

# AGENCY WORKFORCE PLAN



## I. Agency Overview

### A. AGENCY BUSINESS OPERATIONS

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) was created in 1887 as a part of the Department of Agriculture, Statistics and History. In 1907, the Department became a separate state agency charged with “promoting Texas agriculture interests through organizing farmer’s institutes over the state.” Since 1907, TDA has been mandated by the Legislature to be a full-service agency, involved with all phases of modern agriculture, agricultural businesses, and consumer protection. Today its vital functions include regulatory activities, outreach, producer outreach, agricultural resource protection, agricultural research, economic analysis and promoting excellence in adult and children nutrition.



TDA finds new markets for value-added products, protects the public and the environment, and enforces laws that maintain consumer confidence in the marketplace primarily through programs implemented by three main divisions: Agriculture & Consumer Protection, Trade & Business Development, and Food & Nutrition.

The agency is organized into ten (10) divisions consisting of specific-purpose offices, business operations and programs. The divisions include Agency Administration, Agriculture & Consumer Protection, Communications, Executive/Internal Audit, Financial Services, Food & Nutrition, Legal Services, Legislative Affairs and External Relations, Field Operations, and Trade & Business Development. The business operations include Agency Administration, Financial Services and Legal Services.

The program areas are:

1. Agriculture & Consumer Protection and Field Operations, which includes five regional offices located in Lubbock, Dallas, Houston, San Antonio and San Juan, and the Pesticide Laboratory in College Station, the Metrology Laboratory, and Seed Laboratory in Giddings.
2. Trade & Business Development, which includes five export facilities in Brownsville, Del Rio, El Paso, Laredo, and Houston.
3. Food & Nutrition, which includes five regional offices located in Lubbock, Dallas, Houston, San Antonio and San Juan, which include a sub-office in Ft. Worth.

## II. Current Workforce Profile

### B. WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS

The following charts profile TDA's full-time and part-time workforce, based on data from the Uniform Statewide Payroll/Personnel System (USPS), the State Auditor's Electronic Classification Analysis (E-Class) System, State Auditor's reports, and Texas Workforce Commission – Civil Rights Division.

#### GENDER

During Fiscal Year 2020, TDA's workforce was comprised of 47.20 percent males and 52.80 percent females compared to the state's workforce which was comprised of 42.40 percent males and 57.60 percent females.

TDA gender demographics have remained consistent between Fiscal Years 2018 and 2020. TDA total workforce male percentages remain above the state total workforce male percentages. TDA total workforce female percentages remain below the state total workforce female percentages.

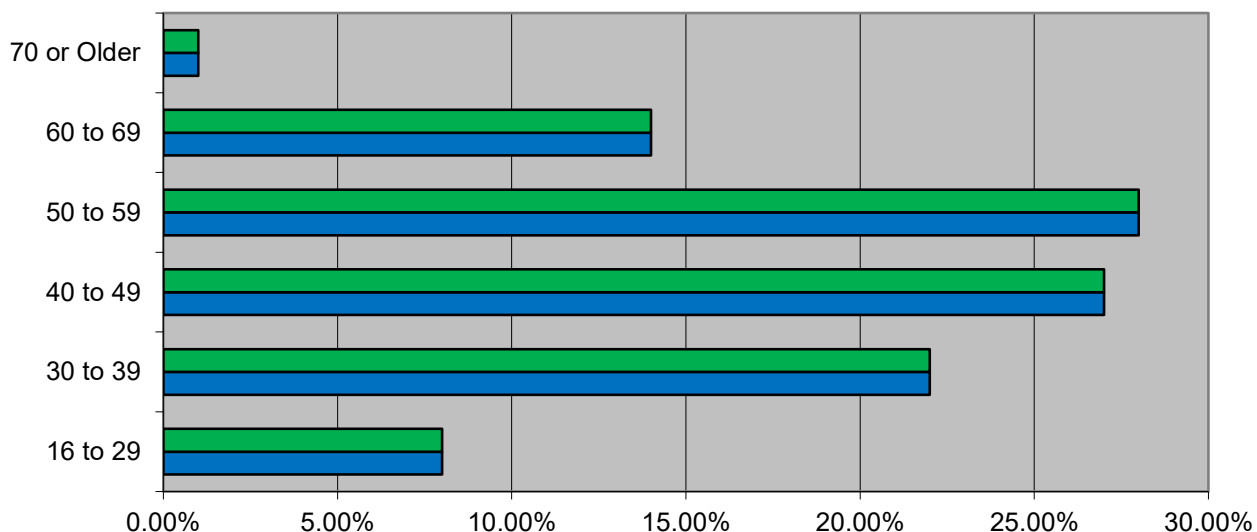
Gender Workforce – State and TDA <sup>1</sup>				
Fiscal Year	Male		Female	
	All State Agencies	TDA	All State Agencies	TDA
2020	42.40%	47.20%	57.60%	52.80%
2018	43.50%	47.60%	56.50%	52.40%

