



DATA REPORT

Facing the Future: Retirements, second careers to reshape state and local governments in the post-Katrina era

**For The Center for State and Local Government Excellence
By Princeton Survey Research Associates International**

March 2008



“There’s an invisible army protecting us and if it failed to do its job for even a day, it would not be safe to breathe or eat.”

Those are the words of Dr. Thomas A. Burke, Professor, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, a national expert who also has been on the front lines as a public health official for the State of New Jersey.

What many people do not realize is that this vital army of public servants is getting older and needs recruits! Some 20 percent of state and local government public health workers are eligible to retire in the next three years; 50 percent will be eligible to retire by 2012.

The other challenge is that it will take time for their replacements to get the training and education required to fill jobs where there are critical shortages: epidemiologists, nurses, environmental health experts, public health physicians, nutritionists, social workers, and health educators.

The Center for State and Local Government Excellence commissioned a public opinion poll to find out if Americans see the looming retirements as a significant problem. They do not. And while Americans may not fully appreciate the challenges associated with building a pipeline of talent for these critically important jobs, two-thirds of them say they might be interested in working for state or local government in the future. That is good news.

The Center seeks to raise awareness among the general public and prospective employees of the opportunities to make a difference to society by working in state and local government. With financial support from the ICMA Retirement Corporation, the Center already has undertaken authoritative research on pressing issues related to financing pensions and retirement plans, retiree health care, and related benefit issues.

Look for more information about the Center’s latest research studies, best practices, and news on the Center’s web site: <http://www.slge.org>.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth K. Kellar".

Elizabeth K. Kellar
Executive Director
Center for State and Local Government Excellence

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FOR THE CENTER FOR STATE AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE
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Executive Summary

State and local governments have faced brutal criticism in recent years for their response to Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, as well as the recent collapse of the I35W interstate highway bridge in Minneapolis. All the while, state and local government employees continued to accomplish the great majority of their duties each day without public commentary.

A surprising number of those workers will be retiring in the next few years, as the Baby Boom generation moves into and beyond retirement age. These retire-

ments threaten the ability of these governments to bear their responsibility, but Americans do not currently see that as a major problem.

- Only one in three (31 percent) see the retirements as a major problem for state governments, and only 24 percent say the same for local government.

One reason for this lack of concern may be that American workers see a great deal of flexibility in the workplace and many see working for state and local governments as a real possibility in the future.

- One in five workers is *very interested* in taking a job at some point with state and local governments. And more than half of all workers are at least *somewhat interested* in such future employment.
- The numbers are even higher when one looks at specific areas, such as public health. Two-thirds of workers (66 percent) are interested in working in a hospital or other public health organization, with 29 percent saying they are *very interested*.

Every day, Americans count on their state and local governments for law enforcement, schools and universities, roads, water and sewer, and public health services. The Center for State and Local Government Excellence commissioned this research to probe Americans' views of state and local government, especially how the public perceives the attractiveness of working for them. State and local governments face increasing duties and challenges, while, at the same time, needing to work to replace the key managers and workers from the Baby Boom generation who will be retiring over the next decade.

The image of state and local governments has taken a beating in America in the early years of the 21st Century, even as the great majority of those governments' work is accomplished each day without fanfare. Governments performed well in responding to the California wildfires in the summer of 2007; it was encouraging, and yet questions remain about how well they would perform in other states or under different

circumstances. The erosion of confidence in government writ large, especially the federal government, has worn away at the public faith in the governments closest to them.

- Americans are divided about whether government at all levels has learned the lessons of Hurricane Rita, with 45 percent to 48 percent saying government is now more prepared, but 41 percent to 43 percent saying there has been no change.
- A plurality of Americans believe that the federal government should be first in line to bear the burden of a major public health emergency, but many say it should be the state governments or the local governments who should be the first line responders.
- Americans are confident that each level of government is prepared to deal with a public health emergency such as the nationwide outbreak of a pandemic flu.
- This despite the fact that the public does not give state and local governments high marks for their current performance in the public health arena.
- Confidence in state and local governments remains at low levels, but still somewhat above confidence in the federal government.
- Americans say it is harder to get a job in state and local governments than it is in private business.

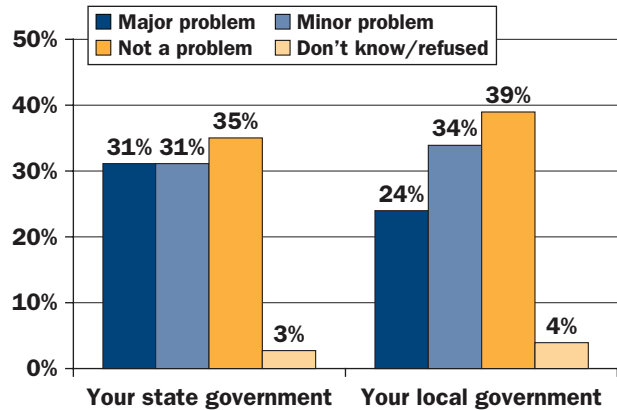
These are among the findings from a new nationwide, representative survey of 1,200 adults age 18 and older in the continental United States, conducted by landline and cellular phone October 24–November 4, 2007, by Princeton Survey Research Associates International. For results based on total sample, the overall margin of sampling error is plus or minus three percentage points. A more detailed description of the survey methodology is included in the Appendix of this report.

