

Statewide Exit Survey Report

Fiscal Year 2018, July 2017 – June 2018

The State Exit Survey was established in October 2012 to learn more about why employees voluntarily leave their employment with an executive branch agency (excluding higher education). The survey is administered by the Office of Financial Management State Human Resources Division (OFM State HR). Participating agencies provide the survey link to their voluntarily departing employees, including those who are resigning from state service and those who are moving to another Washington state agency. Retirements, layoffs, dismissals and non-permanent separations are not included. This report focuses on responses received in fiscal year 2018 (July 2017 through June 2018). The exit survey information allows agencies and OFM State HR to develop retention strategies and to improve workforce management.

Exit Survey Participation

Participating agencies are defined as those that had at least one survey response in fiscal year 2018. From July 2017 through June 2018, 63 executive branch agencies had departures and 44 received one or more exit survey responses, representing an agency participation rate of 70 percent.

During the current reporting period, 532 departing employees completed the exit survey. This represents 31 percent of voluntary departures from participating agencies (1,720 total) and 13 percent of all executive branch departures (4,093 total). Among participating agencies, 22 had a quarterly average response rate at or above 20 percent, which is within the expected range for exit surveys. Response rates are typically lower for exit surveys than other surveys, as some employees may feel uncomfortable responding, or may choose other venues to give their feedback. However, a response rate of *at least* 30 percent is a better goal for more representative and reliable data.

Where are employees going?

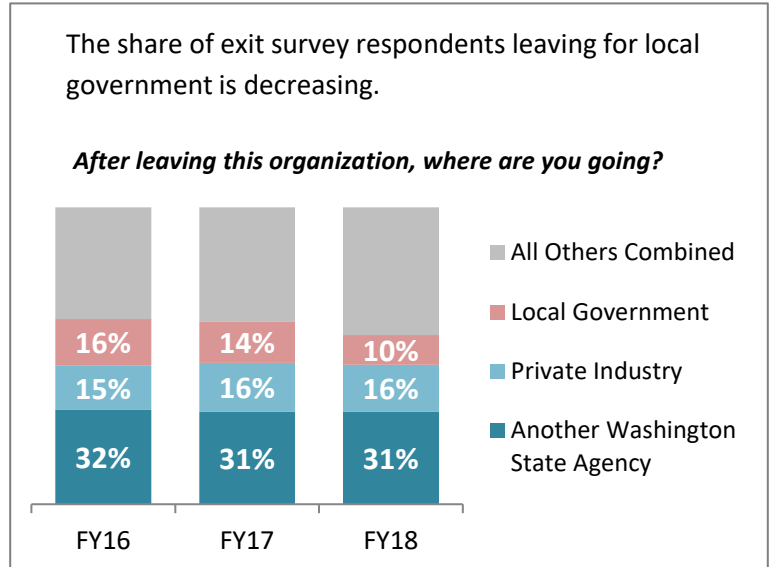
Similar to past reports, one in three employees (31 percent) indicated they were going to another Washington state agency, which continues to be the most common destination for exit survey respondents. (Note that movement to another agency constituted just 23 percent of actual departures in fiscal year 2018, which suggests that employees moving to another Washington state agency are more likely to take the exit survey than are employees leaving state service.) Employees were more likely to be leaving for private industry than local government, with 16 and 10 percent of departing employees, respectively. The 11 percent not leaving for another employer reported leaving to attend school, to take care of family or to address personal matters.



Looking back over time, moving to another Washington state agency has been the single-most common destination for exit survey respondents since the survey began, with private industry and local government coming in as the second and third most common destinations. The statewide exit survey was launched in 2012 in response to concerns the state was losing employees to local government, but exit survey results from the past three fiscal years suggest the share of employees leaving for local government is decreasing.

Why are they leaving?

