

# PUC WORKFORCE PLAN

## Introduction

The PUC's Human Resources (HR) mission is to provide exceptional HR services by ensuring that employees have a safe and productive work environment, developing subject-matter expertise, developing leadership and management skills, and leveraging innovative HR technology to achieve organizational excellence.

The PUC anticipates significant challenges during the next five years that may impact the PUC's ability to fulfill its mission. As the PUC works in its 5<sup>th</sup> decade of existence, the scope and breadth of the PUC's responsibilities continues to advance into new areas. Although the PUC's regulatory responsibilities have changed regarding the electric and telecommunications industries over the past fifteen years due to increased deregulation of those industries, the water and sewer regulation greatly expanded the range of the Commission's regulatory oversight.

While many of the professionals needed to properly oversee the water functions are similar to the current workforce at the PUC, the work-related knowledge and subject-matter expertise will be vastly different. The issues debated and staff-level work required in water cases can vary greatly from that required for electric cases. For instance, the amount of staff interaction required to ensure sufficient applications are filed will be different for water rate applications than it is for electric applications. The largest water utility has approximately 45,000 connections, which is similar in size to the smallest electric utility, which has roughly 50,000 customers; conversely, the largest electric utility has approximately 3 million meters.

Additionally, the PUC is experiencing pressures on its workforce such as the retention of qualified, experienced employees who may leave the PUC for more lucrative positions with the State and the retirement of highly tenured employees. PUC turnover reached 20.5 percent in fiscal year 2021 and through 8 months of fiscal year 2022, 23 employees have resigned and 2 have retired from the PUC. Currently, 50.8 percent of employees have tenure of 5 years or less. The loss of institutional knowledge continues to be a major issue facing PUC executive management. However, the PUC will continue to discuss methods for attracting and retaining quality employees.

## Supply Analysis: Current Workforce Profile

### A. Critical Workforce Skills

The PUC employs qualified individuals in a myriad of program disciplines. Strong employee competencies are critical to meet ongoing business objectives and goals.

Current critical workforce skills include the following:

#### 1. *Management and Leadership*

- Performance Management
- Planning
- Training and mentoring

#### 2. *Technical Skills*

- Knowledge of applicable federal and state laws and regulations
- Litigation and settlement facilitation
- Rules development
- Investigation
- Market analysis
- Rate setting
- Licensing of providers
- Accounting and financial analysis
- Engineering
- Policy development

#### 3. *Customer Assistance*

- Call center customer service
- Informal complaint resolution

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## 4. *Information Management*

Web development and maintenance  
Database development  
Electronic filing and reporting

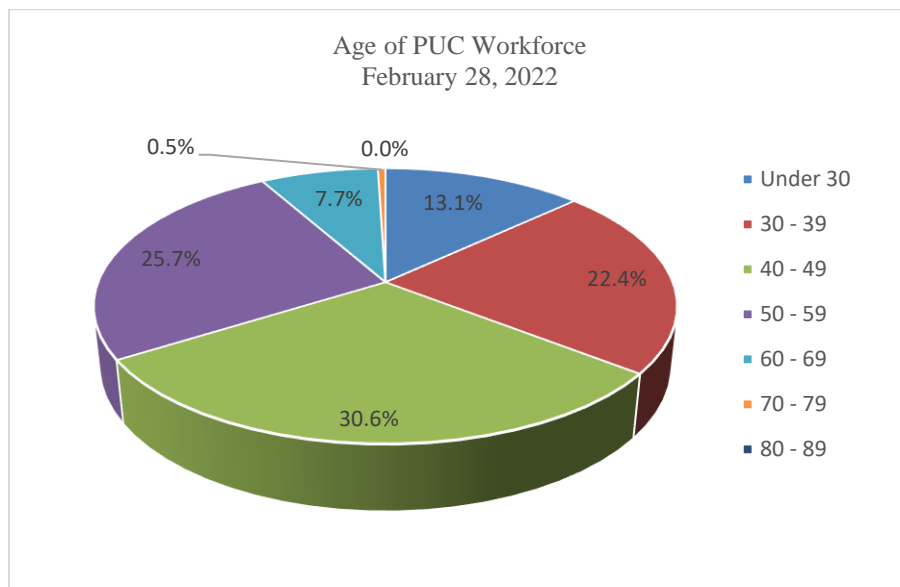
## 5. *Agency Administration*

Fiscal management  
Human Resources management  
Contract management  
Purchasing  
IT Support  
Agency Counsel