Chapter 1: Wave of government retirements a problem?

State and local governments are facing an unprecedented challenge as the Baby Boom generation starts to retire, taking years of knowledge and experience with them.

More than one-third of both state and local government workers are now 50 or older (compared with a little less than a quarter of private sector workers).¹

Chart 1: Retirements a problem?



With the first Baby Boomer applying for Social Security benefits in 2007, the leading edge of this tidal wave of retirements is hitting state and local governments. This impact is felt, in some cases, earlier in state and local government since government pension provisions are often keyed to the number of years of service in ways that is not the case in private business.

At the moment, Americans see this coming wave of retirements as a problem for governments, but they are divided on whether or not this will be a major problem. Just under a third (31 percent) say the retirements will be a major problem for state government and another 31 percent say it will be a minor problem. Thirty-five percent say it will not be a problem at all.

Even fewer see this as a major problem at the local level, with just one in four (24 percent) giving it that level of import. Thirty-four percent say it will be a minor problem at the local level and 39 percent say it will not be a problem at all.

And while only 32 percent of private sector workers are classified as knowledge workers, almost 70 percent of public sector employees fall into this category. This will have a significant impact on the ability of state and local governments to meet the public’s needs in an increasingly complex world.

Interested in a state or local job?

The lack of a public perception that the coming wave of state and local government retirements is a major problem reflects, in part, the growing flexibility that Americans see in their own career paths. Many people have multiple careers during their work lives and fewer and fewer work for the same employer for decades. This new face of work does allow American workers to be asked in a straightforward way if they would consider a job in another field.

In fact, fully 45 percent of American workers now say they have actually looked into the type of job they might do as a second career, an increase in just the past two years.² Fifty-three percent of workers say they have not looked into a second career.

And one surprising finding is that half of American workers now say they would be at least somewhat interested in taking a job in state government (56 percent) or local government (58 percent) at some point in their working lives. And in both cases, about one in five would be *very interested* in working for their state government (18 percent) or their local government (20 percent).

Table 1: Interested in state/local government job at some point?

	Very Interested %	Somewhat Interested %	Not ³ %
Your state government	18	38	43
Your local government	20	38	42
Specific Types of Jobs			
A program that helps poor, elderly or other people in need	42	45	12
A youth program outside the schools	30	43	26
A hospital or other public health organization	29	37	33
A local public school system	27	35	37
A government organization working on environment	25	41	33
A police department or other law enforcement agency	16	23	60

Another way to probe what kinds of jobs Americans might be interested in is to focus on the content or nature of the work, as opposed to strictly on the level of government involved. At the top of the list of the types of jobs that American workers might be interested in are those that help people in need—whether that is the poor, the elderly or others—where 42 percent say they would be very interested. Working with children is also an attractive next career for many workers: 30 percent say they would be very interested in working in a youth program outside the schools and 27 percent

say they would be very interested in working inside the local public school system.

Continuing a theme that runs through much of this research, about one-third of the workers (29 percent) say they would be very interested in working in a hospital or other public health organization.

One in four (25 percent) say they would very interested in working in an environmental agency in the government and one in six (16 percent) say they would be very interested in working in law enforcement.

Government jobs attractive to qualified workers

Another path taken in this survey to gauge public views of government jobs was to ask whether specific jobs in state and local governments would be attractive to qualified people. This approach removes the aspect of whether the respondent would be interested personally in a job and turns the perspective to whether such jobs would simply be attractive.

The answer is that they are attractive. More than one-third of Americans (36 percent in each case) say talented, qualified people would find jobs as a medical professional in either state or local government *very attractive*. About one in four say qualified people would find jobs as managers in state government (24 percent) and local government (25 percent) very attractive. And roughly the same can be said for jobs as financial professionals in state government (23 percent very attractive) and local government (28 percent very attractive).

The perception that jobs in public health would be attractive is an important one, for that is an area where a quiet talent crisis is building in state and local governments.

Over the next five years it is possible that as many as 45 percent of public health workers could retire. Critical vacancies today could put our country at risk if there were a terrorist event or new infectious disease. According to a 2003 survey⁴ by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, some states have vacancy rates of up to 20 percent in key public health positions, and turnover rates are as high as 14 percent in some parts of the country. Careers that face shortages include epidemiologists, public health nurses, and experts in environmental health and laboratory science.

According to ASTHO, more than 50 percent of the states lack enough qualified public health applicants. Many states have implemented new strategies, such as increasing access to advanced education, to attract the talent they need, but the U.S. General Accounting Office reports that barriers, including noncompetitive

salaries, remain to recruiting and retaining professionals for key jobs, such as epidemiologists.⁵

In the case of a public health crisis, shortages in these jobs could be critical.

Chapter 2: Public health emergencies after Katrina

One of the most daunting tasks for government at any level is a public health emergency, a situation where many of its citizens need help . . . all at the same time. While the United States has not faced such a national challenge in recent years, the outbreaks of SARS in Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, and elsewhere in 2003 and 2004 and the repeated outbreaks of avian flu since 2003 have posed threats in other countries. Scientists and public health experts are deeply worried that the United States (and the world) might face a pandemic flu in the future that could cause a public health emergency.