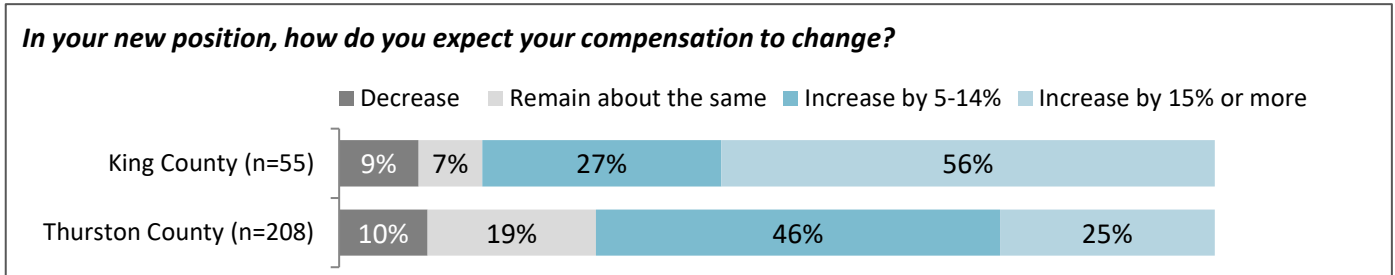
Survey respondents are asked to rank their top three reasons for leaving. As was true in past reports, compensation/pay and skill or career development were the top two reasons cited for an employee’s departure. Compensation/pay was the most frequent primary reason for leaving (85 respondents), followed closely by skill or career development (81 respondents). While dissatisfaction with compensation is the most cited driver of employee departures, it is worth noting that less than half of respondents (47 percent) listed compensation as a first, second or third reason for leaving (218 out of 464).



Employees in King County were more likely to list compensation as a primary reason for leaving, with 21 percent of respondents saying that was their primary reason for leaving, compared to 15 percent of respondents in other counties who said the same.

Employees in Thurston County were more likely to list skill or career development than compensation as a primary reason for leaving (19 percent of respondents and 15 percent, respectively).

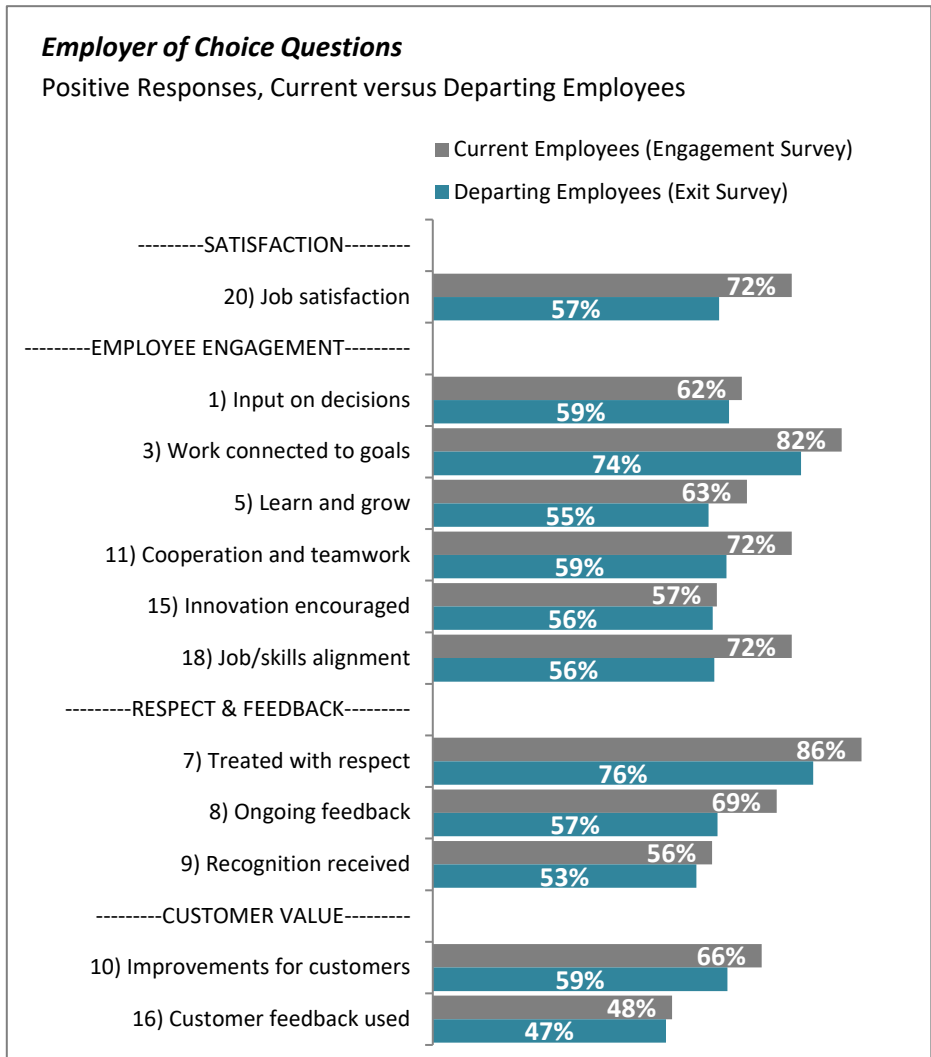
Consistent with the motivation to increase compensation, most departing employees (75 percent) report that they expect their income to increase by at least five percent in their new position. Employees departing from jobs in King County were the most likely to report significant income increases, with 56 percent of employees expecting raises of 15 percent or more in their new positions.