<sup>1</sup> State Auditor's Office – Legislative Workforce Summary by Agency for [FY2018](#) and [FY2020](#)

#### AGE

For Fiscal Year 2021, 70 percent of TDA's employees were age 40 or older. This has remained the same since Fiscal Year 2020, when 70 percent of TDA employees were 40 or older. With less than 30 percent of the agency's workforce under 40 years old in Fiscal Year 2021, TDA must aggressively plan how to replace the knowledge of 94 employees who are eligible to retire before the end of Fiscal Year 2022 or who are currently return-to-work retirees.

TDA Workforce by Age



## DIVERSITY

The following table compares TDA's ethnicity and gender percentages for 2020 to the state agency workforce as reported by the Texas Workforce Commission Civil Rights Division<sup>2</sup>.

<b>FY 2020 Labor Force by Ethnicity and Job Category</b>						
<b>Job Category</b>	<b>African American</b>		<b>Hispanic</b>		<b>Female</b>	
	<b>All State Agencies</b>	<b>TDA</b>	<b>All State Agencies</b>	<b>TDA</b>	<b>All State Agencies</b>	<b>TDA</b>
Officials/Administrators (A)	12.03%	15.0%	15.72%	15.0%	55.69%	45.0%
Administrative Support (C)	18.36%	14.29%	33.74%	38.78%	81.71%	89.80%
Service/Maintenance (M)	24.15%	—	36.16%	75.0%	44.74%	—
Professionals (P)	11.31%	14.94%	17.06%	25.31%	57.23%	53.79%
Para-Professionals (Q)	37.07%	—	29.28%	—	72.18%	—
Protective Services (R)	35.94%	—	24.71%	—	47.97%	—
Skilled/Craft Workers and Operatives (S)	8.57%	—	26.85%	—	8.05%	—
Technicians (T)	18.54%	5.77%	26.31%	38.46%	61.10%	23.08%

<sup>2</sup> [Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Hiring Practices Report Fiscal Years 2019-2020](#) Texas Workforce Commission Civil Rights Division.

## VETERAN EMPLOYMENT

Effective fiscal year 2016, Texas Government Code §657.004, sets for state agencies a goal of employing veterans in full-time positions equal to at least 20.0 percent of the total number of agency employees.

In fiscal year 2020, TDA's total percent of veterans in the workforce was higher than the statewide average. TDA's total percentage has decreased since Fiscal Years' 2019, 2018, 2017 and 2016.

