



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of Inspector General

U.S. Department of Agriculture Staffing Levels

December 17, 2025

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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.

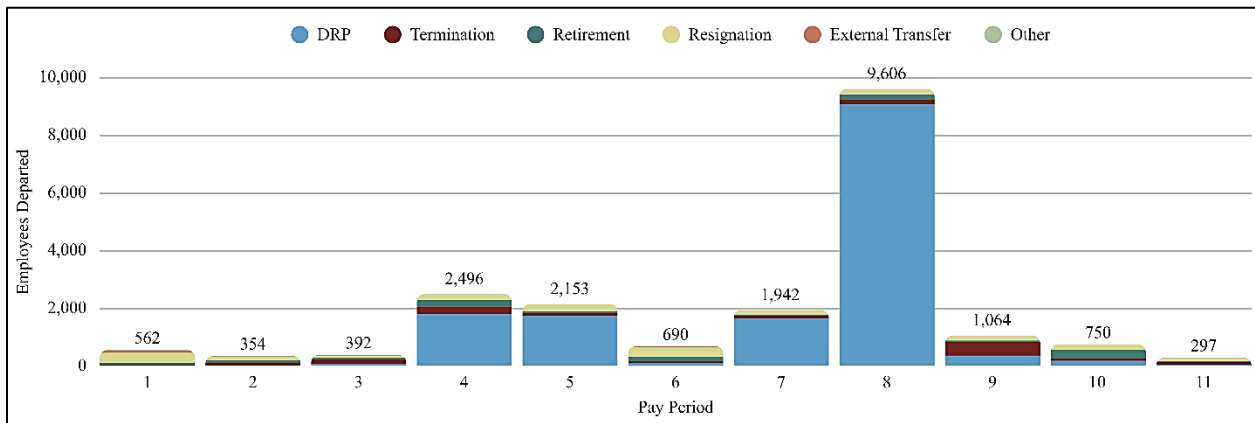


Figure 1. Attrition categories during each pay period. Figure by OIG.

- 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

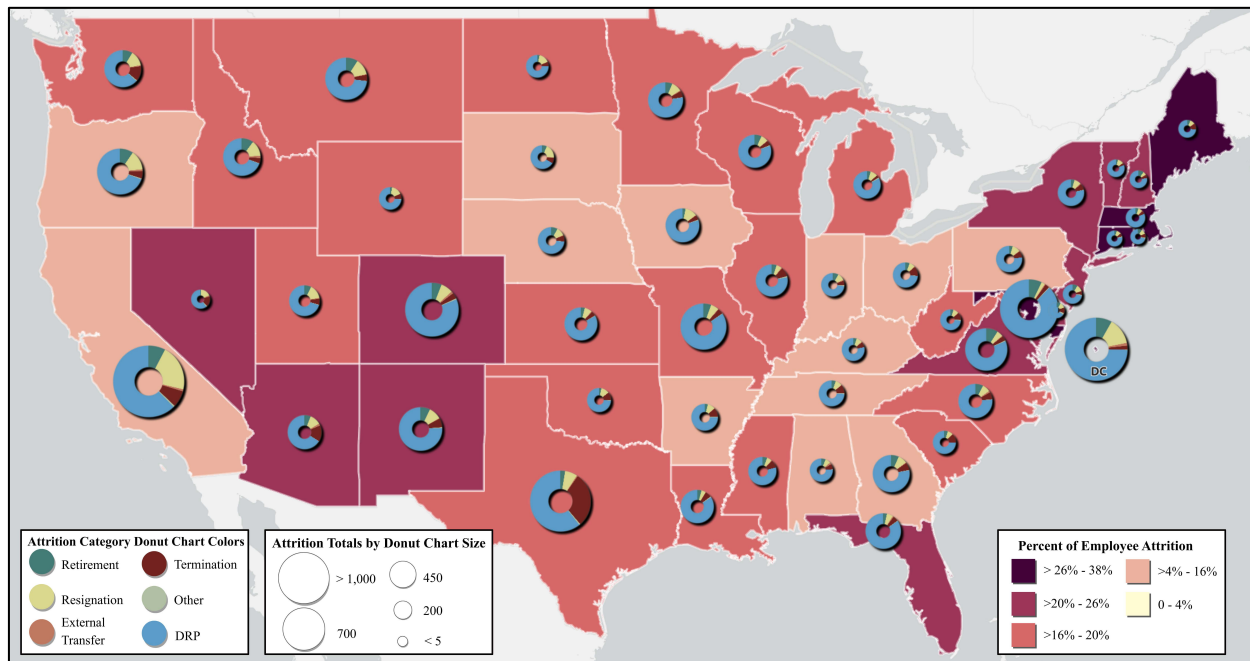


Figure 2. A map showing attrition by state in three variables; 1) total attrition: size of circles, 2) attrition by type: colors in donut charts, and 3) percent employee loss: color of state. Figure by OIG.

- 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-Us), 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%

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