How do exit survey responses compare to engagement survey responses?

The exit survey contains several “Employer of Choice” questions from the State Employee Engagement Survey. Discrepancies in scores between current and departing employees (engagement survey vs. exit survey data) may offer additional insight into why employees are leaving. As expected, scores from the most recent State Employee Engagement Survey (October 2017) were generally more positive than scores on the exit survey. For example, 72 percent of current employees said they were generally satisfied with their job, compared to just 57 percent of departing employees.

The greatest difference was in job/skills alignment, where 72 percent of current employees said they have the opportunity to make good use of their skills, compared to 56 percent of exit survey respondents. Interestingly, the engagement survey shows that job/skills alignment is the area most closely associated with job satisfaction in our state. The exit survey results reveal a compelling symmetry: give employees opportunities to use their skills and they are more likely to be satisfied, fail to use their skills and they are more likely to leave.



Appendix A: Key indicators by occupational category (all responses since 2012)

To avoid problems due to insufficient data, the information below reflects all exit survey responses received since the beginning of the survey, from October 2012 through June 2018. The exit survey asks, “What type of job are you leaving?” and provides a reference link to the [occupational categories](#) listed on hr.wa.gov.

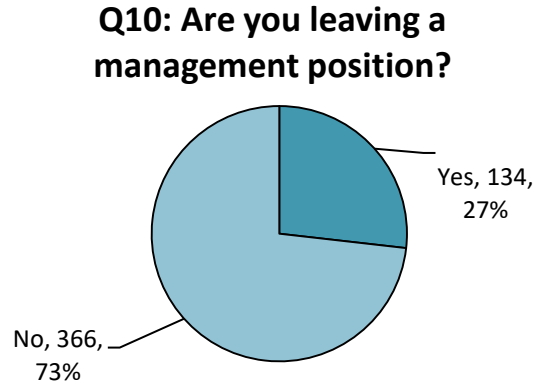
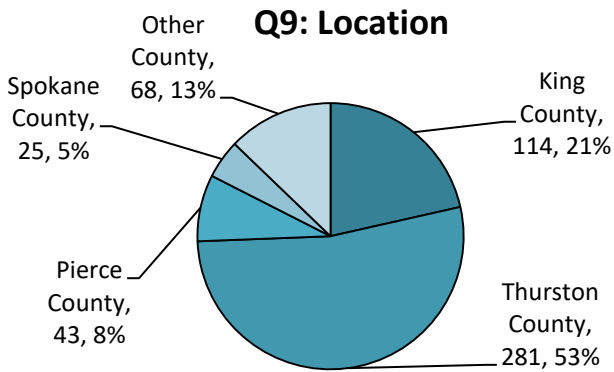
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| <p>All exit survey responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,463 total responses. Departments of Transportation, Health, Attorney General’s Office, Departments of Corrections, Ecology, and Enterprise Services had 47 percent of the responses. 74 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Compensation/Pay, Skill or Career Development, Family or Personal Reasons • Overall satisfaction¹: 62 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (34 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 75 percent | <p>Categories not included in this report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Operations • Institutional Food and Personal Service • Marine-Ferry and Aircraft • Recreational Athletics <p><i>*These job categories had fewer than 30 responses.</i></p> |
| <p>Administrative Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 822 total responses. Departments of Health, Transportation, Ecology, Licensing, Corrections and Enterprise Services had 41 percent of the responses. 61 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Compensation/Pay, Skill or Career Development, Anticipated Promotional Opportunities • Overall satisfaction: 64 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (39 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 72 percent | <p>Financial Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 408 total responses. Departments of Revenue, Enterprise Services, State Health Care Authority and Office of Financial Management had 42 percent of the responses. 47 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Compensation/Pay, Skill or Career Development, Anticipated Promotional Opportunities • Overall satisfaction: 69 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (43 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 76 percent |

¹ Overall satisfaction is the percentage of positive responses to exit survey question 25 “Please express your level of satisfaction with each of the following” which then prompts the respondent to give a rating for each of the following: health insurance benefits, paid time off, pension plan/retirement, pay, fair/reasonable workload, co-workers, quality of supervision, quality of agency leadership, work flexibility (work/life balance), training/development opportunities, job security, work environment, and safety.

