Personnel Board explored and implemented strategies to conduct Merit System-specific job marketing, application, and testing events at local high schools during the school day to encourage interest in public sector employment among graduating seniors. The initial "pilot" event was held at Parker High School and was well-received by the school and students; thus, the Board expanded the event to other high schools across the County with the plan to further expand to additional schools in the coming year.

During 2021, the Personnel Board also made strategic and targeted recruitment efforts to fill many Merit System positions. The Personnel Board also continued to expand its use of LinkedIn, the world's largest professional network, to identify and engage talent in an effort to draw interest in many different positions within the Merit System. Additional efforts were made to leverage social media networks (e.g., Twitter and Facebook) to increase awareness and interest in employment within the System, post openings within professional association job boards to fill specialized positions, and continue employee involvement on employment and professional boards of directors (e.g., Alabama Association of Colleges and Employers and the University of Alabama at Birmingham Career Services Advisory Board) in order to help identify and engage talent for positions at all levels of government. The Board also utilized more traditional recruiting tactics such advertising employment opportunities in local newspapers including the Trussville Tribune, The Birmingham Times, and The Birmingham Market. Additionally, to meet the demand for talent, the Board moved from annual posting and testing for certain positions (e.g., Firefighter and Public Safety Dispatcher, among others) to posting and testing multiple times throughout the year to maintain lists of recent and interested applicants.

One of the Personnel Board’s primary services is processing requests to fill employment vacancies (referred to as certification requests) and issuing lists of eligible candidates (referred to as certification lists) to agencies and departments throughout the Merit System in order to facilitate hiring. Despite the extensive recruiting efforts previously outlined, the COVID-19 pandemic and the highly competitive employment market significantly impacted hiring, job postings, and employment testing in 2021. As a result, the Personnel Board received 13,718 applications for the year, the lowest number of applications in over a decade. Although the number of applications was significantly lower than past years, the number of appointments (including new hires, promotions, and lateral appointments) made across all Merit System agencies increased by 23% from 1,453 in 2020 to 1,784 in 2021. Additionally, the Applicant Services department placed 4,284 applicants on eligible registers.

## Application Activity Over the Past Five Years



## 2021 Applications & Certifications

Agency	Total	Sex			Race		
		Male	Female	Un-known	Black	White	Other/Unknown
Applications Received	13,718	6,320	6,715	683	9,085	3,398	1,235
Applications Placed on Registers	4,284	1,900	2,135	249	2,842	1,051	391
Applications Certified	46,198	26,564	18,153	1,481	28,519	14,540	3,139
Bessemer	2028	948	987	93	1,466	421	141
Birmingham	8853	4051	4467	335	6,075	2,131	647
Center Point	1012	674	320	18	688	278	46
Emergency Mgt Agency	31	2	26	3	26	3	2
Fairfield	771	541	217	13	506	229	36
Fultondale	1794	1188	573	33	1002	692	100
Gardendale	1531	1146	361	24	821	646	64
Health Department	2577	162	2295	120	1,966	352	259
Homewood	3140	2050	997	93	1,763	1205	172
Hueytown	2069	1489	537	43	1,312	648	109
Irondale	1394	964	389	41	725	576	93
Jefferson County	4948	2031	2712	205	3,423	1,120	405
Leeds	1310	984	283	43	672	543	95
Midfield	808	508	282	18	503	260	45
Mountain Brook	1670	1256	371	43	779	771	120
Personnel Board	42	17	24	1	30	6	6
Pleasant Grove	939	545	375	19	602	286	51
Sheriff's Office	1076	762	293	21	628	385	63
Tarrant	2502	1656	772	74	1503	839	160
Trussville	2033	1328	635	70	1,292	647	94
Vestavia Hills	4778	3592	1093	93	2,365	2,098	315
Warrior	892	670	144	78	372	404	116



# JOB ANALYSIS & CLASSIFICATION

The Personnel Board is statutorily required to review positions within the Merit System at least once every five years to ensure positions are classified in the correct job class in accordance with the Board's Salary Administration and Classification Plan. In line with professional best practices, the Personnel Board also conducts thorough job analyses for each Merit System job class at least once every five years. The Personnel Board utilizes an annual job analysis and classification survey process to determine whether the duties performed by employees are consistent with their assigned job class (or more consistent with another class in the Merit System) and to collect job analysis data on Merit System jobs to help drive numerous human resources initiatives (e.g., employment testing, performance appraisal, etc.). In 2021, the Personnel Board concluded the 2020-2021 Job Analysis & Classification survey and began the 2021-2022 survey process.