<b>Veteran Employment <sup>3</sup></b>		
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>All State Agencies</b>	<b>TDA</b>
2020	6.4%	8.5%
2019	6.5%	10.2%
2018	6.8%	10.2%
2017	6.9%	9.4%
2016	7.2%	9.3%

<sup>3</sup> State Auditor's Office – Legislative Workforce Summary by Agency for [FY2020](#)

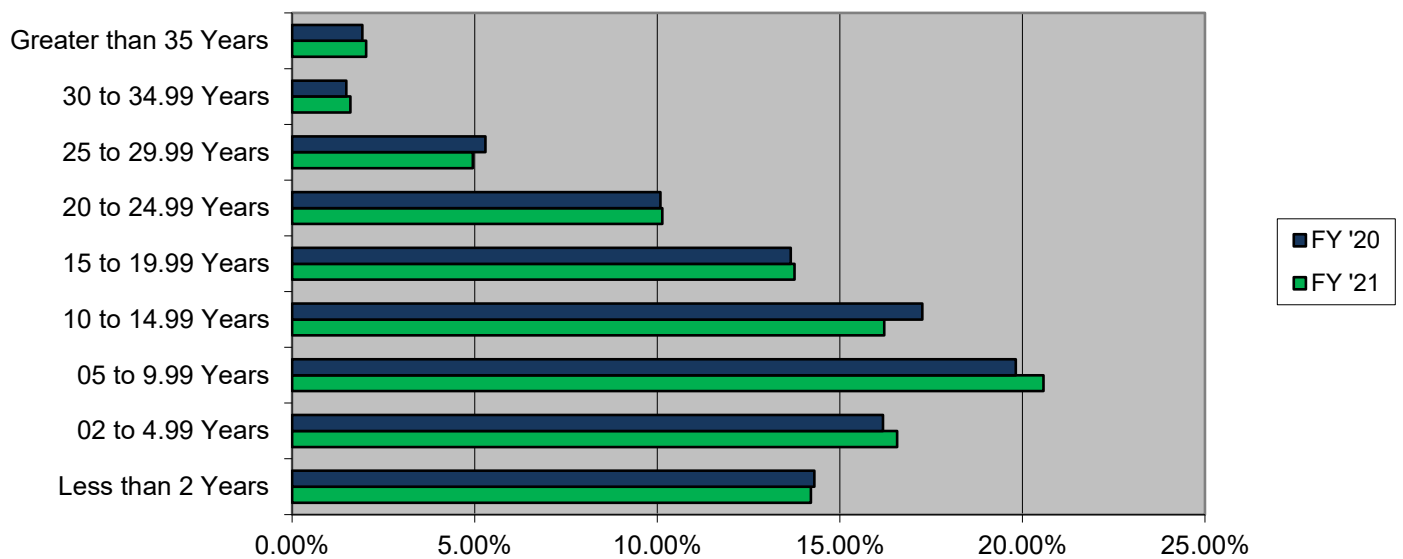
## TENURE

Of the 641.25 employees reported by the Electronic Classification Analysis System (E-CLASS), as of August 31, 2021, 90.75 employees (14.15 percent) have less than two years of agency service; 106.25 employees (16.57 percent) have between two and five years of service; 132 employees (20.58 percent) with five to ten years of service; 104 employees (16.22 percent) with ten to fifteen years of service; 88.25 employees (13.76 percent) with fifteen to twenty years of service; 65 employees (10.14 percent) with twenty to twenty-five years of service; 31.75 employees (4.95 percent) with twenty-five to thirty years of service; 10.25 employees (1.6 percent) with thirty to thirty-five years of service; and 13 employees (2.03 percent) with greater than

thirty-five years of service.

Tenure demographics have remained fairly consistent. As of August 31, 2020, E-CLASS reported TDA had 624.25 employees. Of this, 89.25 employees (14.30 percent) had less than two years of service; 101 employees (16.18 percent) had between two and five years of service; 123.75 employees (19.82 percent) with five to ten years of service; 107.75 employees (17.26 percent) had between ten and fifteen years of service; 85.25 employees (13.66 percent) with fifteen to twenty years of service; 63 employees (10.09 percent) with twenty to twenty-five years of service; 33 employees (5.29 percent) with twenty-five to thirty years of service; 9.25 employees (1.48 percent) with thirty to thirty-five years of service; and 12 employees (1.92 percent) with greater than thirty-five years of service.

