

**2003 NASPE Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Awards
Program Nomination
Innovative State Human Resource Management Program**

Program Title: Intergovernmental Transfer Program

State: New Jersey

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PROGRAM SUMMARY

Under the New Jersey Merit System, the **Intergovernmental Transfer Program** (“ITP”) provides the opportunity for New Jersey State and local government employees with permanent civil service status to transfer between State and local employment jurisdictions while maintaining their permanent status. This program promotes more efficient public service by allowing Merit System (civil service) jurisdictions to share talented and experienced individuals with other governmental sectors. Prior to this program employees with permanent civil service status desiring to work for another jurisdiction, whether for personal or professional reasons, could not transfer without a loss of permanent status. Currently, all parties involved in the transfer (the transferring employee, the sending jurisdiction, the receiving jurisdiction, and the Department of Personnel) must agree to the transfer for it to be completed. Conditions to such transfers are:

- The transferee must be a permanent employee transferring from one Merit System jurisdiction to another and into the same or a substantially similar title
- All parties to the transfer must sign a written agreement stating the terms of transfer, and the Department of Personnel must approve the transfer action
- Transferees with permanent status may retain seniority and usually are not subject to a working test period.
- If the transferee’s current title is not an exact match to the job title at the receiving agency, the Department of Personnel determines the relevance of the employee’s experience to the new title.
- Accrued sick time is transferable, but vacation and administrative leave are not. Supplemental Compensation on Retirement (SCOR) for sick leave depends on whether the receiving agency offers this option.
- Existing open competitive and promotional lists are not a barrier to transferring employees, but Special Reemployment Lists (lists of employees who have been laid off or demoted in lieu of layoff), unique to appointing authorities, must take priority over transfers.
- Local residency requirements may be waived by the receiving agency, but police and firefighters must be residents of New Jersey.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

1. How long has the program been operational?

The Intergovernmental Transfer Program (ITP) has been operational as a pilot since September 1999. The pilot ended in August 2000, and the Program was formally established in November 2000.

2. Why was this program created?

The ITP Program was created to address the need for flexibility within the Merit System and to improve rapid recruitment and hiring. Appointing authorities can hire experienced workers quickly, without the cost and time involved in recruitment, testing, and training. Under ITP, employers can advertise vacancies to the government population or hire someone they already know. This is an attractive and useful feature for appointing authorities, since the alternative is a lengthy process of posting, qualifying, testing, and list issuance before an employee can be interviewed and hired.

3. Why is this program a new and creative method?

The ITP Program is new and creative because such transfer actions across governmental lines were never possible without negative consequences to employees. Further, the Program expedites the recruitment and hiring of qualified employees through active employer participation. When employers post their vacancies on the ITP web site, resumes are sent directly to them for review and selection of candidates, instead of the Department of Personnel. Agencies choose the candidates instead of receiving a list of eligibles in rank order from an open competitive process. Experienced employees already have "Civil Service" permanent status and are hired without working test periods or examinations. This saves time and money for appointing authorities and the State,

since resources are not needed to test and certify eligibles. For trained workers seeking a better position, many more job opportunities become available statewide. Overall, ITP offers greater flexibility to both employers and employees in managing their staff needs and professional careers, respectively. In a time of economic hardship, when governments are asked to do more with less, exchanging trained human resources makes good economic sense.

4. What were the program’s start up costs?

The Intergovernmental Transfer Pilot Program was created as an enhancement to existing services; therefore, the Department of Personnel used existing resources of staffing, furniture, and spacing. However, during the first year as the program developed and received notoriety, new technologies were sought and added to enhance services. The operating costs for the initial year, were:

<u>Administrative Costs</u>	<u>\$55,200.75</u>	<u>Staffing Costs</u>	<u>\$289,628.25</u>
Printing/Office Supplies	\$ 6,530.00	Administrative	\$147,596.75
Travel	\$ 2,449.00	Support Staff	\$142,031.50
Other Services	\$ 3,265.00		
Equipment/Maintenance	\$ 1,632.00		
Data Processing Equipment			
Software and Website			
Development	\$42,324.00		

5. What are the program’s operational costs?

The operational costs of the ITP are:

<u>Administrative Costs</u>	<u>\$38,131.75</u>	<u>Staffing Costs</u>	<u>\$265,669.25</u>
Printing/Office Supplies	\$10,105.75	Administrative	\$ 53,596.75
Travel	\$ 4,897.00	Support Staff	\$212,072.50
Other Services	\$ 2,529.00		
Equipment and Maintenance	\$ 3,264.00		
Data Processing/External	\$17,336.00		

6. How is this program funded?

This program is funded through the Department's general appropriation. In addition, the Department receives a \$306,000 WorkFirst New Jersey Grant from the New Jersey Department of Labor. This grant is used to fund the resources necessary to providing appropriate services to clients experiencing downsizing. A portion of this grant is provided to the Office of Intergovernmental Services to provide assistance to "at risk" employees.

7. Did this program originate in your state?

The Intergovernmental Transfer Program is an original and innovative service for the State of New Jersey. Prior to the creation of ITP, transfer actions resulted in either the "loan" of individual employees to other agencies or a break in service with loss of seniority and benefits for those who transferred.

8. Are you aware of similar programs in other states?

A survey of 43 states, prior to setting up the Intergovernmental Transfer Pilot Program, indicated that such a program was not available elsewhere.

9. How do you measure the success of this program?

Since the creation of the ITP 78 jurisdictions have received assistance with their recruitment and redeployment efforts. The transfers of **421** employees has saved the State of New Jersey thousands of dollars in training, recruitment, and possible unemployment benefits. The program has enabled 258 law enforcement officers to transfer between 58 of these authorities. Appointing Authorities have posted **1003 position vacancies** to the program's web site. In addition, an average of 85,000 hits are received on the Web Site per month. Approximately 12,000 individuals actually view the

job vacancies. The success of the ITP Program has also been measured in a formal survey of appointing authorities that have utilized the Program. The response was very favorable and gave critical support to formally establishing our Program.

10. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

Since its inception, the Program has been expanded to allow employees who were laid off to transfer to another job within 90 days of the effective date of the layoff, without loss of seniority. This gives workers a 3-month window of opportunity to remain gainfully employed. Soon, sending agencies will not be able to block a transfer; instead they will be given “notice” of a request to transfer with a time frame to fill the impending vacancy. The Vacancy Posting outreach initiative was developed to assist appointing authorities with an active web-based avenue for seeking career service individuals who are interested in the program. Staff have reached out to assist State and local authorities with posting specific titles, including unclassified titles and to assist in recruitment, as well as assisting individuals seeking positions with other jurisdictions. This outreach developed effective communication between the staff and the appointing authorities in looking at ways position vacancies are marketed to potential candidates. Innovative features will soon be added to the ITP. The Online Resume Summary by Title Book is a related service that will enable all employees to post their titles and most important skills online on our web site. Employers with vacancies will be able to see employees’ titles and can contact experienced workers through the Office of Intergovernmental Services for interview and possible hire. In this way, ITP will be contributing its resources and services to assisting government employees in New Jersey to remain gainfully employed.