



THE Spring 2018
**PUBLIC EMPLOYEE
 2018 LEGISLATIVE
 COMMUNICATOR**

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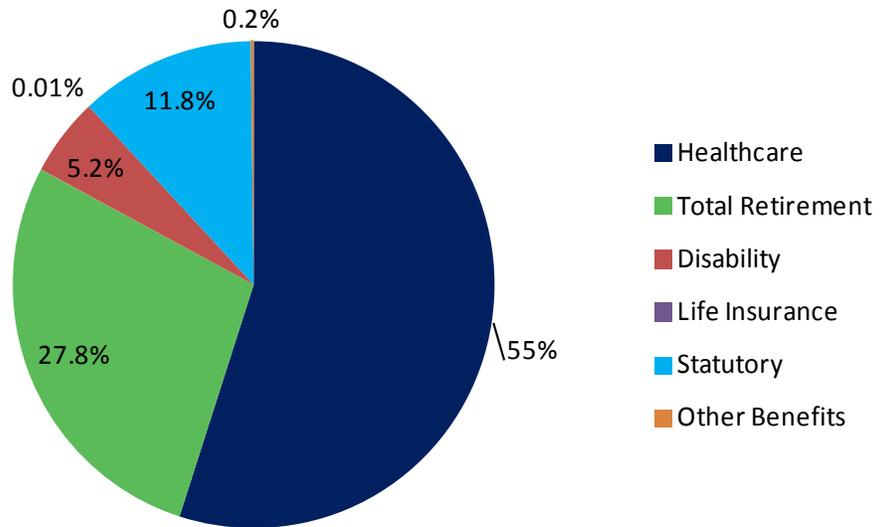
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Legislature funds 2.5% State Employee Salary Increase

The legislature granted Utah’s state and higher education employees a 2.5% general increase for FY2018-2019. This is the largest across-the-board increase since 2008. In addition, the bill funded the health insurance increase (4.1%) and the 401(k) match (up to \$26 per pay period) for FY2019.

UPEA lobbied lawmakers throughout the year to make employee compensation a priority during the legislative session. Governor Gary Herbert recommended funding a 2% salary increase for all state employees when his budget was introduced in December 2017. UPEA saw this as a starting point, and made improving employee compensation a focus throughout the session.

After revenue estimates were released in mid-February, the Executive Appropriations Committee began to construct the final FY2019 budget. When Senate Bill 8, State Agency and Higher Education Compensation

Appropriations, sponsored by Sen. Kevin Van Tassell, was introduced, proposing a 1% pay increase for public employees, UPEA met with House and Senate leadership to educate and inform them of the needs of their state employees. As a result, 1st substitute Senate Bill 8 was introduced, proposing a 2.5% pay increase for public employees. 1st substitute Senate Bill 8 passed both the House and Senate, securing funding for a 2.5% general increase for all state and higher education employees that will go into effect July 1, 2018.

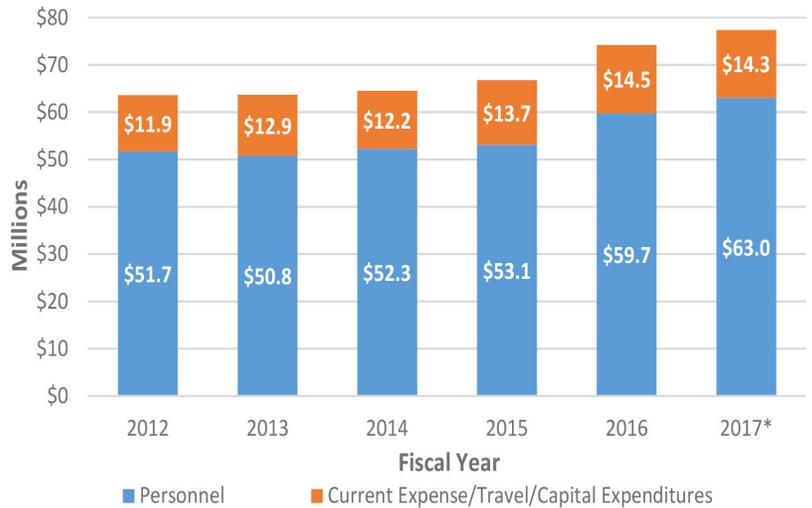
The telephone calls and e-mails sent by state employees to legislators did not go unheard. UPEA encourages state employees to maintain contact with legislators throughout the year to educate them on salary and benefits.