### TDA Tenure



### Employee Turnover and Projected Attrition

The Texas Department of Agriculture’s (TDA) employee turnover rate has consistently remained below the overall state employee turnover rate.

The following tables depict the following turnover rates:

- TDA’s turnover (**excluding** interagency transfers) compared to the state turnover (**excluding** interagency transfers) 4;
- TDA’s turnover (**including** interagency transfers) compared to the state turnover (**including** interagency transfers) 5; and
- TDA’s turnover (**excluding** involuntary separations and retirements) compared to the state turnover (**excluding** involuntary separations and retirements) 6.

<b>Employee Turnover (Excluding Interagency Turnover) <sup>4</sup></b>		
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>All State Agencies</b>	<b>TDA</b>
2020*	18.6%	9.5%
2019	20.3%	12.1%
2018	19.3%	10.7%
2017	18.6%	9.3%
2016	17.6%	12.4%

<sup>4</sup> State Auditor's Office – Legislative Workforce Summary by Agency for [FY2020](#)

\*The Legislative Workforce Summary Report ends with Fiscal Year 2020.

<b>Employee Turnover (Including Interagency Turnover) <sup>5</sup></b>		
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>All State Agencies</b>	<b>TDA</b>
2021	22.5%	11.8%
2020	19.9%	13.8%
2019	22.0%	16.4%
2018	20.8%	16.5%
2017	33.6%	10.2%
2016	22.7%	18.5%

<sup>5</sup> State Auditor's Office – An Annual Report on Classified Employee Turnover for Fiscal Year [2021](#), [2020](#), [2019](#), [2018](#), [2017](#) and [2016](#)

<b>Employee Turnover (Excluding Involuntary Separations and Retirements) <sup>6</sup></b>		
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>All State Agencies</b>	<b>TDA</b>
2019	14.1%	11.0%
2018	12.9%	11.8%
2017	26.1%	7.4%
2016	15.4%	14.3%
2015	12.0%	11.6%
2014	11.7%	9.0%

<sup>6</sup> State Auditor's Office – An Annual Report on Classified Employee Turnover for Fiscal Year [2021](#), [2020](#), [2019](#), [2018](#), [2017](#) and [2016](#)

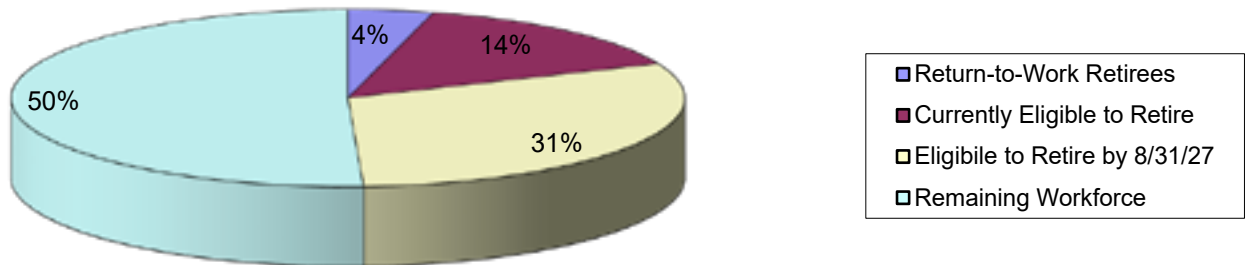
According to information obtained through the State Auditor's 2021 Employee Exit Survey, the following are the top three reasons why employee leave the agency: (1) Better pay/benefits is the primary reason employees leave the agency; (2) Retirement is second reason; (3) Lastly, employees leave the agency due to personal or family health. For Fiscal Year 2021, the highest percentage of TDA turnover occurs among employees in the Program Specialist, Compliance Analyst, Contract Specialist and Administrative Assistant classification series.