## 2020-2021 Survey Summary

The 2020-2021 Job Analysis & Classification Survey was completed in May and the results were adopted by the Three-Member on June 8, 2021. **The survey was administered to positions across 115 job classes.** Of the eligible participants, 43% completed the survey. A total of seven employees were determined to be performing substantial duties outside of their assigned job class and their positions were recommended for re-classification to a more appropriate job. The survey process included jobs within the job families listed below:

- Accounting
- Appraisal & Taxation
- Architecture & Design
- Audit
- Civil Engineering
- Communications
- Emergency Communications
- Environmental Protection
- Finance Management
- Fire Protection & EMS
- Mechanical Technology
- Planning
- Public Works Operations

## 2021-2022 Survey Overview

During 2021, the Personnel Board began preparation work for the administration of the -2022 Job Analysis & Classification Survey. A total of **2761 positions across 137 job classes are slated for inclusion** in this process. The survey includes job classes from 20 separate job families:

- Compensation and Benefits
- Employee Relations
- Employee Selection
- Recruiting
- HR Management
- HR Administration
- Public/Business Administration
- Policy and Compliance
- Organization Development
- Police and Sheriff
- Legal
- Coroner
- Elections
- Environmental Protection
- Utility Services
- Stores/Purchasing
- Mechanical Technician
- Automotive Maintenance
- Civic Center/Auditorium
- Museum

## New Job Classes Established

Throughout the year, the Personnel Board receives requests from Merit System agencies to create new job classes when existing job classes do not sufficiently cover the needed duties of a new position. After thorough review of received requests, the Personnel Board **established 12 new job classes** for use within the Merit System during 2021. The established job classes and their associated pay grades are provided below.

- Assistant Golf Pro (G16)
- Clinical Nurse Practitioner/Physician Assistant Supervisor (G33)
- Code Compliance Officer II (G21)
- Code Compliance Supervisor (G24)
- Code Compliance Manager (G28)
- Comptroller (G37)
- Compliance Program Coordinator—Youth Detention (G24)
- Engineering Drafter Supervisor (G24)
- Gymnastics Director (G23)
- Gymnastics Instructor (G12)
- Multimedia Services Manager (G32)
- Police Accreditation Manager (G26)

## Job Audits

In addition to review of job assignment and job description consistency through the Job Analysis & Classification Survey, the Personnel Board received 44 additional working out-of-class job audit requests. These job audits consisted of data gathering regarding the job duties performed within the position through interviews with the incumbents and their supervisors, gathering of time spent performing assigned duties estimates, and thorough comparison of the assigned responsibilities relative to the assigned job class, as well as other potential job classes. Of the 44 out-of-class audit requests, 22 (50%) were determined to be performing significant work outside of their assigned job class and, as a result, their positions were recommended for reclassification to other job classes that more closely aligned with their performed duties.

## Job Analyses Completed

The Personnel Board engages in extensive job analysis activities to help appropriately drive human resources related initiatives to include, but are not limited to, employee selection, position classification, employee development, and performance management. Job analysis data is shared with Merit System agencies, where requested, to assist in supporting their human resources efforts (e.g., employment selection). The job analyses involve heavy input from job incumbents and supervisors, referred to as subject matter experts (SMEs), from across all Merit System agencies and all types of positions for each of the target jobs. This input is traditionally provided through onsite interviews and job observations, in-person focus groups where Personnel Board staff facilitate job information sharing by these SMEs to help promote a thorough and comprehensive job study, and data collected from SMEs through the Job Analysis & Classification Survey. In 2021, the Personnel Board completed **job analyses for 185 separate job classes**, including the 137 jobs in the 2021-2022 Annual Job Analysis & Classification Survey and the 12 new job classes established during the year.