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| <p>Legal Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 329 total responses. Offices of the Attorney General and Administrative Hearings had 76 percent of the responses. 20 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Compensation/Pay, Skill or Career Development, Family or Personal Reasons • Overall satisfaction: 65 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (27 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 78 percent | <p>Science and Engineering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 358 total responses. Departments of Transportation, Ecology and Natural Resources had 81 percent of the responses. 18 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Skill or Career Development, Compensation/Pay, Family or Personal Reasons • Overall satisfaction: 62 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (28 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 78 percent |
| <p>Regulatory Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 298 total responses. Departments of Ecology, Licensing, Health and Revenue had 53 percent of the responses. 31 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Compensation/Pay, Skill or Career Development, Family or Personal Reasons • Overall satisfaction: 61 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (26 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 79 percent | <p>Information Technology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 225 total responses. Departments of Health, Enterprise Services, Board for Community and Technical Colleges and Department of Ecology had 35 percent of the responses. 41 agencies had responses. • Top reasons for leaving: Skill or Career Development, Compensation/Pay, Anticipated Promotional Opportunities • Overall satisfaction: 61 percent • Least satisfied with: Training/Development Opportunities (35 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 67 percent |
| <p>Health Care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 183 total responses. Department of Health, State Health Care Authority, Department of Corrections, and Department of Veterans Affairs had 91 percent of the responses. 15 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Compensation/Pay, Family or Personal Reasons, Skill or Career Development • Overall satisfaction: 58 percent • Least satisfied with: Work Environment (42 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 69 percent | <p>Protective Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 121 total responses. Departments of Corrections, Military and WA State Patrol had 80 percent of the responses. 16 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Compensation/Pay, Family or Personal Reasons, Skill or Career Development • Overall satisfaction: 50 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (28 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 66 percent |

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| <p>Social Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 101 total responses. Department of Corrections, Health Care Authority and Military had 47 percent of the responses. 18 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Compensation/Pay, Family or Personal Reasons, Skill or Career Development • Overall satisfaction: 62 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (34 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 74 percent | <p>Maintenance Trades and Labor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 192 total responses. Department of Transportation had 66 percent of the responses. 19 agencies had responses. • Top reason for leaving: Compensation/Pay, Family or Personal Reasons • Overall satisfaction: 59 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (15 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 83 percent |
| <p>Information Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 102 total responses. Departments of Licensing, Health and Revenue had 31 percent of the responses. 34 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Skill or Career Development, Compensation/Pay, Anticipated Promotional Opportunities • Overall satisfaction: 61 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (38 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 70 percent | <p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82 total responses. Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Board for Community and Technical Colleges, School for the Blind and Military had 54 percent of the responses. 28 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Skill or Career Development, Compensation/Pay, Family or Personal Reasons • Overall satisfaction: 61 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (30 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 72 percent |
| <p>Retail Operations and Marketing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 total responses. Department of Commerce, WA State Lottery, and the Department of Health had 64 percent of the responses. 13 agencies had responses. • Top 3 reasons for leaving: Skill or Career Development, Compensation/Pay, Family or Personal Reasons • Overall satisfaction: 61 percent • Least satisfied with: Pay (32 percent were satisfied) • Percent expecting an increase in pay: 92 percent | |

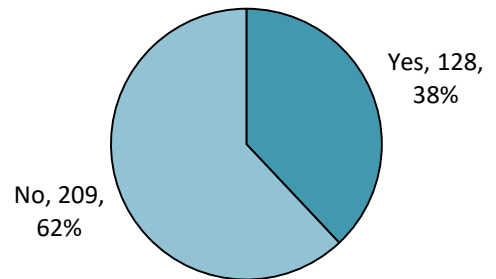
Appendix B: Respondent demographics (fiscal year 2018)