According to the Annual Report on Classified Employee Turnover for Fiscal Year 2021 report, the State Auditor's Exit Surveys completed by state agency employees who voluntarily left the employment at their state agencies reported that retirement is the primary reason for leaving the agency, followed by better/pay benefits and poor working conditions/ environment.

Because TDA is a mature agency (with 69.86 percent of its employees over the age of 40), retirements may have a significant impact on the agency over the next five years. These could result in the loss of important institutional knowledge and expertise. TDA recognizes the importance of minimizing the loss of critical program knowledge and organizational experience with departing employees.

TDA estimates that by the end of Fiscal Year 2027, 30.76 percent of the agency's workforce will be eligible to retire (based on Fiscal Year 2022 data). This is in addition to the 4.01 percent return-to-work retirees currently employed with TDA.

### Retirement Eligibility and Projections



### C. CRITICAL WORKFORCE SKILLS

TDA employs qualified individuals in numerous program disciplines. Strong employee competencies are critical to meet ongoing business objectives and goals. Skills are needed in the following substantive areas in order for TDA to accomplish its basic business functions:

- Regulatory and consumer protection;
- Legal services;
- Information technology;
- Adult and child nutrition;
- Rural economic development; and
- Business development and outreach.

TDA employees also need the following skills to succeed:

- Critical thinking;
- Technology/computer;
- Customer service;
- Dietary/nutrition management;
- Research and analysis;
- Grant/Contract administration;
- Compliance analyses;
- Financial management;
- Leadership and management;
- Data and information management;
- Performance management;
- Strategic planning;
- Staff hiring, development, retention, and management; and
- Mentoring and coaching.



The following business areas are most at risk for loss of skills and institutional knowledge based on retirement projections:

- Agriculture and Consumer Protection;
- Field Operations;
- Food and Nutrition; and
- Trade and Business Development.

### III. Future Workforce Profile

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#### A. EXPECTED WORKFORCE CHANGES

As a result of increasing public demands in the areas of adult and child nutrition, consumer protection and rural economic development, it is expected that a greater distribution of agency resources will be directed to these areas in the future.

#### B. ANTICIPATED CHANGE IN NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES NEEDED

TDA has the ability to meet changing workloads through the strategic allocation of FTEs within the agency. Additionally, the use of technology and streamlined processes allow TDA to continue to meet the changing needs of its constituents.

#### C. CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

The Texas Department of Agriculture's critical functions are:

- Regulatory and consumer protection;
- Nutrition program administration;
- Rural economic development; and
- Various grant programs.



To successfully complete these critical functions, TDA relies on a strong set of support areas with expertise in areas such as:

- Legal Services;
- Information Technology;
- Operational Support;
- Human Resources;
- Legislative Affairs and External Relations;
- Financial Services;
- Communications;
- Agriculture and Consumer Protection;
- Adult and Child Nutrition;
- Rural Economic Development;
- Grant/Contract Management;
- Marketing and Outreach; and
- International Trade.

## **IV. Future Workforce Skills Needed**

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The critical workforce skills needed to fulfill TDA's mission include:

- Critical thinking;
- Technology – information resources databases, systems applications, programming design, and implementation and network maintenance;
- Customer service;
- Leadership and management;
- Dietary/nutrition management;
- Research and analysis;
- Compliance analyses;
- Grant/Contract management;
- Project management, quality oversight and evaluation;
- Financial management;
- Data and information management;
- Performance management;
- Strategic planning;
- Outreach and technical assistance;
- Staff hiring, development, retention, and management; and
- Mentoring and coaching.

Future functions to accomplish TDA's mission and goals will include the following:

- Increase computer skill sets for employees;
- Increase and maintain high levels of customer service skills by maximizing electronic records and minimizing paper records;
- Increase automation with technology;
- Create and implement comprehensive training programs; and
- Promote a comprehensive internship program.