# EMPLOYMENT TESTING

The Personnel Board is charged with assessing the qualifications and relevant job skills of applicants for employment to ensure the hiring of well-qualified employees into Merit System positions. To this end, the Board is responsible for the administration of valid and legally defensible selection tests. In order to achieve this goal the Personnel Board relies on data obtained from up-to-date job analyses for all Merit System jobs. The important job duties and the critical knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform those duties, as identified by subject matter experts through the job analysis, are used to drive the development of job-related qualifications, which are then used to screen submitted applications and to develop employment selection tests used to rank candidates based on their competency in relation to the target job.

In 2021, the Personnel Board continued to ensure the development of up-to-date minimum qualifications (MQs). These MQs are used to assist in identifying applicants who possess the necessary competencies to perform at an acceptable level for Merit System jobs. Over the course of the year, the Personnel Board developed updated MQs for all Merit System job classes included within the 2020-2021 survey. The Board ensures continuous review and development of MQs based on a five-year schedule to ensure MQs remain up-to-date and appropriate for use in screening applications for all Merit System jobs.

Administering Merit System employment selection tests, in most instances, requires bringing candidates together in large numbers. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, employment testing was postponed or significantly modified for a period in 2020 and into 2021 for public health purposes. As COVID-19 vaccines became available and community infection rates dropped in 2021, the Personnel Board was able to resume administering examinations both remotely and in-person. Where viable, the Board utilized computer-based testing with remote proctoring to allow candidates to test in a manner that promoted public health. Employment tests that were not amenable to remote administration (e.g., promotional tests) were administered in-person in a manner that ensured social distancing and masking requirements to help minimize any potential public health concerns. Testing schedules were significantly modified in 2020, with a number of examinations being postponed; consequently, the Personnel Board worked throughout much of 2021 to facilitate the administration of those exams that were previously postponed to help ensure lists of candidates for critical positions were available for Merit System agencies. During 2021, the Personnel Board administered employment tests to 2580 test candidates for a number of critical Merit System jobs, including those listed below.

- Firefighter
- Fire Apparatus Operator
- Fire Lieutenant
- Fire Captain
- Police Sergeant
- Police Lieutenant
- Police Captain
- Public Safety Dispatcher
- Public Safety Telecommunicator
- Property Control Clerk
- Accounting Assistant I
- Accounting Assistant II
- Skilled Laborer
- Administrative Clerk
- Medical Clerk
- Court Clerk
- Administrative Assistant
- Administrative Supervisor
- Administrative Analyst



# ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

One of the essential functions of the Personnel Board includes ensuring that Merit System employees in *Regular* (i.e., non-probationary) status who have been subject to certain disciplinary or adverse employment actions are provided an avenue for due process, if they desire to appeal the action. The Board is responsible for ensuring employees' rights to due process are upheld by administering the a fair and impartial administrative hearing process. This hearing is a quasi-judicial forum where employee appeals are evaluated by a third-party Hearing Officer who renders a recommendation to the Three-Member Board for a final ruling.

In 2021, the Personnel Board received notification of 283 disciplinary employment actions. Of those actions, 28% were eligible for appeal in accordance with the Personnel Board Rules & Regulations and Administrative Appeals Procedures. Of those employees who were eligible, 39% exercised their right to appeal.

The Personnel Board concluded 52 disciplinary appeal hearings in 2021. The Three-Member Board upheld the Appointing Authority's decision in 23 of the cases, six cases were overturned, five cases were modified and 18 cases were settled during the appeal process. The tables below provide a breakdown of the disciplinary actions, resulting appeals, and the outcomes of the appeal hearings. *Note that some hearing decisions rendered in 2021 were based on actions initially filed in an earlier year and some appeals received in 2021 carried into 2022.*

## 2021 Disciplinary Actions & Appeals

Disciplinary Action	Number of Actions	Appeal Not Eligible	Appeal Eligible	Appeal Reviews
Suspensions	195	155	40	0
Terminations	37	0	37	29
Grievances	39	39	0	0
Demotions	4	2	2	2
ALWOP	8	7	1	0
Totals	283	203	80	31