## B. *Workforce Demographics*

### Gender and Age

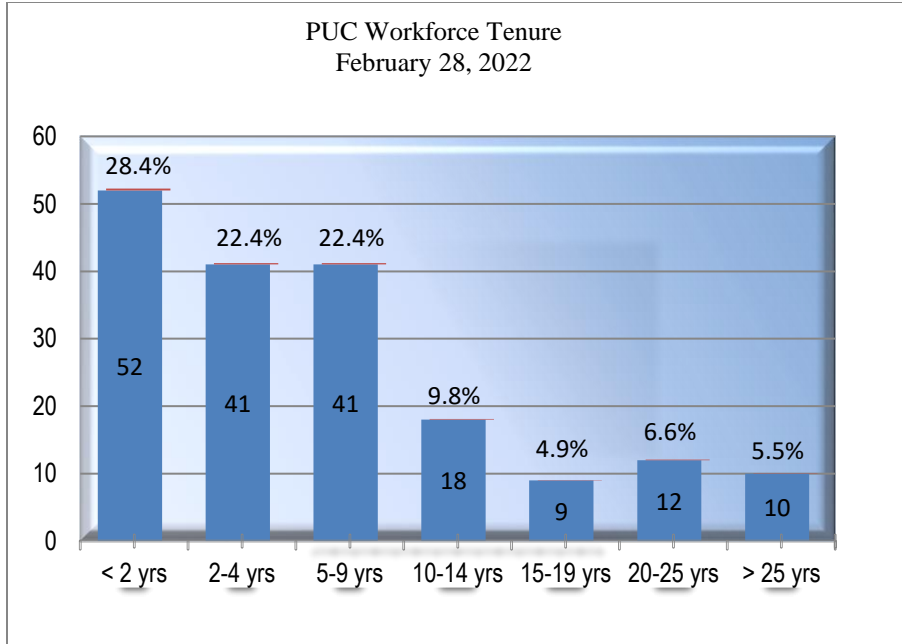
As of February 28, 2022, the PUC had a total of 183 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee. Of the total employees, there were 95 females (51.9%) and 88 males (48.1%). The average age of PUC employees is 44 years, and 118 (64.5%) of the employees are over the age of 40.



### Tenure

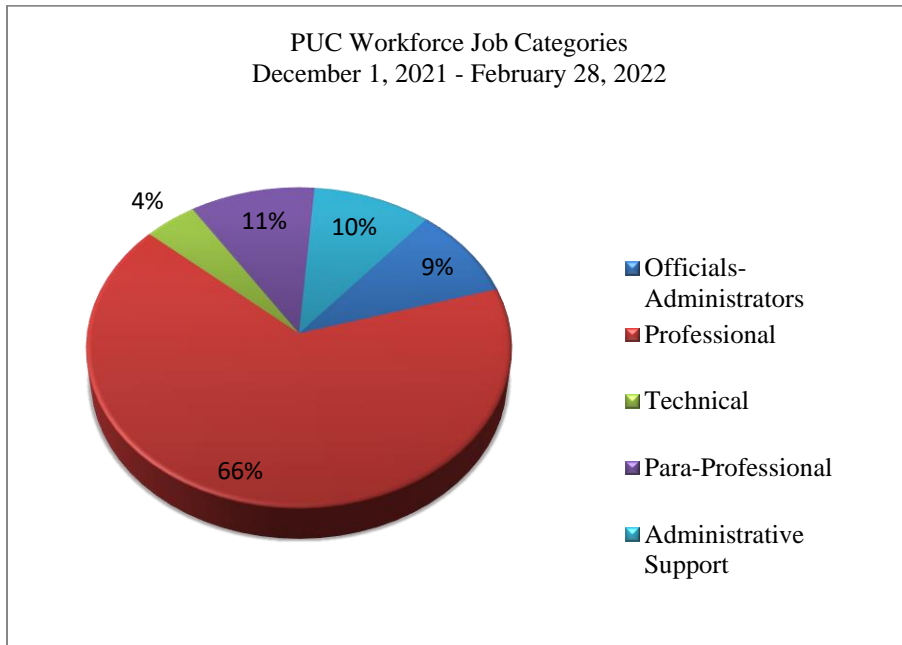
Of the PUC staff, 93 (50.8%) employees have fewer than five years of service with the agency. There are 59 employees (32.2%) with five to fourteen years of service with the PUC and 31 employees (17%) who have fifteen or more years of service with the PUC. The table below reflects tenure of PUC employees. Fifty-two employees (28.4%) have fewer than two years of agency service.