## **V. Gap Analysis**

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### **A. ANTICIPATED WORKER SHORTAGE/SURPLUS**

With more than 14 percent of TDA's workforce being eligible for retirement by FY 2022 (this is in addition to the 4.1 percent return-to-work retirees currently employed with TDA), TDA projects a potential shortage in staffing and skill levels needed to meet future requirements. The projected shortage of qualified employees with the necessary skills and knowledge will most affect the following areas:

- Agriculture and Consumer Protection;
- Field Operations;
- Food and Nutrition programs; and
- Trade and Business Development.

The loss of skilled and experienced employees due to retirements and separations may impair the agency's ability to achieve its goals. While the agency expects to be able to recruit employees with the required skills and professional training to perform needed functions, TDA will need to enhance recruiting and retention practices. Additionally, TDA will need to identify what specific skills and competencies are needed for every position. Programs and individual responsibility require the agency to focus on an organized training effort to assist staff in being more proficient and efficient.



The agency anticipates that evolving technology will continue to offer opportunities to automate and streamline processes, requiring more staff with the skills to fully utilize this technology.

Management staff will need to develop and enhance the skills needed to manage performance and motivate staff, manage change, communicate goals and objectives, coach and mentor, and encourage innovation.

## **B. ANTICIPATED SKILL SHORTAGE/SURPLUS**

TDA believes replacing projected retirements and turnovers in management will require succession planning and greater emphasis on professional development and training. With this additional professional development, TDA can work to develop the skills required to replace the anticipated loss of institutional knowledge.

A significant barrier to replacing all skill sets is recruiting employees externally.

Specifically, TDA may experience shortages of employees with the following skill sets and knowledge:

- Leadership and management;
- Thorough knowledge of laws and regulations affecting the agency;
- Valuable institutional knowledge, expertise, and experience; and
- Information technology.

## **VI. Strategy Development**

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### **A. GOALS**

Comments provided through the State Auditor's Exit Survey indicated a strong need for employment rewards/recognition, employee training and development, resources, supervisor/employee engagement and career advancement.

Goals to address TDA's projected workforce gap will include the following:

- Compensation review – Efforts will be made to identify positions that are not equitable compared to other state agencies to enhance employee rewards/recognition;
- Career development programs – Programs such as mentoring, the internship program and an increase in professional training and development for staff will be initiated throughout the agency;
- Leadership development – Efforts will be made to identify, retain, and develop existing employees with management and leadership capabilities. This will require the funding to identify and increase leadership training;
- Training and development – Funding for in-house and external training such as managerial training and skill development will be needed to address individual employee training needs for the day-to-day operations of the agency to include the management of remote employees; and
- Succession planning – Supervisors will identify what skill sets are critical to meeting their objectives and can plan for employee attrition. Succession planning will also address staffing or skill imbalances due to turnover and retirements.

### **B. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

- Recruitment plan – Current recruitment efforts will focus on areas that are difficult to attract and/or retain such as contract and grants specialist, case preparation officers, administrative review specialists and Information Technology positions.
- Retention programs – Managers will be trained regarding employee retention programs such as flextime, staggered work hours, professional development training opportunities, employee engagement enhancement, mentoring and service awards; and

- Coaching and mentoring programs – With 69 percent of employees having five or more years with TDA, they have an in-depth understanding of the detailed processes and procedures required. New and less tenured employees benefit from the extensive program experience/expertise of those employees.

### **C. WORKFORCE PLAN EVALUATION AND REVISION**

The Workforce Plan will be implemented in connection with TDA’s Strategic Plan. Strategic Plan changes due to leadership or legislative changes may result in adjustment to the Workforce Plan.

## **VII. Conclusion**

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Human Resources (HR) will continue to build a stronger business partnership with each of the divisions to determine staffing and training needs and assist with workforce strategic and succession planning. HR will provide divisions with information regarding turnover, retirement eligibility and tenure in addition to assisting in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.





**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
**COMMISSIONER SID MILLER**