## 2021 Administrative Hearing Outcomes

Action Appealed	Total	Upheld	Overturned	Modified	Settled
Suspensions	21	10	2	2	7
Demotions	2	0	0	1	1
Terminations	29	13	4	2	10
All Appeal Hearings	52	23	6	5	18

# TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

The Personnel Board is committed to the betterment of Merit System employee performance and their service to our communities by providing a variety of opportunities for employees to develop their personal and professional knowledge, skills, and abilities through a wide array of course offerings. The Personnel Board provides certificate programs (Leading People, Managing Processes, Professional Development, and Civil Servant Leadership) comprised of over 50 courses in both technical and non-technical areas for all Merit System employees, executive level programs designed to improve the leadership attributes of our upper level managers and leaders, and specialized course offerings targeted at specific needs of our Merit System agencies.

The Personnel Board designed our professional development certificate programs around the needs of Merit System employees and agencies. The goal of these certificate programs is to assist in producing competent, complete leaders in the public sector - employees who not only have the ability to lead individuals, but also manage high level projects; individuals who understand their own developmental needs and can strategically position themselves to succeed and advance in the workforce; and individuals who have the skills to thrive in today's technologically driven society. The individual certificate programs are designed to be stand alone, yet complementary. Individuals who complete all four programs are awarded the distinction of 360° Leader. The certificates include:



**Leading People** - Leading People is a program requiring completion of 32 training hours designed to share skills needed to assist today's managers in developing, motivating, and leading their employees. Topics include coaching, giving feedback, change management, delegating, and more.

**Managing Processes** - Managing Processes is designed to strengthen a supervisor's ability to handle the process side of management. By focusing on skills like Strategic Planning, Project Management, Creative Problem Solving, Effective Meetings, and Critical Thinking, this 36 contact hour program enables participants to gain practical skills that can be applied immediately to improve their work environment.

**Professional Development** - Professional Development is a 34 contact hour program designed to equip today's Merit System employees with the professional and business skills needed to be successful in the workplace and to further their careers within the Merit System and beyond. Topics include personal branding, business writing, time management and more.

**Civil Servant Leadership** - Employees are eligible for the Civil Servant Leadership certificate program if they have completed the other three programs listed above, serving as the capstone certificate for The 360 Degree Leader Program. This cohort-based learning program lasts 16 weeks and focuses on developing servant leadership skills through classroom-based learning, e-learning, assigned readings, group discussions, a service project, and a final presentation.

In addition to the aforementioned certificate programs making up the 360°Leader, the Personnel Board also offers an intensive management program, called **MPACT (Managers Preparing to Accomplish Change Today)**, designed to develop Merit System managers in critical leadership areas. Participants apply for inclusion in the program and participate as a cohort. This is a 65 contact hour program which consists of deep-dive training classes on trust, communication, accountability, change management, and more. Participants are required to complete outside of classroom exercises and assignments, post to an electronic forum regarding management issues and challenges, interact with guest speakers, visit local businesses, and complete a significant project designed to improve their department and agency.

# Training & Development Innovations and Enhancements

In 2021, the Personnel Board continued to develop new ways to design and deliver employee development opportunities. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has presented a number of challenges, it has also highlighted a number of opportunities to modify and enhance our services. As a result of efforts to ensure training opportunities could continue safely during the pandemic, the Personnel Board worked aggressively to modify our training offerings to provide effective development of employees remotely. Provided below are new and innovative approaches in which the Personnel Board is actively engaging to ensure the continued development of our Merit System employees.

## Virtual Instructor Led Training (VILT)

As mentioned, the pandemic led the Personnel Board to aggressively develop remote training opportunities through live instructor led virtual (remote) training sessions to supplement our in-person training offers. These Virtual Instructor-Led Training (VILT) sessions are live classes hosted by a trainer and supported by a producer. These sessions are dynamic and engaging, and are comprised of interactive communication, group virtual breakout sessions, and more. The Personnel Board has converted 95% of our training programs to VILT, with attendance averaging 35 employees per session. The sessions have been so well-received, that the Personnel Board now offers these training classes in both in-person and VILT formats.