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### Job Categories

The main job categories of PUC employees are identified in the table below. The “Professional” category has the largest number of agency employees, which reflects the qualifications required to accomplish the PUC’s business goals. As a result of these requirements, the PUC has a highly educated workforce with many of the employees holding advanced degrees and credentials.



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## Diversity

The following three tables profile the PUC’s workforce of 183 employees for the second quarter of fiscal year 2022 (December 1, 2020 through February 28, 2022). The workforce comprises 51.9% female and 48.1% male, with an average age of 44 years. The tables compare the African American, Hispanic and female employees in the Commission Workforce to the State Civilian Workforce, as reported by the Civil Rights Division of the Texas Workforce Commission.

Gender – Racial – Ethnic Diversity								
Male	Female	Caucasian American	African American	Hispanic American	Asian American	Two or More	Other	Total
88	95	98	21	49	11	4	0	<b>183</b>
48.1%	51.9%	53.55%	11.47%	26.78%	6.01%	2.19%	0.000%	100%

**All employees on payroll as of February 28, 2022.**

Gender – Occupational Diversity					
Job Category	Male		Female		Female Goal
Administrative	13	61.9%	8	38.1%	38.8%
Administrative Support	0	0%	17	100%	71.6%
Para-Professional*	5	25%	15	75%	N/A
Professional	64	54.7%	53	45.3%	54.5%
Protective Services*	0	0%	0	0%	23.0%
Service Maintenance*	0	0%	0	0%	52.0%
Skilled Craft	0	0%	0	0%	12.0%
Technical	6	75%	2	25%	55.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>		<b>95</b>		

Racial – Ethnic – Occupational Diversity														
Job Category	Caucasian American		African American		Goal	Hispanic American		Goal	Asian American		Two or More		Other	
Administrative	16	76.2%	1	4.76%	8.1%	3	14.28%	22.4%	1	4.76%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Administrative Support	6	35.29%	4	23.53%	14.3%	7	41.18%	36.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Para-Professional*	7	35%	1	5%	N/A	11	55%	N/A	0	0.0%	1	5%	0	0.0%
Professional	64	54.7%	15	12.82%	10.9%	26	22.22%	20.3%	9	7.7%	3	2.56%	0	0.0%
Protective Services*	0	0%	0	0.0%	20.8%	0	0.0%	30.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Service/Maintenance*	0	0%	0	0.0%	13.2%	0	0.0%	52.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Skilled Craft*	0	0%	0	0.0%	10.2%	0	0.0%	51.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Technical	5	62.5%	0	0.0%	14.4%	2	25%	29.2%	1	12.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Percentage goals represent the State Civilian Workforce, as reported by the Civil Rights Division (CRD) of the Texas Workforce Commission in the EEO/Minority Hiring Practices Report in December 2018. The CRD analyzes the workforce using an 80% benchmark from the EEOC Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection to determine utilization within each occupational category. Highlighted sections indicate areas in which the percentage of Commission employees in those categories meet or exceed the percentage in the State Civilian Workforce using the 80% benchmark. Shaded sections identify those areas where the percentage of Commission employees in those categories is below the percentage in the State Civilian Workforce using the 80% benchmark.