The last such outbreak in the United States, the so-called Spanish flu of 1918–1919, killed more than 675,000 while an estimated 50,000,000 died around the world.⁶ The federal government has made a push in the past few years to improve the federal level of preparedness, as well as to work with state and local governments to improve their levels of preparedness.

In the event of a public health emergency, such as a pandemic flu, Americans are divided about which level of government should take the lead, with a small plurality saying the federal government should do so. Just over a third of the public (36 percent) say the federal government should take the lead in the event of an emergency such as a pandemic flu. But about one-quarter (25 percent) say the state governments should take the lead and another 25 percent say local governments should take the lead.

Is government prepared for a pandemic flu?

It may be a little surprising, given the overall low levels of confidence in government, but the public is pretty confident that all levels of government are ready to take on a public health emergency. Those who named a level of government as the most responsible for helping people deal with a public health emergency were then asked how they thought that level of government would do in handling the task:

- About two-thirds of those looking to the federal government (65 percent) say the feds are very

prepared or somewhat prepared for such an emergency.

- More than seven in ten of those who look to the state government (73 percent) say the state governments are prepared.
- Likewise more than seven in ten of those who mentioned the local governments (71 percent) say they are prepared.

Table 2: How prepared is government for public health emergency?

	Federal Government %	State Government %	Local Government %
Very prepared	10	11	14
Somewhat prepared	55	62	57
Not too prepared	19	17	18
Not at all prepared	15	7	8
Don't know / Refused	1	3	2
<i>Number who say that level of govt. has responsibility</i>	n=420	n=308	n=308

There are not a great number of differences by demographic groups in these perceptions. For example, African-Americans and young people are more likely to say the federal government should be responsible, but there are no similar differences in terms of views of preparedness.

Confidence in government on public health

Public health issues cover a broad range of responsibilities for state and local governments, from school vaccinations to sexually transmitted diseases to public hospitals. And, of course, the exact role and function varies from state to state and locale to locale.

With such a broad spectrum of duties, perhaps it is not surprising that both state and local governments receive negative marks for how they are handling such matters. Only 36 percent give excellent or good marks to state governments in the public health area, while fully 62 percent give only fair or poor ratings.

The pattern is similar for local governments, with 37 percent of the public giving this level of government positive marks for public health issues. More than half (58 percent) give local governments poor marks.

Overall Confidence in Governments

The past four decades in America have seen the erosion of public confidence in the nation’s government at all levels, as well as in many other institutions. The events of the past few years, from Hurricane Katrina to the collapse of the I35W bridge in Minneapolis, have helped to prevent any reversal of the slide of confidence that has bedeviled the country.

Today, only one in five Americans (20 percent) express a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the federal government. More than three in four (77 percent) say they have only some or very little confidence in the topmost layer of government.

State and local governments do fare better, but not by huge margins. More than a third of the public (35 percent) express high levels of confidence in the local government, while 62 percent have lower levels of confidence. Twenty-seven percent of the public express high levels of confidence in their own state governments, while 72 percent say they have some or very little confidence.

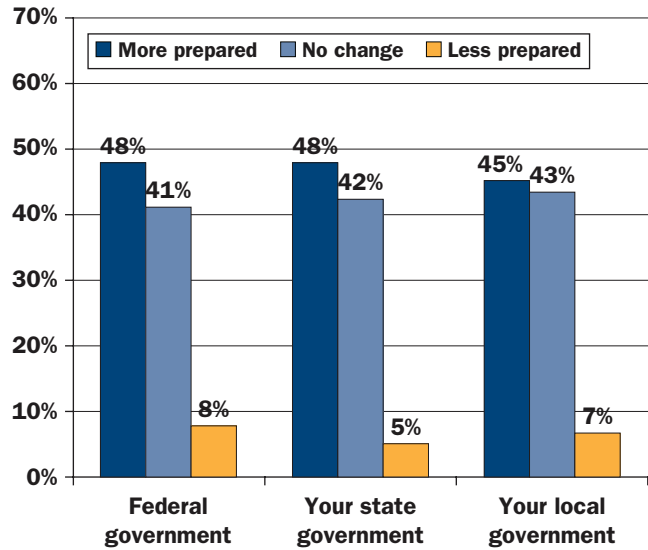
These numbers, while not encouraging, do not fill in the entire picture. With more specific questions about the performance of state and local governments, one does find the public giving each level of government better marks. For example, the public is almost exactly divided on how well their local governments are doing in taking care of their local roads and water and sewer services. Forty-nine percent give local governments good or excellent marks, and 50 percent give them only fair or poor ratings.

Turning to state governments, 46 percent of the public give their state government good or excellent marks for taking care of bridges and highways, a better finding than the overall confidence numbers. While 51 percent give state governments negative marks in this arena, one might be surprised the figures are not more negative after such an widely covered disaster as the I35W bridge collapse.

More prepared for future emergencies after Katrina?

While governments’ response to Hurricanes Katrina in New Orleans and Rita in Florida burned images of failure and chaos into the American psyche, leaders at all levels have pledged to do better and to learn from the horrible experiences of those disasters. At least some Americans think governments have learned their lesson from the hurricanes.