## Lunchtime Learning Blasts

With the changes that organizations made to address the pandemic, also came many employment challenges, such as lack of engagement of employees. The Personnel Board leveraged training opportunities to help keep employees connected and engaged during the pandemic when many were working modified or remote work schedules. One of these efforts included the development of Lunchtime Learning Blasts — over 50 LIVE remote sessions presented over the lunchtime hour for any employees interested in learning about a variety of professional topics. These sessions were presented on Facebook Live in order to share the content as quickly and efficiently as possible. Example topics included:

- “In-the-Moment” Coaching Strategies
- The ABC’s of Giving Constructive Feedback
- Seven Pro Tips to Enhance Your Public Speaking Skills
- How to Overcome Decision Making Fatigue

## Trainer Talks

Trainer Talks are live, interactive sessions hosted monthly by the Personnel Board. Topics are chosen that affect our Merit System employees, such as networking, feedback processes, and more. Fifteen Trainer Talks were delivered in 2021 with example sessions listed below:

- Customer Service in Government
- Managing Workplace Conflict
- Management Mistakes to Avoid
- How to Become a Critical Thinker

The Lunchtime Learning Blast and Trainer Talk sessions are also recorded and placed on our website or social media platforms for future viewing.

# HONORING EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

## 2021 Certificate Achievement

Each year, the Personnel Board hosts a graduation ceremony for Merit System employees who successfully complete a certificate program. In 2020 the graduate ceremony had to be postponed due to public health concerns related to the pandemic. In 2021, public health concerns still prevented the Board from hosting the large scale event in a large civic center as it would normally be hosted; however, in lieu of that large ceremony, over a two week period in September of 2021, the Personnel Board took the annual graduation event "on-the-road" for a series of smaller events held on location at each of the Merit System agencies with graduating employees. Individual agency ceremonies were held for graduates from Bessemer, Birmingham, Homewood, Hueytown, Irondale, Jefferson County Commission, Jefferson County Department of Health, Leeds, Mountain Brook, Trussville, and Vestavia Hills. This allowed the Personnel Board to have smaller gatherings in accordance with social distancing guidelines while still providing special recognition for those employees who completed a certificate program. A total of 119 employees completed at least one of our certificate programs and were recognized during the graduate ceremonies. The Personnel Board honors and congratulates the following 2021 Training Certificate Recipients.

### City of Bessemer

Bronda McKisson - CSL  
Erin Rogers - LP  
Ranesha Carmichael - PD, CSL  
Stenson Lawyer - LP  
William Collins - LP, MP, PD

### City of Homewood

Christopher Thacker - LP  
City of Hueytown  
David Bayliss - MPACT  
Lashaun Young - CSL

### City of Irondale

Charles Holliday - LP, MP, PD

### City of Leeds

Laura Roberts - MPACT  
Michael Jenkins - LP, MP

### City of Mountain Brook

Jay Loring - MPACT  
LaTorya Mines - CSL  
Sacha Koster - MP

### City of Trussville

David A. Griffith - MP  
Justin Grogan - LP

### City of Vestavia Hills

David Abston - MPACT  
Joel Gaston - MPACT  
Thomas Underwood - LP

### Personnel Board of Jefferson County

Claudia Johnson - CSL  
Greg Gravlee - MPACT  
Jay Gordon - LP  
Jimmy Johnson - PD  
Pamela Lambert - MP, PD

### Jefferson County Dept of Health

Alexis Parker - PD  
Anna Elizabeth Hill - MP  
Dr. Khalilah Brown - MP  
Jaline Thomas - LP, MP  
Jannese Covington - LP  
Natasha Pickens Shumpert - PD  
Takeno Frazier - LP, MP  
Tekela Wimberly - LP  
Tiana Davis - MPACT  
Yolanda Woods - CSL  
Yvette Burt - LP