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When using the EEOC Uniform Guidelines and applying the 80% benchmark, the agency exceeded the percentage goal for Female employees in the Administrative, Administrative Support and Professional occupations. In the ethnic categories, the agency exceeded the goals for African American employees in the Administrative Support and Professional occupations and exceeded the goals for Hispanic American employees in the Administrative Support, Professional, and Technical occupations. The agency did not attain the percentage goal and Female employees are underutilized in the Technical (19.16%) occupations. In the ethnic categories, African American employees are underutilized in the Administrative (1.72%) and Technical (11.52%) occupations and Hispanic American employees are underutilized in the Administrative (3.64%) occupation. The PUC does not employ staff for Protective Services, Service/Maintenance and Skilled Craft occupations.

\*The State category “Para-Professional” is not included since this category is not referenced in the U.S. Bureau of the Census crosswalk. The State category “Protective Services” was extracted from the Census “Service Workers” to become a stand-alone category. The State category “Service and Maintenance” was created by combining the Census categories “Laborers and Helpers” and “Service Workers” (less the “Protective Services” workers and less the “Para-Professional” workers. Prior to 2014, these categories were under one group as “Service/Maintenance” and these categories have been modified to coincide with Chapter 21 of the Texas Labor Code.

### *C. Employee Turnover and Projected Attrition*

Turnover is important in any organization and the PUC is no exception. Throughout its existence, the PUC has faced the difficult challenge of retaining qualified and experienced staff. The PUC turnover averaged 20.3% during FY 2017-2021, however, turnover began to decline beginning in FY 2020 likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The following table compares the average PUC turnover to that of all state agencies for the last five years.

<b>EMPLOYEE TURNOVER</b>					
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>PUC</b>	16.8%	19.9%	22.6%	21.7%	20.5%
<b>All Agencies*</b>	34.0%	21.5%	23.0%	20.3%	23.3%

\* Information obtained from the State Auditor’s Office E-Class System.

Despite significant statutory post-employment restrictions that apply only to the PUC, the PUC generally experiences turnover due to more lucrative positions in industry-related firms. In FY 2021, the collective turnover in the Attorney, Administrative Law Judge, General Counsel classification series is 27.7%. The turnover in the same classifications averaged 36.6% during FY 2019-2021.

In addition, there are organizational areas in the PUC that generate turnover due to the stressful nature of the work and limited career ladder movement. In prior fiscal years, the Customer Protection Division had difficulty retaining qualified employees due to the stressful nature of the jobs in the PUC call center. Customer Care Representatives in the call center assist customers who are often angry about their telephone or electric service. “Burnout” is associated with call center jobs, and the PUC is continually challenged to minimize the negative effects associated with complaints-related jobs (including employee stress and turnover). In an effort to decrease the stress and turnover, the Customer Protection Division utilizes continuous improvement processes to make changes to work procedures. As a result, there has been a significant improvement in employee morale and drop in turnover in this area in recent years.

#### Length of Service

Among terminating employees in fiscal year 2021, those with five to nine years of service had the highest turnover (33.3%), followed by 25% among employees with two to four years of service, and 22.2% among employees with less than two years of service. Six employees retired from the agency in fiscal year 2021 and two of the six had more than twenty years of service with the PUC.