Chart 2: Governments More Prepared After Katrina?



About half of all adults say each level of government is now better prepared for an emergency: 48 percent for the federal government, 48 percent for state governments and 45 percent for local governments. But the glass is truly half-full: more than 40 percent of adults say there has been no change in the level of government preparedness to deal with emergencies.

Chapter 3: Harder to get that government job

Many Americans say they may be interested in working for state or local governments, but that does not mean they think it would be easy to find and be hired for such a job. Bureaucracies develop a reputation, justified or not, for being slow and difficult to deal with in many ways. State and local governments’ hiring processes are often seen in that light. But the public’s view is, once again, more nuanced and multifaceted than a simple sentence can convey.

In broad strokes, it is true that the public does see government jobs as harder to get. Fifty-seven percent say state government jobs are harder to get than those in private business, while 23 percent say there is no difference. Twelve percent say it is easier to get a job in state government.

Likewise, 52 percent of the public says it is harder to get a job in local government than in private business; 26 percent say there is no difference; and 16 percent say local government is easier.

But there are aspects of the hiring process that get greater or lesser criticism from the public.

Hard to find out about government jobs

First, Americans do think it is harder to find out which jobs are available in government when compared with private business. A majority of the public (56 percent) says it is hard to find out about job openings in state government and nearly as many say the same about local government (50 percent). Thirty-five percent say it is easy to find out about jobs in state government and 41 percent say that about local government.

The reverse is true about private business: A majority, 51 percent, say it is easy to find out about jobs in private business and only 38 percent say it is hard.

Too complicated to apply for state job, but not local

One specific criticism of government hiring practices is that it is simply too complicated a process to go through. From the public's perspective, that is not quite the case.

For state government jobs, 51 percent say it is too complicated to apply for such positions, but 42 percent say it is no more complicated than applying for a job in private enterprise.

For local governments, the public is split: 43 percent say it is too complicated to apply for a local government job, but 45 percent say it is no different from private practices.

Too many qualifications for jobs is not necessarily the case

And one criticism is more likely to be rejected by the public. A majority of the public (50 percent) say that local government does not put too many qualifications on job positions, whether that be education degrees, job experience, or other limitations. Only 37 percent say local government applies too many qualifications.

For state government, the picture is mixed: 45 percent say they have too many qualifications for jobs and 43 percent say state governments do not.

By way of comparison, 63 percent say they think private business does not put too many qualifications on its job openings, while 31 percent say it does.

APPENDICES

**Facing the Future 2007:
Final Topline**

**FOR THE CENTER FOR STATE AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE
BY PRINCETON SURVEY RESEARCH
ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL**

(November 19, 2007)

N=1,202 adults 18 and older, including 202 cell phone users

Field period: October 24, 2007–November 4, 2007

Margin of Error: plus or minus 3 percentage points for results based on Total [n=1,202]

Margin of Error: plus or minus 4 percentage points for results based on those who are employed [n=680]

Margin of Error: plus or minus 4 percentage points for results based on registered voters [n=998]

Margin of Error: plus or minus 5 percentage points for results based on Form 1 [n=591]

Margin of Error: plus or minus 5 percentage points for results based on Form 2 [n=611]

Job: #27065

Notes: Because percentages are rounded, they may not total 100%. An asterisk (*) indicates less than 1%.

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling for Princeton Survey Research. We're conducting a survey about some important issues today, and would like to include your household. We are not selling anything. May I please speak with the YOUNGEST MALE, age 18 or older, who is now at home? (IF NO MALE, ASK: May I please speak with the YOUNGEST FEMALE, age 18 or older, who is now at home?)

Q1 Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in your community today?

%	
68	Satisfied
27	Dissatisfied
5	Don't know/refused

Q2 I am going to read you a list of institutions in America, and I'd like you to tell me how much confidence you have in each one—a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little confidence. [First/Next] How much confidence do you have in [INSERT ITEM. ROTATE]—a great deal of confidence, quite a lot, some or very little confidence?

	A great deal %	Quite a lot %	Some %	Very little %	Don't know/refused %
a. Large corporations	9	12	39	36	4
b. Small businesses	26	30	34	7	3
c. The federal government	8	12	36	41	3
d. Your state government	9	18	43	29	2
e. Your local government	13	22	39	23	4
f. Non-profit organizations such as the Y-M-C-A	30	28	26	8	7

Q3 Now I would like to know how your state and local governments are doing in several areas. [First/Next] what kind of a job do you think [INSERT ITEMS. ROTATE in pairs a-b and c-d]—excellent, good, only fair or poor?

	Excellent %	Good %	Only fair %	Poor %	Don't know/refused %
a. Your State Government is doing taking care of bridges and highways	8	38	34	17	2
b. Your Local Government is doing taking care of local roads and water and sewer services	9	40	33	17	2
c. Your State Government is doing in dealing with public health issues	4	32	40	22	3
d. Your Local Government is doing in dealing with public health issues	5	32	35	23	5

Q4 Now I'd like to ask how some recent events may have affected your views of state and local governments. In view of the lessons learned from the response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, do

you think [INSERT ITEM] is now more prepared to provide help in emergencies, less prepared or don't you think there has been any change? (Next, in view of the lessons learned from the response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, do you think [INSERT ITEM] is now more prepared to provide help in emergencies, less prepared or don't you think there has been any change?)