## City of Birmingham

Andrea Ishaku - MP  
Angel Armstrong - MP  
Antonio Madison - LP, MP, PD  
April Trammell - MP, PD  
Archie Gresham - LP, MP, PD  
Arnita R. Maxwell - PD  
Beneva Nelson - LP, MP  
Bernard C. Buggs Jr. - LP, MP, PD  
Brandon Smith - CSL  
Brian Blakes - CSL  
Cameron Jones - LP, PD  
Carolyn Jordan - PD  
Cedric Roberts - MPACT  
Christy Mixon - MPACT  
Coleecia Cainion - LP, MP, PD  
Dedra Campbell - PD, CSL  
Deitric Gail Borden - PD  
Derryo Fowler - MP, PD  
Dwight Wren - LP  
Eric Gober - LP  
Erica Lewis - LP  
James Keith - LP  
Jason Hallman - MP, PD  
Jazmin Welch - PD  
Jerry Artis - LP  
Joshua Osborne - LP  
Kendra S. Finley - MP, PD  
LaTonja Samuels - LP, PD  
Lisa J. Davenport - LP, MP  
Monica Law - LP  
Mosely Johnson, Jr - LP  
Natalie Jones - PD, CSL  
Ramaade Bailey - MP  
Reva L. Palmer - LP, MP, PD  
Sabrina Franklin - CSL  
Sebastian D. Goldman - LP  
Shanika Lawson - MP  
Stephanie Amerson - MP  
Tamela Parrish - MPACT  
Tammy High - MP  
Taneka Smith - LP, MP, PD  
Wendie Williams - CSL

## Jefferson County Commission

Akirashanti Byrd - CSL  
Alan Sconiers - LP  
Alicia Rodriguez - CSL  
Amanda Haddin - CSL  
Andrea Knight - LP  
Antonio Davis - PD  
Brenda Dees - PD  
Candace Harris - MP  
Cedric Hayden - LP  
Cheryl Dunklin - CSL  
Chrissy Young - LP, MP, PD  
Coleecia Perryman - CSL  
Corleen Farley - MP, PD  
Danyelle Hinton - LP, MP  
Devaun Brooks - MP  
Eugene Bennett - LP, PD  
Gloria Rowry-Kidd - LP  
Hubert Chapman - LP  
Ian Peters - PD  
Jeff Calvert - MPACT  
Jinnifer Purnell - CSL  
John Weatherly - PD  
Johnny Mickles - LP  
Kenneth R. Holmes - LP  
Kerry Morris - MP  
Lauren Sanders - CSL  
Mark Schofield - LP  
Marvis Brown - LP, PD  
Matisha Dunklin - LP, MP  
Melanie Lowe - LP  
Mitzi Dayball - LP, MP, PD  
Nancy Wilson - LP  
Nathan Tidmore - CSL  
Patrice Tarrant - LP  
Phillip Richards - CSL  
Phyllis Moore - CSL  
Phyllis Wright - LP  
Romissa M. Walton - MPACT  
Shanderia Richardson - LP, PD  
Shaniqua Hunter - MPACT  
Vickie George - LP, MP, PD  
Wilma Thornton - LP, PD

# REVISIONS TO RULES & REGULATIONS

Section 12 of the Enabling Act of the State of Alabama charges the Personnel Director with the responsibility to “prepare and submit to the Board for its consideration and approval such forms, rules and regulations as are necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act...necessary for administering a scientific and economical personnel system.” In 2021, the Personnel Board undertook a process to make revisions to its Rules & Regulations. In compliance with Rule 2.2, notice of proposed revisions to the Rules were publicly posted on our organizational website, along with a form for interested individuals to provide written comment. Emails to communicate the proposed revisions were sent to all Appointing Authorities, their primary assistants, payroll coordinators/HR managers, and all classified employees for whom we had active email addresses. The proposed changes were posted for written public comment from August 26 to September 10, 2021. Minor edits were made to one of the proposed revisions (i.e., Rule 11.13) based on the written comments received. Those changes were then publicly noticed and posted for comment from September 29 to October 12, 2021. On November 9, 2021, the Three-Member Board approved the proposed revisions to the Personnel Board Rules & Regulations effective that same date.