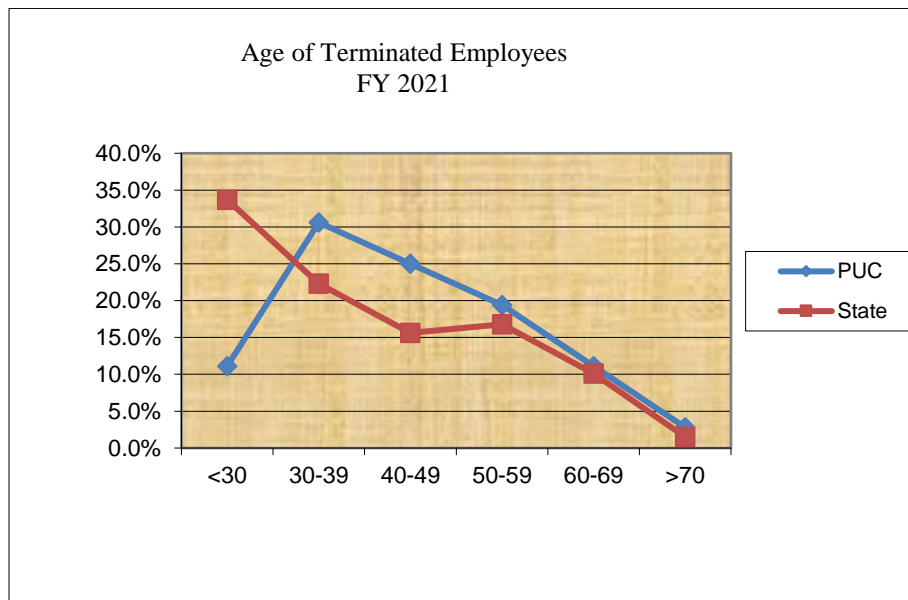
Efforts to decrease turnover and retain staff beyond the first five years should provide greater continuity for PUC operations and allow employees to develop critical agency knowledge for training entry-level personnel.

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Tenure of Terminating Employees Compared To Tenure of All Employees FY 2021				
Tenure in Years	Terminating Employees	% Terminating Employees	All Employees	% All Employees
Less than 2	8	22.2%	44	25.4%
2 – 4	9	25%	37	21.4%
5 – 9	12	33.3%	44	25.4%
10 – 14	4	11.1%	18	10.4%
15 – 19	1	2.8%	9	5.2%
20 – 24	1	2.8%	14	8.1%
25 +	1	2.8%	7	4.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Age

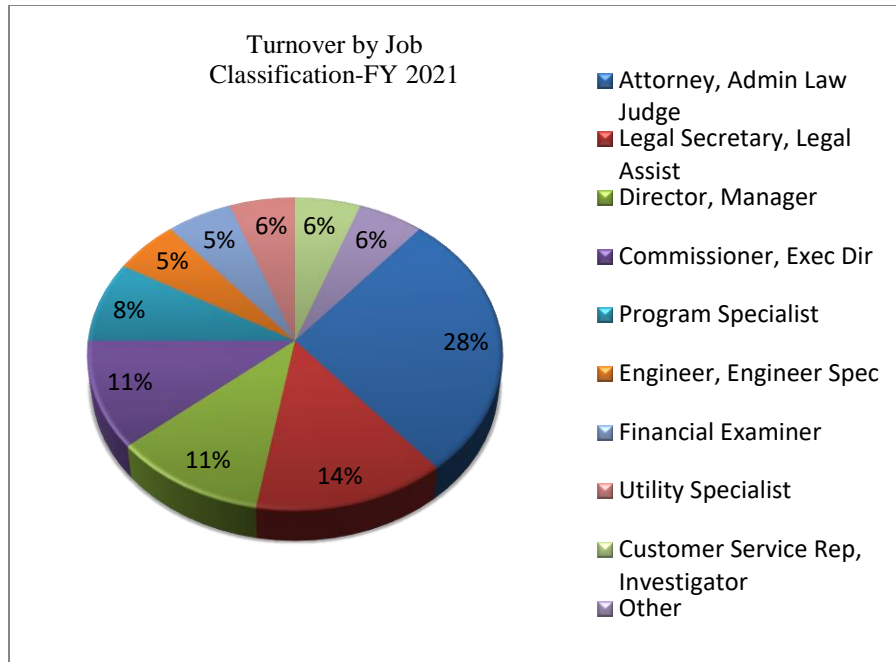
The highest percentage of turnover occurred among employees in the 30-39 years of age group. About 41.7% of the PUC's turnover in FY 2021 were under the age of 40 and 58.3% were over age 40.