Juvenile Justice Services & Closure of Wasatch Youth Center

Legislative auditors provide independent examinations of agency programs and budgets at the request of the Legislative Audit Committee. On Thursday, January 25, 2018, Brian Dean from the Legislative Auditor’s office presented A Performance Audit of the Division of Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) to the Legislative Audit Committee. The committee referred the audit for further review to the Executive Offices and Criminal Justice Appropriations Subcommittee. The Subcommittee extensively discussed the audit on January 26, January 30, and February 1.

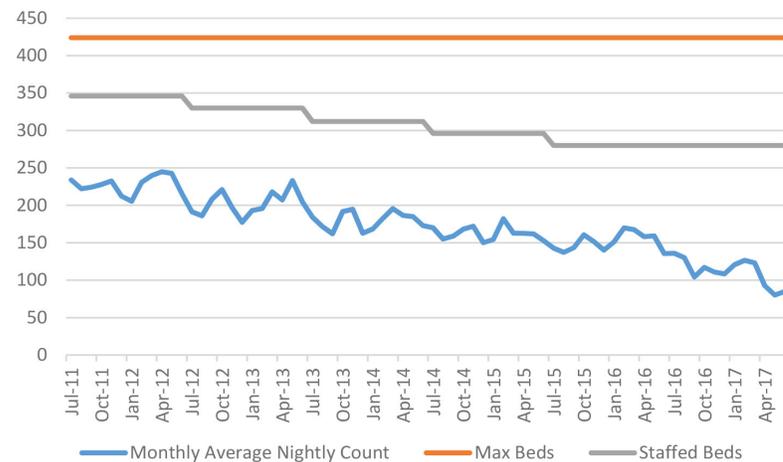
Auditors highlighted that over the last six years, JJS’s operating costs have continued to increase, despite a reduction in the number of juveniles in custody during the same timeframe. The audit read that “From fiscal years 2012 to 2017, the number of juveniles served decreased 35 percent while actual expenditures from 2012 to 2017 increased by three percent.” As a result, operation expenditures went up \$13.8 million.

Department of Human Services Executive Director Ann Silverberg Williamson and JJS Division Director Susan Burke said, “they agree with the auditor’s recommendations to change their business practices and how they calculate their budget.” Legislative fiscal analysts recommended a reduction of 50 JJS FTEs or \$3,750,000 from their FY18 budget. The Committee unanimously supported a motion to reduce \$14 million of the JJS ongoing budget in the Subcommittee’s base budget to continue the discussion of the JJS audit.



At the February 1, 2018, meeting before the Subcommittee, JJS administrators presented their plan to provide legislators accurate information about their programs and their assurance to improve communications with private providers.

During the Executive Offices and Criminal Justice Appropriations Subcommittee’s final meeting on February 13, 2018, Senator Daniel Thatcher made a motion to restore \$9 million of the \$14 million budget cut, resulting in a \$5 million base budget cut for JJS. The motion passed unanimously and included the recommendation to close the Wasatch Youth Center in Salt Lake County, which is nearly half, or \$2.4 million of the \$5 million reduction.



JJS Division Director Susan Burke told UPEA Field Services Manager Christy Cushing “the Division is currently working with DHRM to create workforce adjustment plans in accordance with Utah State Code 67-19-18(6) and eliminate 41 positions.” The reduction in positions will probably will not be limited to Salt Lake County, but will include Weber, Davis and Utah Counties. JJS is looking at current vacancies within their division to transfer or reassign employees before instituting a RIF (reduction-in-force).

On February 23, 2018, Director Burke emailed JJS staff informing them of a possible \$8,000 retirement incentive for the division’s schedule B employees who retire on or before June 15, 2018. Eligible employees are required to notify Director Burke in writing by March 30, 2018, notifying her of their intent to retire; must currently work in Salt Lake, Utah, Davis or Weber Counties; be eligible to retire under URS rules with or without actuarial reduction; and be in one of the following positions: Program Administrator II, JJS Supervisor, Licensed Clinical Therapist, JJS Counselor III, JJS Counselor II, JJS Tech II, Office Specialist II, Journey Maintenance/Construction Specialist, General Maintenance Worker II. The number of eligible employees who choose the retirement incentive may reduce the number of RIF’d positions.

JIS & Wasatch Youth Center Continued...

UPEA will ensure that the process for conducting a RIF is equitable. If an employee calls UPEA about a RIF, an Employee Relations Representative will gather information about the employee's circumstances and then request a Work Force Adjustment Plan (WFAP) from the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM). The WFAP establishes the agency's criteria for conducting a RIF of employees. UPEA evaluates the WFAP to determine whether an agency is following its own guidelines.