The most substantive change to the Rules & Regulations was the inclusion of a new rule, Rule 11.13 *Secondary Employment*. This rule allows the potential for a Merit System employee to have a secondary appointment in another Merit System agency, so long as the secondary appointments is limited to part-time employment and both the Appointing Authority of the employee’s regular position and the Appointing Authority of the secondary appointment consent. The secondary appointment does not maintain the rights of a Regular Employee appointment under the Rules & Regulations. In addition to adding Rule 11.13, the adopted revisions included changes to the Rules listed below. These revisions included minor grammatical changes and rewording of statements to clarify the intent of the rule.

- 1.3 Definitions (edits to three definitions)
- 4.5 Review of Actions of the Director (subsection a. only)
- 7.7 Reclassification of Positions (subsections b.2.i and b.2.ii only)
- 8.2 Administration of the Pay Plan (subsection c only)
- 9.5 Disqualification from Recruitment and/or Examination (subsection j. only)
- 11.3 Types of Appointments
- 11.10 Transfers (subsection d. only)
- 11.12 Reduction in Force (subsection b. only)
- 11.13 Secondary Employment (proposed new addition to the rules)
- 12.7 Witnesses
- 12.8 Subpoenas
- 13.14 Temporary Leave for National Guard and Armed Forces Reserve Training and Active Service
- 13.19 Disposition of Leave Upon Resignation or Retirement
- 14.1 Performance Appraisal Ratings
- 14.2 Forms
- 14.3 Performance Appraisal Rating Plan

# RECOGNITION OF MR. LORREN OLIVER

After nearly 20 years of leadership at the Personnel Board of Jefferson County, on August 10, 2021, Personnel Board Director Lorren Oliver attended his final meeting of the Three-Member Board where he publicly announced his official retirement as Director. This report would be remiss without acknowledging the significant contributions that Mr. Oliver made to the Personnel Board and the Merit System during his tenure and the meaningful legacy that he has left behind. Anyone familiar with the history of the Personnel Board Merit System is likely aware of the undeniable challenges facing the System at the time of his hiring in 2002. After decades of being unable to meet the requirements of a long-standing federal consent decree relating to employment selection processes, in 2002, the Personnel Board was found by the United States District Court to be in contempt and placed under federal receivership. It was under these very difficult circumstances that Mr. Oliver joined the Board and offered critical leadership to bring about the systemic change necessary to achieve compliance with the federal consent decree and establish the Personnel Board as a model Merit System agency.

By establishing an effective vision, leading with courage, and maintaining the highest levels of integrity, Mr. Oliver guided the Personnel Board through those tumultuous times. Through his efforts, the Board achieved undisputed release from its long-standing decree, and the Merit System was transformed with modern operations and the infrastructure to make tremendous strides toward being a model administrative agency that approaches its responsibilities under the Enabling Act with professionalism, fairness, transparency, and fiscal responsibility. Although not an exhaustive list, notable accomplishments of the Personnel Board under his direction included: acquiring and retaining well-qualified and skilled staff, winning multiple awards for transformative and innovative employment selection processes and employee training and development programs, establishing a high-functioning recruiting program that attracts high-quality talent to the Merit System, transitioning the Board from paper-based application and employment record processes to a best-in-class human capital management system, and implementing operational efficiencies that resulted in significant reduction in overall budget for Personnel Board operations over his tenure.

In addition to his significant contributions to the Personnel Board, Mr. Oliver was also a critical driver and contributor to the success of the Jefferson County Commission being released from its also long-standing consent decree. Serving as the federally-appointed Receiver for the County, Mr. Oliver worked to establish a Human Resources department within Jefferson County that possessed the skillset and operational processes necessary to effectively and fairly guide their employment hiring processes in compliance with the requirements of the decree.

The Personnel Board, its employees, and the Merit System owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Mr. Oliver. As an organization, we sincerely thank him for his countless contributions and extraordinary leadership during his entire 20-year tenure and wish him the warmest and the most well-deserved congratulations on his retirement. Following his lead, the Personnel Board continues his unwavering promotion of our core values and his clear focus on facilitating a merit system that enhances the employment and development of government employees through innovative, efficient, and effective human resources practices.

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