### Occupations

During fiscal year 2021, a total of 36 employees separated from employment with the PUC. The table below provides detail for this turnover activity by classification. Of the 36 terminations, the Attorney classification reflected the single greatest turnover rate (27.8%), followed by the Legal Assistant and Legal Secretary (13.9%) classifications. The Director and Manager classification reflected a 11.1% turnover rate and the Program Specialist reflected 8.3%. Collectively, the total turnover rate for fiscal year 2021 was 20.5%.

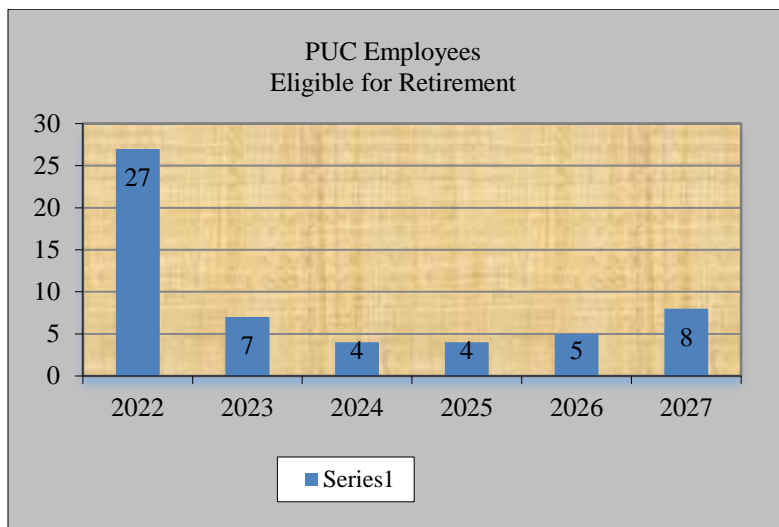
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## D. Retirement Eligibility

Six employees retired in fiscal year 2021. Of the employees potentially eligible to retire prior to FY 2022, twenty-seven remain with the PUC. Based on PUC information, during FY 2022 – 2027, an additional twenty-eight employees (15%) may become eligible to retire from state service. Between now and 2027, a total of 55 employees (30.1%) could potentially leave the PUC based on retirement eligibility.

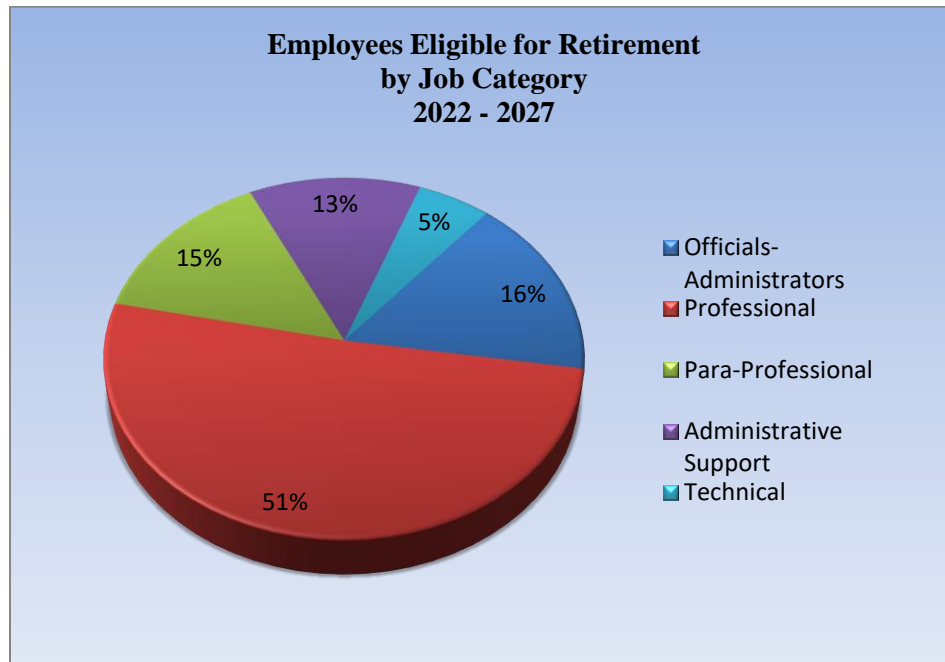
Turnover due to retirement is important to PUC operations because of the loss of institutional knowledge and expertise. It also affects the level of succession planning the organization should implement to attract new employees and train existing staff in key competencies to assume important functions and leadership roles.