	More prepared %	No change %	Less prepared %	Don't know/ refused %
a. The federal government	48	41	8	3
b. Your state government	48	42	5	5
c. Your local government	45	43	7	5

Q5a In the past, the nation has faced public health emergencies, where many people are sick and need medical care at the same time, such as the anthrax attacks in 2001. Should a public health emergency, such as a pandemic flu (PAN-dim-ick floo), occur, which level of government—federal . . . state . . . or local—do you think is most responsible for helping people deal with the emergency?

%	
36	Federal government
25	State government
25	Local government
9	A combination (VOL)
5	Don't know/refused

Q5b How prepared do you think the [INSERT ITEM CHOSEN IN Q5a] is to handle a public health emergency—very prepared, somewhat prepared, not too prepared, or not at all prepared?

Based on those who named a level of government most responsible

	Federal Government %	State Government %	Local government %
Very prepared	10	11	14
Somewhat prepared	55	62	57
Not too prepared	19	17	18
Not at all prepared	15	7	8
Don't know/refused	1	3	2
	[n=420]	[n=308]	[n=308]

Q6 Are you now employed full-time, part-time, retired, or are you not employed for pay?

%	
50	Employed full-time
10	Employed part-time
23	Retired
13	Not employed for pay
2	Disabled (VOL)
1	Student (VOL)
1	Other (VOL)
*	Refused

Q7 Are you employed by a private business, a non-profit organization, the federal government, the state government or the local government?

Based on those who are employed [N=680]

%	
65	Private business
9	Non-profit
5	Federal government
10	State government
7	Local government
5	Refused

Q8 Can you please tell me what kind of work you do? (PRECODED OPEN-END)

Based on those who are employed [N=680]

%	
27	Professional (e.g. lawyer, doctor, teacher, nurse, accountant)
16	Skilled trades (e.g. electrician, plumber, carpenter)
13	Service work (e.g. waiter/waitress, hairstylist, police or fireman, janitor, nurses' aide)
12	Manager, executive, or official (e.g. store manager, business executive)
12	Clerical/office/sales (e.g. secretary, receptionist, sales clerk)
9	Semi-skilled (e.g. assembly line worker, truck driver, bus driver)
3	Business owner
5	Other
4	Don't know/refused

Q9 Now, I'd like to ask what you think is important in a job. Whether or not you are employed, we would like to know what you think. When you think about a job, how important is... [INSERT ITEM. ASK a-c first. THEN ROTATE.]—very important, somewhat important, not too important or not important at all?

	Very %	Somewhat %	Not too %	Not at all %	Don't know/refused %
a. How much one is paid, the total compensation	65	31	2	*	1
b. The health insurance plan	84	12	2	1	1
c. The retirement or pension plan	76	19	2	1	1
d. The amount of vacation time	46	43	8	3	1
e. A flexible, family-friendly workplace	71	22	3	2	2
f. Having job security	82	14	2	1	1
g. Having the potential for promotions	66	29	4	1	1
h. Working with talented managers	68	25	4	1	2
i. Being in an environment with clear policies and procedures	82	15	1	1	1
j. Being creative and intellectually stimulated	66	29	3	1	2
k. Having independence and personal autonomy	57	34	3	1	4
l. Getting quick decisions on issues at work	69	26	3	1	2
m. Working with others from a diverse set of backgrounds	50	32	9	6	2
n. Having a reasonable commute to work	63	30	3	2	2
o. Making a contribution to society	64	31	3	2	1

Q10 Whether or not you are currently thinking about changing jobs, how interested would you be in taking a paying job with the following organizations at some time in your life? [First, how about/Next, how about] (INSERT ITEMS. ROTATE. Always ASK g-h LAST)? Would you be very interested, somewhat interested, not too interested, or not at all interested (in taking a job with this type of organization)?

Based on those who are employed [N=680]

	Very %	Somewhat %	Not too %	Not at all %	Don't know/refused %
a. A police department or other law enforcement agency	16	23	20	40	1
b. A local public school system	27	35	15	22	1
c. A youth program outside the schools	30	43	12	14	*
d. A program that helps the poor, the elderly or other people in need	42	45	7	5	1
e. A hospital or other Public Health organization	29	37	15	18	1
f. A government organization that works on environmental issues	25	41	14	19	*
g. Your state government	18	38	16	27	1
h. Your local government	20	38	16	26	1

Q11 Now I would like to ask you about some specific jobs and whether they are attractive to talented, qualified people. First, would you say talented, qualified people would find a job as... [INSERT ITEMS. ROTATE as pairs a-b, c-d. Always ASK g-h LAST]... very attractive, somewhat attractive, not too attractive or not attractive at all? (Next,) what about a job as [INSERT ITEM]... would talented, qualified people find that very attractive, somewhat attractive, not too attractive or not attractive at all?

