



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of Inspector General

U.S. Department of Agriculture Staffing Levels

December 17, 2025

OAI Report 25-064-01





OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Agriculture



DATE: December 17, 2025

TO: Deedra Fogle
Acting Chief Human Capital Officer
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Human Resources Management

FROM: Craig Goscha
Acting Assistant Inspector General
Office of Analytics and Innovation

SUBJECT: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Staffing Levels

On April 16, 2025, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) initiated an engagement examining staffing levels throughout USDA.¹ Based on the data available, OIG assessed staffing and attrition from pay periods 1 through 11 (January 12, 2025 - June 14, 2025).

To conduct our analysis, we used National Finance Center (NFC) Employee Personnel data and NFC Timekeeping Entries data. We partnered with USDA's Office of Human Resources Management to obtain and understand additional data regarding the Deferred Resignation Program (DRP).² We appreciate the courtesy and assistance provided by USDA staff throughout this project.

Results

Our review evaluated staffing levels and attrition rates by state, category (retirement, dismissal, resignation, external transfer, DRP, or other), and agency. Our analysis determined the following:

- As of January 11, 2025, USDA had 110,384 employees.
- In total, 20,306 employees attrited between January 12, 2025, and June 14, 2025. Attrition by pay period is included below:

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Pay Period 01 (01/12/25-01/25/25): | -562 employees |
| Pay Period 02 (01/26/25-02/08/25): | -354 employees |
| Pay Period 03 (02/09/25-02/22/25): | -392 employees |
| Pay Period 04 (02/23/25-03/08/25): | -2,496 employees |
| Pay Period 05 (03/09/25-03/22/25): | -2,153 employees |
| Pay Period 06 (03/23/25-04/05/25): | -690 employees |
| Pay Period 07 (04/06/25-04/19/25): | -1,942 employees |
| Pay Period 08 (04/20/25-05/03/25): | -9,606 employees |
| Pay Period 09 (05/04/25-05/17/25): | -1,064 employees |
| Pay Period 10 (05/18/25-05/31/25): | -750 employees |
| Pay Period 11 (06/01/25-06/14/25): | -297 employees |

¹ To mitigate impairments to independence in fact or appearance, we excluded OIG employees from this review.

² DRP totals were determined by the DRP agreement date. These individuals deferred their separation action past the project scope. Employees in this category are considered a separation via DRP, unless a subsequent separation action occurred during the project scope. Additional situations may have occurred to alter a DRP agreement after pay period 11.

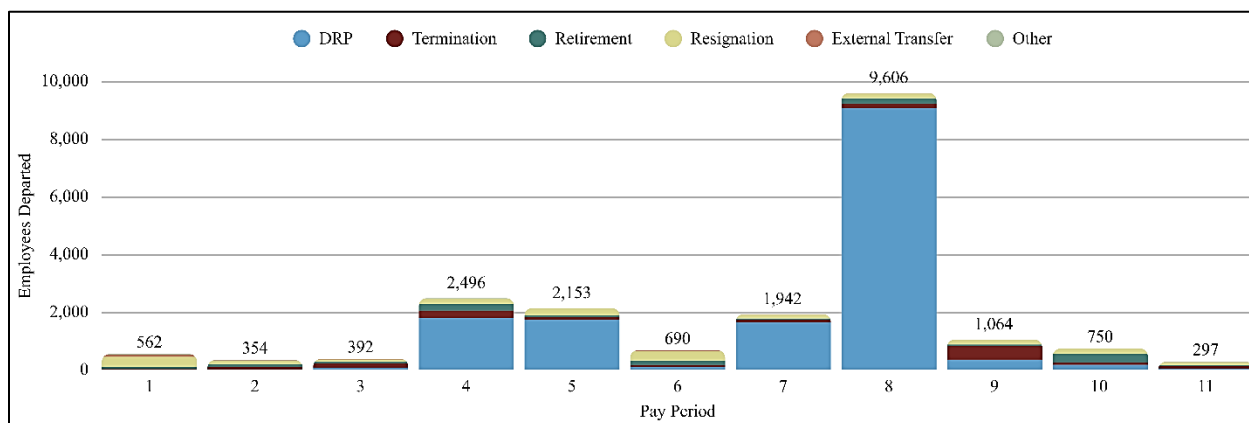


Figure 1. Attrition categories during each pay period. Figure by OIG.