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## Retirees by Category

The largest percentages of employees who may become eligible to retire over the next five years are in the *professional* (50.9) category. The second largest percentage of employees potentially eligible to retire is in the *officials-administrative* (16.4%) and *para-professional* (14.5%) categories. Turnover as a result of retirement eligibility could have a significant impact on high-level key positions. Eight employees (14.5%) in key management positions could be eligible to retire over the next five years. All of the key management employees are in the *officials-administrative* category and 5.5% are currently eligible to retire due to the Rule of 80.



## Projected Attrition

In fiscal year 2021, the PUC had a 20.5% turnover rate which is a 1.2 percentage point decrease from fiscal year 2020. As of April 30, 2020, twenty-three (12.4%) employees have terminated their employment with the PUC.

As market conditions begin to improve in central Texas over the next five years and as the economy strengthens, the PUC anticipates that retaining high quality staff will continue to be a challenge. Additionally, energy and communications industries are also experiencing a well-publicized aging of their workforces, potentially leading to an increased demand in the private sector for the unique knowledge and skills that PUC employees possess. The decrease in state benefits provided to state employees also impacts the ability of state agencies to attract and keep qualified employees.

## **Demand Analysis: Future Workforce Profile**

### *A. Critical Functions*

- Economists and Market Analysts
- Regulatory Accountants and Financial Analysts
- Utility Infrastructure Analysts and Engineers
- Enforcement (Investigators and Attorneys)

### *B. Expected Workforce Changes*



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The changing demands in the PUC’s oversight role in a market competition environment within the electric, telecommunication, water and sewer utility industries will create more emphasis on recruiting and retaining employees as economists, market analysts, enforcement investigators, attorneys and engineers. Historically, the PUC has had trouble in recruiting and retaining these professional positions because the labor market in Austin and in these industries has been strong and PUC has not been able to compete with private sector compensation.

## *C. Future Skills Needed*

The PUC will continue to maintain a highly educated professional workforce. Knowledge, skills and abilities central to the core functions of the PUC will remain an integral part of employee qualifications. The PUC does not anticipate significant changes in the critical workforce skills required of its workforce over the next five years.

## *D. Anticipated Employee Increases and Decreases*

The PUC anticipates operating below the agency’s FTE cap for the remainder of the biennium. The PUC plans to fill as many vacancies as possible by the end of August 2022. Depending on the Comptroller’s economic outlook for Texas in 2024-25, the PUC will seek additional funding to increase staff levels to address an increasing workload, particularly in the regulation of water utilities.

## *E. Future Critical Functions*

The changing demands in the PUC’s oversight role in a market competition environment within the electric and telecommunication industries will drive changes to the PUC’s future critical functions relating to those two industries. Fewer resources are allocated for traditional regulatory functions, such as ratemaking activities, than in the past. More resources are being allocated for market oversight, enforcement, and customer assistance.

Additionally, resources historically devoted to electric and telecommunications market activities are being reallocated to providing regulatory oversight of the water and wastewater industries. Ensuring that the PUC has adequate resources to fulfill its obligations to effectively regulate the water and wastewater industries is critical to the PUC achieving its goals in effectively overseeing all of the industries under its purview.

## **Gap Analysis**

An examination of the workforce data indicates the PUC may face the loss of its institutional knowledge and expertise through retirements and loss of employees to the private sector. The ability to offer a combination of salary and employee benefits that will attract and retain employees with the necessary education and experience will be a key factor in the success of the PUC’s workforce.