After evaluating the WAP UPEA may help an employee file an appeal of the RIF. An appeal must be filed within twenty (20) working days of an employee receiving written notice of the RIF. The appeal goes directly to the Department Director who is required to hear the appeal in person. If the Director denies the appeal, an employee may then appeal the Director's decision to the Career Service Review Board (CSRB) within twenty (20) working days after the effective RIF date.

Utah Public Employee Salute

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Nominees can be an employee of any city, county,
or state government agency.

Senate Bill 73, Public Employees' Benefit and Insurance Program Amendments

Senate Bill 73, Public Employees' Benefit and Insurance Program Amendments, sponsored by Sen. Hemmert (R), was originally drafted to change the parity between the PEHP Traditional plan and the STAR plan. The original bill would have led to dramatic premium increases for employees who were enrolled in the Traditional plan. UPEA staff met with the sponsor of the bill, representatives from PEHP, and other stakeholders regarding this issue. UPEA Staff lobbied to educate the sponsor on the potential harmful effects to state employees. After many meetings and much deliberation, Senate Bill 73 was substituted and passed by Sen. Fillmore (R) in the Senate Retirement and Independent Entities Committee.

The changes in 1st Substitute SB 73 brought state statute into alignment with current PEHP plan benefit design. Consequently, there is no change to any health plan and the bill has no fiscal impact that will lead to dramatic premium increases for employees who are enrolled in the Traditional plan or the Star plan. The bill will not restrict the ability of state employees to annually choose the plan that best meets their needs.

1st Substitute SB 73 passed both the Senate and House unanimously. The bill is now ready to be signed by Governor Gary Herbert.

H.B. 156 - Family Leave Amendments

HB 156 Family Leave Amendments, sponsored by Rep. Weight (D), was heard in the House Business and Labor Committee. HB 156 allows Executive Branch and Higher Education employees to use 240 hours of paid parental leave based on the birth or adoption of the eligible employee’s child. The leave would run concurrent with the Family Medical Leave Act for employees that have worked for the state for at least 12 months.

Weight explained that “there is a growing trend for businesses to provide parental leave,” and she believes that offering this leave to state employees will keep the state in line with what the private sector is offering their employees. Weight also quoted a statement from a current state employee that said “this bill makes the statement that men and women can be brave in pursuing a family, and not worried about choosing between a job and family.” Utah is known for having a “primary interest in families and children” and this bill would only further that idea.

HB 156 had a fiscal note of \$8,000 of one-time funding for updating the payroll systems. However, Rep. Weight and the fiscal analysts were unsure how much funding would actually be needed for this policy change. Weight stated that “the salaries of these employees are already budgeted, and this bill shouldn’t require any additional revenue.” Rep. Seegmiller (R) stated “that while employee salaries are budgeted, employee replacements are not, therefore this could require more funding than has been allocated.” The state would have to cover that “loss of productivity.” Salt Lake City has already implemented this benefit and reported that 3% of employees are using this leave; yet that number would most likely be higher for State employees.

UPEA testified in support of this bill, stating that “the parental leave benefit would further the concept of work/life balance.” After discussion and several public comments, the bill was held in committee due to fiscal uncertainties.

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UPEA Membership Agreement/Payroll Deduction Authorization					
You may fax to: (801) 264 - 8879 or Mail to: 1000 W Bellwood Ln, Murray, UT 84123					
Last Name		First Name		Preferred E-Mail Address	
Agency Name			Home Mailing Address		
Agency Address			Home City	Home Zip	Home Phone
Agency City	Agency Zip	Employee Work Phone	Recruiter Name	UPEA Office Use Only	
I hereby voluntarily authorize and direct my employer to deduct \$15.00 per month from my paycheck and pay the same to the Utah Public Employees' Association (UPEA) as dues for membership in that organization and agree that said payroll deductions shall continue until I revoke this authorization by giving written notice to UPEA. Authorization for withholding UPEA dues will remain in effect even after retirement unless a member gives written notice to UPEA. Upon retirement this form authorizes the Utah Retirement Systems to deduct \$5.00 per month from my retirement allowance. This payroll deduction authorization shall serve as my application for membership in UPEA and shall designate UPEA as my employee representative for all purposes provided by law.					
X Signature			Date	Voting District	Senate District
For Office Use Only			District Number	County	Jurisdiction Number
				Agency/Low Org. #	Confirmed Date