	Very %	Somewhat %	Not too %	Not at all %	Don't know/refused %
a. A manager in LOCAL government	24	52	11	8	4
b. A manager in STATE government	25	52	11	8	5
c. A financial professional in LOCAL government	23	49	14	8	6
d. A financial professional in STATE government	28	48	10	7	6
e. A medical professional in LOCAL government	36	40	11	8	5
f. A medical professional in STATE government	36	41	10	8	5

Q12 Do you think it is harder to get a job in [INSERT ITEM. ROTATE] than in private business, easier to get a job in [INSERT ITEM], or don't you think there is any difference? Next, what about [INSERT ITEM]? Do you think it is harder to get a job in [INSERT ITEM] than in private business, easier to get a job in [INSERT ITEM], or don't you think there is any difference?

	Harder %	No difference %	Easier %	Don't know/refused %
a. State government	57	23	12	8
b. Local government	52	26	16	7

Q13 As far as you know, is it easy to find out about the jobs that are available in [INSERT ITEM] ... or hard to find out about those job openings?

	Easy %	Hard %	(VOL) Depends %	Don't know/refused %
a. Private business	51	38	5	7
b. Your state government	35	56	2	8
c. Your local government	41	50	2	7

Q14 Now I am going to read you two statements. Please tell me which one you agree with more, even if neither is precisely right. First... [READ. ROTATE.]... Which statement do you agree with more?

Based on Form 1 respondents [N=591]

%	
51	It's too complicated to apply for a job in state government
42	It is no more complicated to apply for a job in state government than one in private business
3	Depends/equally hard (VOL)
5	Don't know/refused

Q15 Now I am going to read you two statements. Please tell me which one you agree with more, even if neither is precisely right. First... [READ. ROTATE.]... Which statement do you agree with more?

Based on Form 2 respondents [N=611]

%	
43	It's too complicated to apply for a job in local government
45	It is no more complicated to apply for a job in local government than one in private business
4	Depends/equally hard (VOL)
8	Don't know/refused

Q16 Do you think [INSERT ITEM] imposes too many qualifications for the jobs they want to fill or not?

	Yes %	No %	Don't know/refused %
a. Private business	31	63	6
b. Your state government	45	43	12
c. Your local government	37	50	13

Q17 Now I would like to ask you to compare careers with different employers. (First/Next,) in terms of [INSERT ITEM] ... is a career in state and local government better; is a career in private businesses better, or are they both about the same?

	State/local gov't is better %	Same/(vol) No difference %	Private sector better %	Don't know/refused %
a. Compensation	26	33	36	5
b. Benefits	58	23	14	6
c. Job security	58	23	13	5
d. Opportunities for promotion	25	26	40	8
e. Making a contribution to society	36	30	27	6
f. Encouraging innovation and creativity	11	23	60	6
g. Working with the best and brightest people	12	30	52	6

Q18 Over the next 10 years, experts say more than a third of key professionals in state and local government will be eligible to retire. Do you think that this will be a major problem for [INSERT ITEM], a minor problem or not a problem at all?

	Major %	Minor %	Not a problem %	Don't know/refused %
a. Your state government	31	31	35	3
b. Your local government	24	34	39	4

Q19 If you had a son or daughter, would you be proud of them if they [INSERT ITEM. RANDOMIZE.]? Next, what about [INSERT ITEM] . . . would you be proud of them?

	Yes, proud %	No, not proud %	(VOL) Depends %	Don't know/refused %
a. Got a job with the federal government	88	7	4	1
b. Got a job with your state government	90	7	3	1
c. Got a job with your local government	87	8	4	1
d. Joined the military	75	20	3	2
e. Started their own business	97	2	1	*
f. Got a job with private business	94	2	3	1

Q20 You just mentioned several things a son or daughter could do that would make you proud. Of those, which would make you the most proud . . . ? [DISPLAY/READ ONLY ITEMS WHERE R WOULD BE PROUD]

%	
53	Starting their own business
10	A job with the federal government
10	Joining the military
8	A job with private business
4	A job with your state government
1	A job with your local government
*	No, not proud of any
9	Depends (VOL)
5	Don't know/refused

Q21 Regardless of how far down the road it might be, at what age do you expect to retire and not work at all?

Based on those who are employed [N=680]

%	
3	40–49
6	50–54
12	55–59
16	60–62
25	63–65
7	66–69
19	70 or older
6	Never (VOL)
5	Don't know/refused

Q22 Which of the following have you done in anticipation of retirement? Have you (READ IN ORDER)?

Based on those who are employed [N=680]

	Yes %	No %	Refused %
a. Discussed retirement planning with family or friends	61	38	*
b. Discussed retirement planning with a professional planner	47	52	1
c. Contributed money to a 401K, I-R-A, pension or other retirement savings account	77	22	1
d. Saved or invested money in other accounts that you can use in retirement	62	37	1
e. Looked into a type of job you might do as a “second career”	45	53	2

Q23 Overall, how satisfied are you with the amount you have saved for retirement? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not too satisfied or not at all satisfied?

Based on those who are employed [N=680]

%	
14	Very satisfied
43	Somewhat satisfied
21	Not too satisfied
21	Not at all satisfied
1	Refused

Q24 Now I am going to read you two statements. Please tell me which one applies most closely to your situation, even if neither is precisely right. Which statement applies more closely to your situation?

Based on those who are employed [N=680]

%	
44	Just paying my regular bills leaves little or no money to be set aside for my retirement.
54	Saving for my retirement is something I do regularly even though I could spend the money on other things.
1	Depends/neither (VOL)
1	Don't know/refused

Q25 Earlier, you mentioned that you are retired. Are you currently receiving a monthly pension from your former employer? [IF YES, ASK: Is that pension from the federal, state or local government?]

