

Personnel & Benefits 2025 Annual Report

Part One – Executive Brief

Key Accomplishments and Successes from 2025

- Administered 39 civil service examinations with 106 candidates, plus 61 Qualified Incumbent Examinations and 36 eligible lists certified to departments.
- Achieved an exceptional provisional rate of 3.9%, a 4.1% improvement from the previous year.
- Expanded participation in the Civil Service HELP Program, securing approval for 27 additional titles, bringing the total to 77 titles.
- Managed Workers' Compensation for the County, Towns, and Villages, overseeing a \$1 million program and processing 43 injuries.
- Coordinated and maintained a wide range of civil service job postings, new hire orientations, and benefits consultations for active employees and 300 retirees.
- Completed 5 desk audits, created 15 new titles, and supported reclassification requests.
- Delivered multiple Institute for Advancement (I4A) trainings and coordinated Employee Recognition & Appreciation Week.
- Successfully held the annual Employee Recognition Ceremony, honoring 48 long-serving employees.

Major Challenges or Constraints in 2025

- Continued workforce shortages across nearly all titles, consistent with statewide trends.
- Carried an average of 37 full-time vacancies, slightly higher than the previous year.
- Experienced 11 retirements, 85 resignations, and 40 removals, increasing staffing needs and onboarding demands.
- Faced complex labor negotiations with two unions, both of which reached the end of their contract terms in 2025.
- Filed a Declaration of Impasse with NYS PERB for the National Correctional Employee Union negotiations.

Ongoing Priorities and Goals for 2026

- Focus on timely job postings and efficient examination administration to decrease vacancies and sustain low provisional levels.
- Advocate for further expansion of the HELP Program to additional titles.
- Strengthen labor relations efforts and work toward resolution of ongoing contract negotiations.
- Enhance training and development opportunities through I4A.
- Improve retention strategies, particularly in high-turnover titles.
- Maintain strong administration of Workers' Compensation, benefits, and civil service oversight for all County and municipal entities.

Part Two – Narrative Departmental Report

The Personnel Department's daily operations center on civil service administration, fringe benefits management, and labor relations support for Tioga County and its municipal partners. In 2025, the department dedicated substantial time to managing vacancy postings, examination administration, employee benefits consultations, Workers' Compensation oversight, employee relations, contract negotiations, and new employee orientations. The office also managed reclassification requests, conducted five desk audits, and created fifteen new titles to meet evolving workforce needs.

Managed civil service administration for all County departments, nine towns, six villages, five school districts, and three special districts, the department oversees a total of 1,583 classified civil service positions, an increase of sixteen from 2024. This includes positions ranging from school support staff to municipal operators, EMTs, and specialized district employees.

Civil service activity remained high throughout the year. The department administered 39 examinations, processed 61 Qualified Incumbent Examinations, and certified 36 eligible lists. Participation in the Hiring for Emergency Limited Placement (HELP) Program expanded significantly, with approval for 27 additional titles, bringing the total to 77. This program continues to play a critical role in addressing statewide workforce shortages by reducing barriers to permanent employment.

The Personnel Department also administers the Tioga County Self-Insured Workers' Compensation Plan, which includes all towns and villages. The program operated with a \$1

million budget in 2025, and the department processed 43 injuries across participating municipalities.

Labor relations were a major focus. Negotiations with the National Correctional Employee Union and the Tioga County Law Enforcement Association began in spring 2025 as both contracts approached expiration. The County filed a Declaration of Impasse with NYS PERB for the Correctional Employee Union negotiations in December. Discussions with both unions continued through the end of the year.

Staffing trends reflected ongoing challenges. The County experienced 11 retirements, 85 resignations, and 40 removals, contributing to an average of 37 full-time vacancies at any given time. Staffing positions remained difficult across nearly all job titles, mirroring statewide labor shortages. Despite these challenges, the department maintained a strong provisional rate of 3.9%, a notable improvement from the previous year.

Training and employee engagement remained priorities. Although the Institute for Advancement (I4A) had an off year, it still offered several courses, including Real Leadership, Public Speaking 101, Financial Fundamentals, Alignment Attitude & Communication, and Advanced Coaching Skills. The department also collaborated with the Employee Recognition Program to host Employee Recognition & Appreciation Week in September, featuring pin ceremonies and employee appreciation events. This year's honorees included: 19 employees with 5 years of service, 13 with 10 years, 3 with 15 years, 6 with 20 years, 5 with 25 years, 1 with 30 years, and 1 with 35 years of service. The annual recognition luncheon honored long-serving employees, including individuals with 25, 30, and 35 years of service.

Overall, 2025 was a year of high activity, continued workforce challenges, and meaningful progress in civil service administration, employee support, and organizational development. The department remains committed to improving vacancy posting processes, enhancing employee programs, and supporting all County and municipal partners in 2026.