## **Strategy Development**

The PUC has developed workforce goals to address the potential deficit between the current workforce and future demands. The strategies will need to be assessed periodically to determine their effectiveness in achieving the PUC’s workforce goals.

**GOAL ONE:** Recruit professionals with the requisite skills to complement the PUC’s existing workforce and take steps to retain these professionals.

**Rationale:** The demand for educated, licensed or certified staff in the electric and telecommunication industries requires special agency efforts. Competition with the private sector for the same labor supply creates a disadvantage for state agencies due to salary differences.

**Action Steps:**

- Continue to market the “total” state compensation and benefits program to potential applicants and employees.

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- Human Resources and division directors will participate in university sponsored career fairs, locate free advertising with associated and minority organizations, appropriate technical educational institutions, and Work In Texas (Texas Workforce Commission), DiversityJobs.com, Governmentjobs.com, the Texas State Bar Association, Simplicity, Handshake, HBCU Connect, LinkedIn, Indeed and other social media platforms to aggressively recruit qualified minority males, females, and people with disabilities.
- Expand the PUC's volunteer internship program to alert and encourage qualified minority males, females, and people with disabilities to apply.
- Improve recruiting techniques by streamlining application procedures and reviewing applicant flow data to target sources that will assist with hiring employees in underutilized job categories.
- Require managers to work with new employees to attempt to align PUC employment opportunities with the employee's individual career goals.

**GOAL TWO:** Retain qualified and experienced staff ensuring smooth business operations and excellent customer service.

**Rationale:** The PUC's experience with high turnover in a competitive market for certain skills supports the need for this goal.

- Action Steps:**
- Increase employee career planning assistance through training programs and participation in continuous professional development initiatives that enhance the employee's current job performance and future opportunities within the PUC.
  - Ensure that managers and supervisors, especially those new to these responsibilities, have adequate training in how to recruit, train and retain quality staff.
  - Manage available funds to award merit increases to provide a fair balance of rewarding employee performance and maximizing retention of key personnel.

**GOAL THREE:** Review FTE allocations to ensure conformance to current PUC priorities and workload.

**Rationale:** Varying workload demands and shifting priorities can change the appropriate allocation of PUC resources.

- Action Steps:**
- Continue to assess all vacancies created by employee departures to determine whether the position should be modified or relocated in the PUC.
  - When a need for additional staffing in a given area is identified and vacant positions are not available, offer current employees the opportunity to relocate within the agency.
  - Encourage employees to cross train in related skill areas to provide flexibility in staff assignments.

**GOAL FOUR:** Develop a formal PUC succession plan.

**Rationale:** It is critical that the PUC have a leadership development program and identify potential staff with leadership and other critical skills in the event the PUC experiences the loss of key staff members in leadership or critical positions (through retirement or otherwise).

- Action Steps:**
- Continue to concentrate on leadership development across the PUC.
  - Identify training programs that focus on development of needed critical skills and competencies.
  - Develop skills of staff level employees through training and mentoring to provide in-house candidates for management positions that become available.
  - Identify capable successor candidates interested in leadership and critical positions early and provide appropriate opportunities for growth.

## Conclusion

## **PUC WORKFORCE PLAN**

During the next five years, the PUC must ensure that it does not experience a deficit in leadership and knowledge talent. As the labor force segment age 25 to 34 years declines, there will be fewer younger workers to fill vacant positions. Also, Texas population is projected to grow from 30 million in 2022 to more than 54.4 million by 2050, increasing demands for state and local government services, as well as demands for utilities.

Available talent, as well as the state's ability to develop and retain a competent, qualified workforce will be a limiting or enabling factor for state government in general. An effective workforce plan will translate into successful strategic goal achievement, program initiatives and sustained momentum for efficient, well-run agencies. The PUC's strategies encompass a realigned workforce plan to meet future business objectives by developing an effective succession management and talent retention program.