- All 50 states, Washington D.C., Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands incurred attrition, with an average of 370 employees departed. The largest rate of attrition occurred in Rhode Island, where 38% of the employees departed. The lowest rate occurred in Kentucky with 12%.³

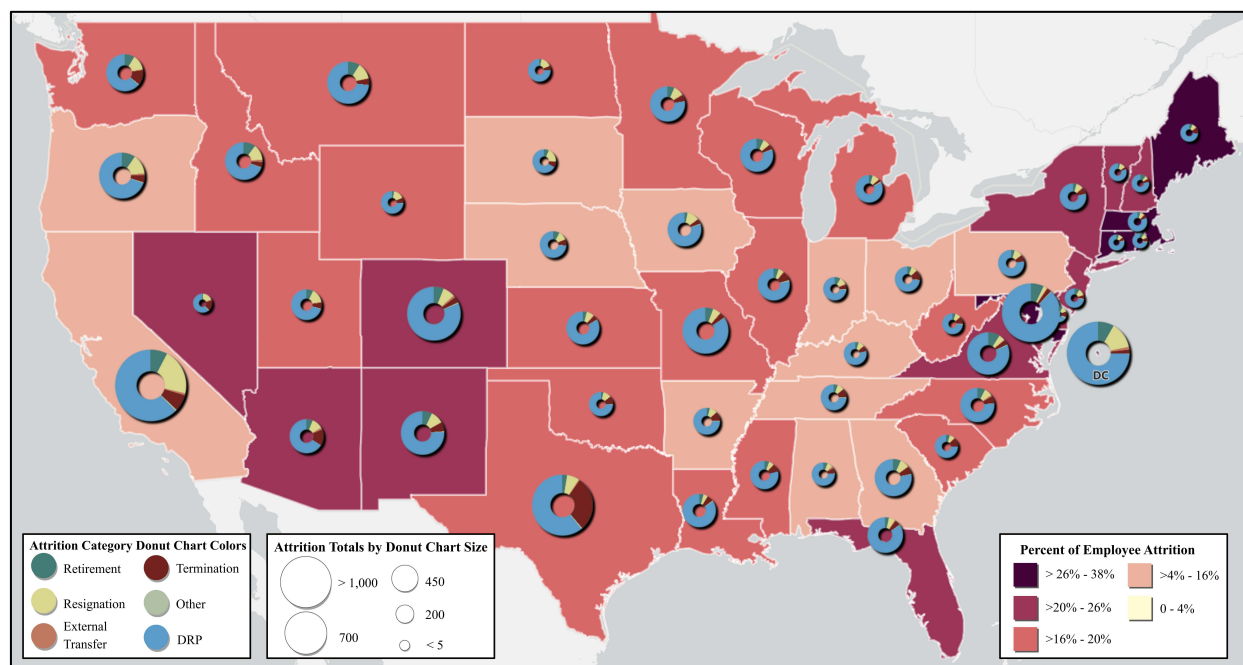


Figure 2. A map showing attrition by state in three variables; 1) total attrition: size of circles, 2) attrition by type: colors in donut charts, and 3) percent employee loss: color of state. Figure by OIG.