Based on those who are retired [N=347]

%	
27	Yes, from federal, state, local government
24	Yes, from some other former employer
46	No
3	Refused

Cell Now thinking about your telephone use... Do you, yourself, have a working cell phone?⁷

%	
65	Yes, have cell phone
22	No, do not
1	Refused
12	Undesignated

(READ) I have a few last questions for statistical purposes only...

SEX Respondent sex

%	
47	Male
53	Female

AGE What is your age?

%	
19	18–29
38	30–49
25	50–64
17	65 or older
*	Don't know
1	Refused

MAR Are you currently married, living with a partner, divorced, separated, widowed, or have you never been married?

%	
51	Married
6	Living with a partner
10	Divorced
3	Separated
8	Widowed
19	Never been married
2	Single (VOL)
1	Don't know/refused

PAR Are you the parent or guardian of any children under age 18 now living in your household?

%	
32	Yes
68	No
*	Don't know/refused

REG These days, many people are so busy they can't find time to register to vote, or move around so often they don't get a chance to re-register. Are you NOW registered to vote in your precinct or election district or haven't you been able to register so far?

%	
79	Yes, registered
20	No, not registered
1	Don't know/refused

EDUC What is the last grade or class you completed in school? (DO NOT READ)

%	
2	None, or grades 1–8
10	High school incomplete (grades 9–11)
33	High school graduate (grade 12 or GED certificate)
3	Technical, trade or vocational school AFTER high school
23	Some college, no 4-year degree (includes associate degree)
17	College graduate (B.S., B.A., or other 4-year degree)
10	Post-graduate training/professional school after college (toward a Masters/Ph.D., Law or Medical school)
1	Don't know/refused

HISP Are you, yourself, of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Latin American background?

%	
11	Yes
89	No
*	Don't know/refused

RACE What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian, or some other race?

%	
75	White
13	Black or African-American
2	Asian or Pacific Islander
3	Mixed race
2	Native American/American Indian
2	Other (SPECIFY)
3	Don't know/refused

INCOME Last year, that is in 2006, what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category. [READ]

%	
6	Less than \$10,000
8	10 to under \$20,000
12	20 to under \$30,000
12	30 to under \$40,000
10	40 to under \$50,000
14	50 to under \$75,000
10	75 to under \$100,000
8	100 to under \$150,000
6	\$150,000 or more
14	Don't know/refused

THANK RESPONDENT: That concludes our interview. Have a nice day/evening.

Methodological Report: Facing the Future Survey

FOR THE CENTER FOR STATE AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE
BY PRINCETON SURVEY RESEARCH
ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL

November 2007

Summary

The Facing the Future Survey, sponsored by the Center for State and Local Government Excellence, obtained telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1,202 adults living in the continental United States. The survey was conducted by Princeton Survey Research International. The interviews were conducted in English by Princeton Data Source, LLC from October 24 to November 4, 2007. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for the complete set of weighted data is $\pm 3.2\%$.

Details on the design, execution and analysis of the survey are discussed below.

Design and Data Collection Procedures

Sample Design

A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples was used to represent all adults in the continental United States who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) according to PSRAI specifications.

Numbers for the landline sample were selected with probabilities in proportion to their share of listed telephone households from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from 1000-blocks dedicated to cellular service according to the Telcordia database.

Contact Procedures

Interviews were conducted from October 24 to November 4, 2007. As many as 10 attempts were made to

contact every sampled telephone number. Sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of making contact with potential respondents. Each household received at least one daytime call in an attempt to find someone at home.

For the landline sample, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest adult male currently at home. If no male was available, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest female at home. This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender. For the cellular sample, interviews were conducted with the person who answered the phone. Interviewers verified that the person was an adult and in a safe place before administering the survey. Cellular sample respondents were offered a post-paid cash incentive for their participation.

Weighting and analysis

Weighting is generally used in survey analysis to compensate for sample designs and patterns of non-response that might bias results. A two-stage weighting procedure was used to weight this dual-frame sample. A first-stage weight of 0.5 was applied to all dual-users to account for the fact that they were included in both sample frames.⁸ All other cases were given a first-stage weight of 1. The second stage of weighting balanced sample demographics to population parameters. The sample was balanced—by form—to match national population parameters for sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region (U.S. Census definitions), population density, and telephone usage. The basic weighting parameters came from a special analysis of the Census Bureau's 2006 Annual Social and Economic

Supplement (ASEC) that included all households in the continental United States that had a telephone. The cell phone usage parameter came from an analysis of the July-December 2006 National Health Interview Survey.

Weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using a statistical technique called the *Deming Algorithm*. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the national population. Table 1 compares weighted and unweighted sample distributions to population parameters.