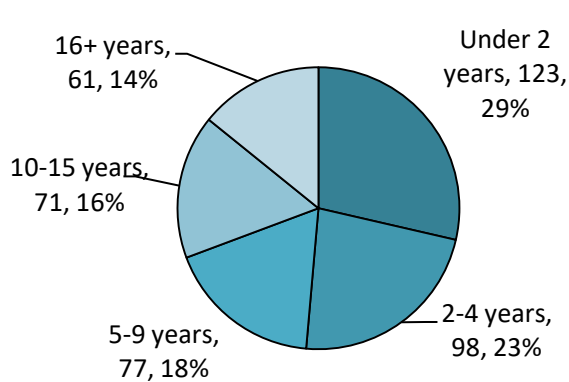
Q11: Job category



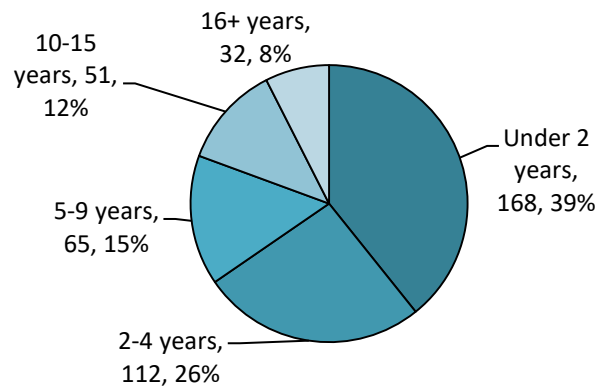
Q19: Were you actively recruited for your new position?



Q20: Worked for the state

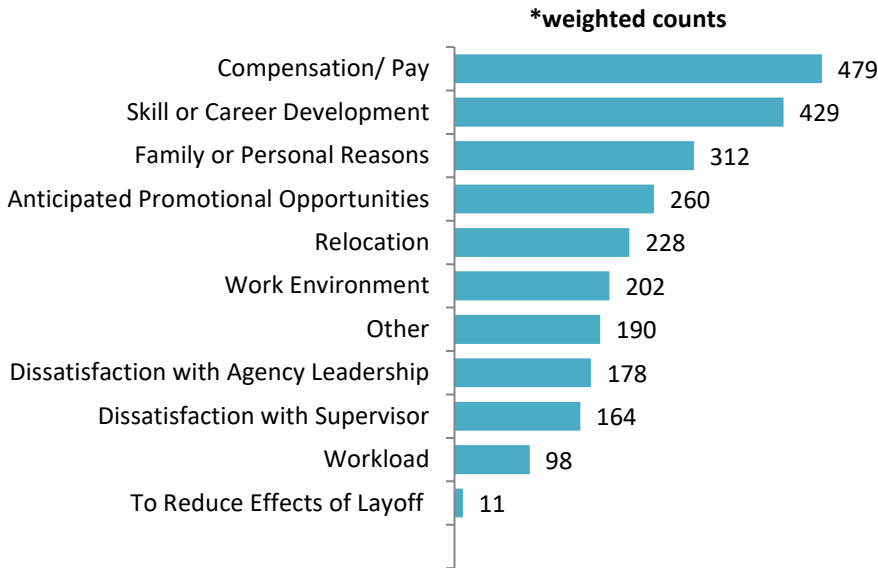


Q21: Worked for this agency



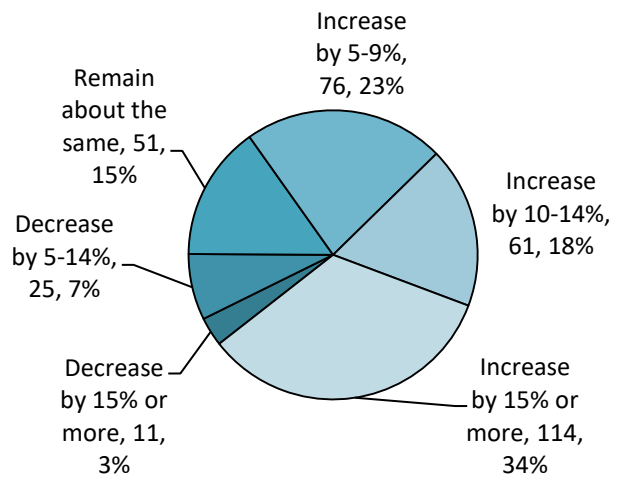
Appendix C: Feedback and future plans (fiscal year 2018)

Q13: Reasons for leaving



* responses weighted by priority (first reason = x3, second =x2, third = x1)

Q18: Change in income



Percent who indicated they were satisfied (4 or 5)

Q25: Satisfaction