- Of the 20,306 employees that left USDA during the review period, 15,114 left under the DRP. Attrition by category is included below:

³ The full counts and percentages for each state and territory are available in [Appendix A](#). All percentages in this memo are rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.

| Pay Period | Attrition Type | | | | | |
|------------|----------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------------|-------|
| | DRP | Termination | Retirement | Resignation | External Transfer | Other |
| 1 | 0 | 63 | 54 | 350 | 84 | 11 |
| 2 | 0 | 105 | 104 | 116 | 19 | 10 |
| 3 | 87 | 150 | 50 | 87 | 13 | 5 |
| 4 | 1,804 | 264 | 242 | 161 | 11 | 14 |
| 5 | 1,745 | 89 | 66 | 242 | 5 | 6 |
| 6 | 109 | 80 | 152 | 331 | 10 | 8 |
| 7 | 1,667 | 87 | 43 | 125 | 9 | 11 |
| 8 | 9,082 | 162 | 184 | 156 | 12 | 10 |
| 9 | 371 | 473 | 48 | 154 | 7 | 11 |
| 10 | 192 | 75 | 312 | 162 | 3 | 6 |
| 11 | 57 | 88 | 25 | 112 | 2 | 13 |
| Total | 15,114 | 1,636 | 1,280 | 1,996 | 175 | 105 |

Table 1. The total attrition for the six major categories of employee exits. Table by OIG.

- Each agency experienced attrition during the period, with percentages ranging from 7% to 67%.⁴ Attrition by agency is included below:

| Agency | Total Employees (EOY 2024) | Employee Attrition | Percent Employee Attrition |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) | 4,473 | 633 | 14% |
| Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) | 8,435 | 2,105 | 25% |
| Agricultural Research Service (ARS) | 7,190 | 1,647 | 23% |
| Departmental Administration (DA) | 506 | 185 | 37% |
| Economic Research Service (ERS) | 294 | 84 | 29% |
| Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) | 729 | 150 | 21% |
| Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services (FNCS) | 1,842 | 579 | 31% |
| Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) Business Center | 1,594 | 531 | 33% |
| Forest Service (FS) | 35,550 | 5,860 | 16% |
| Farm Service Agency (FSA) | 3,402 | 806 | 24% |
| Farm Service Agency County Office (FSACO) | 15,837 | 1,082 | 7% |
| Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) | 8,356 | 775 | 9% |
| National Appeals Division (NAD) | 68 | 13 | 19% |
| National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) | 805 | 275 | 34% |
| National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) | 488 | 169 | 35% |

⁴ The full list of agencies used in calculating the figure above is based on attrition data received. Some subagencies are aggregated into their parent agencies.

| | | | |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------|
| Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) | 12,058 | 2,673 | 22% |
| Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA) | 61 | 22 | 36% |
| Office of Communications (OC) | 49 | 28 | 57% |
| Office of the Chief Economist (OCE) | 67 | 15 | 22% |
| Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) | 982 | 240 | 24% |
| Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) | 1,580 | 357 | 23% |
| Office of Civil Rights (OCR) | 149 | 50 | 34% |
| Office of the General Counsel (OGC) | 275 | 62 | 23% |
| Office of Homeland Security (OHS) | 56 | 13 | 23% |
| Office of Policy and Program Evaluation (OPPE) | 52 | 28 | 54% |
| Rural Development (RD) | 4,910 | 1,745 | 36% |
| Risk Management Agency (RMA) | 414 | 70 | 17% |
| Office of the Secretary (SEC) | 162 | 109 | 67% |
| Totals | 110,384 | 20,306 | 18% |

Table 2. Attrition rates by each USDA agency. Table by OIG.

Objective, Scope, and Methodology:

The objective of this engagement was to analyze staffing levels in USDA from pay period 1 through pay period 6 of calendar year 2025. We expanded the scope of our review through pay period 11 to reflect additional staffing changes.

We evaluated NFC Employee Personnel data to determine attrition types and counts based on Nature of Action (NOA) codes and NFC Timekeeping Entries data from USDA to determine DRP.⁵ We also used NFC Employee Personnel data to determine an employee's state of residence based on their duty station (city and State).

USDA OIG applied the established Office of Analytics and Innovation quality assurance standards to ensure the information presented in this product is adequately supported.⁶ We discussed the results of our review with agency officials on December 11, 2025, and included their responses in this report, as appropriate.

cc:

Bryan Knowles, Acting Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer

⁵ The NOA codes used for each category are as follows: a. Retirement: 300 (Retirement-Mandatory), 301 (Retirement-Disability), 302 (Retirement-Voluntary), 303 (Retirement-Special Option), 304 (Retirement Ilia), 307 (Full Retirement Status-Voluntary); b. Termination: 355 (Term Exp of Appt), 357 (Termination), 385 (Discharge During Prob/Trial Period); c. Resignation: 312 (Resignation-Ilia), 317 (Resignation); d. External Transfers: 352 (Termination Appt In); e. Other (Various): 330 (Removal), 350 (Death), 353 (Separation-U), 356 (Termination-Involuntary), 390 (Separation-Appt In).

⁶ USDA OIG Directive IG-5006 *The Quality Control Process*, December 5, 2017.

Appendix A:

| State or Equivalent | Abbr. | Retirements | Resignations | External Transfers | Terminations | Others | DRPs | Total Attrition | Starting Employee Counts | Percent Employee Attrition |
|----------------------|-------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|--------|------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Alaska | AK | 13 | 18 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 221 | 264 | 974 | 27% |
| Alabama | AL | 14 | 17 | 6 | 16 | 1 | 167 | 221 | 1,404 | 16% |
| Arkansas | AR | 12 | 28 | 1 | 32 | 2 | 223 | 298 | 2,125 | 14% |
| Arizona | AZ | 27 | 49 | 9 | 70 | 1 | 295 | 451 | 2,277 | 20% |
| California | CA | 98 | 267 | 11 | 95 | 9 | 788 | 1,268 | 9,310 | 14% |
| Colorado | CO | 53 | 65 | 12 | 31 | 6 | 713 | 880 | 3,899 | 23% |
| Connecticut | CT | 3 | 6 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 49 | 63 | 242 | 26% |
| District of Columbia | DC | 89 | 148 | 16 | 22 | 1 | 800 | 1,076 | 3,357 | 32% |
| Delaware | DE | 5 | 7 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 40 | 61 | 287 | 21% |
| Florida | FL | 17 | 28 | 5 | 24 | 2 | 407 | 483 | 2,199 | 22% |
| Georgia | GA | 34 | 42 | 3 | 34 | 2 | 402 | 517 | 3,408 | 15% |
| Guam | GU | 0 | 1 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 5 | 20 | 101 | 20% |
| Hawaii | HI | 11 | 17 | 1 | 80 | 0 | 82 | 191 | 869 | 22% |
| Iowa | IA | 14 | 53 | 2 | 20 | 3 | 359 | 451 | 2,855 | 16% |
| Idaho | ID | 55 | 73 | 11 | 24 | 2 | 363 | 528 | 3,278 | 16% |
| Illinois | IL | 21 | 23 | 3 | 38 | 5 | 323 | 413 | 2,432 | 17% |
| Indiana | IN | 18 | 23 | 3 | 14 | 3 | 161 | 222 | 1,449 | 15% |
| International | IT | 2 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 8 | 17 | 194 | 9% |
| Kansas | KS | 17 | 31 | 3 | 20 | 2 | 362 | 435 | 2,350 | 19% |
| Kentucky | KY | 11 | 18 | 2 | 16 | 0 | 166 | 213 | 1,706 | 12% |
| Louisiana | LA | 19 | 19 | 1 | 27 | 4 | 373 | 443 | 2,445 | 18% |
| Massachusetts | MA | 7 | 10 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 113 | 139 | 524 | 27% |
| Maryland | MD | 71 | 20 | 5 | 23 | 4 | 861 | 984 | 3,506 | 28% |
| Maine | ME | 5 | 9 | 1 | 11 | 0 | 76 | 102 | 383 | 27% |
| Michigan | MI | 14 | 27 | 0 | 10 | 4 | 256 | 311 | 1,813 | 17% |
| Minnesota | MN | 31 | 47 | 4 | 28 | 1 | 370 | 481 | 2,505 | 19% |
| Missouri | MO | 39 | 41 | 3 | 27 | 2 | 592 | 704 | 3,708 | 19% |
| Mississippi | MS | 19 | 19 | 3 | 29 | 0 | 259 | 329 | 2,064 | 16% |
| Montana | MT | 58 | 79 | 2 | 30 | 1 | 457 | 627 | 3,678 | 17% |
| North Carolina | NC | 35 | 35 | 7 | 31 | 2 | 352 | 462 | 2,831 | 16% |
| North Dakota | ND | 6 | 32 | 1 | 13 | 0 | 155 | 207 | 1,228 | 17% |
| Nebraska | NE | 24 | 31 | 2 | 21 | 1 | 219 | 298 | 1,983 | 15% |
| New Hampshire | NH | 10 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 76 | 99 | 459 | 22% |
| New Jersey | NJ | 12 | 15 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 98 | 136 | 627 | 22% |
| New Mexico | NM | 48 | 63 | 3 | 44 | 4 | 496 | 658 | 2,846 | 23% |
| Nevada | NV | 1 | 22 | 3 | 24 | 2 | 78 | 130 | 648 | 20% |

| State or Equivalent | Abbr. | Retirements | Resignations | External Transfers | Terminations | Others | DRPs | Total Attrition | Starting Employee Counts | Percent Employee Attrition |
|---------------------|-------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| New York | NY | 11 | 23 | 4 | 22 | 1 | 229 | 290 | 1,383 | 21% |
| Ohio | OH | 14 | 20 | 2 | 32 | 1 | 192 | 261 | 1,682 | 16% |
| Oklahoma | OK | 8 | 27 | 0 | 26 | 1 | 176 | 238 | 1,337 | 18% |
| Oregon | OR | 68 | 99 | 9 | 37 | 5 | 486 | 704 | 4,549 | 16% |
| Pennsylvania | PA | 13 | 29 | 2 | 23 | 0 | 221 | 288 | 1,837 | 16% |
| Puerto Rico | PR | 2 | 6 | 1 | 25 | 0 | 62 | 96 | 674 | 15% |
| Rhode Island | RI | 4 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 34 | 48 | 126 | 38% |
| South Carolina | SC | 11 | 17 | 0 | 28 | 1 | 163 | 220 | 1,383 | 16% |
| South Dakota | SD | 15 | 44 | 1 | 18 | 0 | 152 | 230 | 1,543 | 15% |
| Tennessee | TN | 14 | 24 | 1 | 30 | 3 | 204 | 276 | 2,134 | 13% |
| Texas | TX | 27 | 68 | 6 | 302 | 7 | 615 | 1,025 | 5,428 | 19% |
| Utah | UT | 28 | 57 | 4 | 24 | 2 | 267 | 382 | 2,040 | 19% |
| Virginia | VA | 58 | 30 | 4 | 23 | 4 | 513 | 632 | 2,632 | 24% |
| Virgin Islands | VI | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 27 | 19% |
| Vermont | VT | 4 | 11 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 80 | 99 | 398 | 25% |
| Washington | WA | 46 | 69 | 5 | 68 | 4 | 328 | 520 | 2,862 | 18% |
| Wisconsin | WI | 30 | 31 | 2 | 20 | 3 | 349 | 435 | 2,272 | 19% |
| West Virginia | WV | 8 | 15 | 1 | 19 | 2 | 124 | 169 | 953 | 18% |
| Wyoming | WY | 6 | 32 | 0 | 16 | 1 | 151 | 206 | 1,160 | 18% |
| Totals | | 1,280 | 1,996 | 175 | 1,636 | 105 | 15,114 | 20,306 | 110,384 | 18% |

Learn more about USDA OIG at <https://usdaoig.oversight.gov>

Find us on LinkedIn: [US Department of Agriculture OIG](#)

Find us on X: [@OIGUSDA](#)

Report suspected wrongdoing in USDA programs:



<https://usdaoig.oversight.gov/resources/hotline-information>

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs and operations are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, religion, retaliation for engaging in protected civil rights activity or opposition to any practice made unlawful under any Federal antidiscrimination laws, or receipt of income derived from programs or activities conducted or funded by OIG, political beliefs, or marital, familial or parental status (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250 9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

Cover photos are from USDA Flickr and are in the public domain. They do not depict any particular audit, inspection, or investigation.