Table 1: Sample Demographics

	Parameter	Unweighted	After First-stage	Weighted
Gender				
Male	48.2	45.7	46.0	47.3
Female	51.8	54.3	54.0	52.7
Age				
18–24	12.4	8.5	9.5	11.8
25–34	17.6	13.1	13.1	16.8
35–44	19.7	16.0	15.1	19.6
45–54	19.7	19.2	18.3	19.9
55–64	14.3	20.1	19.1	14.8
65+	16.3	23.1	24.8	17.2
Education				
Less than HS Graduate	14.5	8.1	9.7	12.4
HS Graduate	35.7	30.5	32.4	36.4
Some College	23.6	24.9	24.3	23.6
College Graduate	26.2	36.5	33.6	27.6
Race/Ethnicity				
White/not Hispanic	70.8	78.2	77.3	71.8
Black/not Hispanic	10.9	10.9	11.3	11.3
Hispanic	12.4	6.4	6.7	10.8
Other/not Hispanic	5.9	4.4	4.7	6.1
Region				
Northeast	18.6	19.1	19.1	19.0
Midwest	23.3	24.2	23.7	23.5
South	36.2	37.9	38.3	36.2
West	21.9	18.8	18.9	21.2

County Pop. Density				
1–Lowest	20.1	22.6	23.6	20.3
2	20.0	22.4	21.8	20.4
3	20.1	21.8	21.3	20.4
4	20.2	20.0	20.0	20.2
5–Highest	19.6	13.2	13.3	18.8
Phone Use				
LL only	26.0	22.1	33.9	25.7
Dual	60.0	69.3	53.0	61.8
Cell only	14.0	8.6	13.2	12.5

Effects of Sample Design on Statistical Inference

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. PSRAI calculates the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called “design effect” or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for this survey is 1.29.

PSRAI calculates the composite design effect for a sample of size *n*, with each case having a weight, *w_i* as:

$$deff = \frac{n \sum_{i=1}^n w_i^2}{\left(\sum_{i=1}^n w_i \right)^2}$$

In a wide range of situations, the adjusted *standard error* of a statistic should be calculated by multiplying the usual formula by the square root of the design effect (\sqrt{deff}). Thus, the formula for computing the 95% confidence interval around a percentage is:

$$\hat{p} \pm \left(\sqrt{deff} \times 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n}} \right)$$

where \hat{p} is the sample estimate and *n* is the unweighted number of sample cases in the group being considered.

The survey’s *margin of error* is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample—the one around 50%. For example, the margin of error for the entire sample is ±3.2%. This means that in 95 out every 100 samples drawn

using the same methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 3.2 percentage points away from their true values in the population. The margin of error for estimates based on form 1 or form 2 respondents is $\pm 4.5\%$. It is important to remember that sampling fluctuations are only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Other sources, such as respondent selection bias, questionnaire wording and reporting inaccuracy, may contribute additional error of greater or lesser magnitude.

Response Rate

Table 2 reports the disposition of all sampled telephone numbers ever dialed from the original telephone number samples. The response rate estimates the fraction of all eligible respondents in the sample that were ultimately interviewed. At PSRAI it is calculated by taking the product of three component rates:⁹

- Contact rate—the proportion of working numbers where a request for interview was made¹⁰
- Cooperation rate—the proportion of contacted numbers where a consent for interview was at least initially obtained, versus those refused
- Completion rate—the proportion of initially cooperating and eligible interviews that were completed

Thus the response rate for the land line sample was 19 percent. The response rate for the cellular sample was 23 percent.

Table 2: Sample Disposition

Landline	Cellphone	
14299	3300	Total numbers dialed
793	52	Business/government/ non-residential
744	5	Fax/modem
46	0	Cell phone
5209	1311	Other not-working
1178	61	Additional projected NW
6330	1871	Working numbers
44.3%	56.7%	Working rate
352	12	No answer
41	9	Busy
782	284	Answering machine
84	27	Other non-contacts
5071	1540	Contacted numbers
80.1%	82.3%	Contact rate
422	146	Callbacks
3372	869	Refusal—unknown eligibility
1277	525	Cooperating numbers
25.2%	34.1%	Cooperation rate
203	76	Language barrier
0	206	Screenouts/child's cell phone
1074	243	Eligible numbers
84.1%	46.3%	Eligibility rate
74	41	Refusal 2—Refusal after case determined eligible
1000	202	Completes
93.1%	83.1%	Completion rate
18.8%	23.3%	Response rate

Endnotes

1 *Public Sector Employment: The Current Situation*, By Stuart Greenfield, <http://www.slge.org>.

2 43 percent of those 50–70 now say they have done so, compared with 32 percent of those in that age group in the *MetLife Foundation/Civic Ventures New Face of Work Survey*, <http://www.civicventures.org>.

3 The answers *Not too interested* and *Not at all interested* combined.

4 *State Public Health Employee Worker Shortage Report*. Council of State Governments, ASTHO, and the National Association of State Personnel Executives. (2004).

5 *Bioterrorism Preparedness Varied Across State and Local Jurisdictions*. United States General Accounting Office, (GAO-03-373) (April 2003) p. 17.

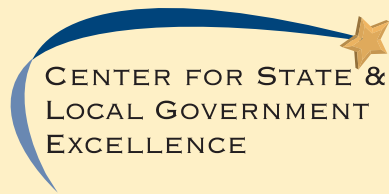
6 <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/general/index.html>

7 Question was not asked of those in the cell phone sample, but results shown here reflect Total combined RDD and cell phone sample. Question was added after the first night of RDD interviewing, so 167 adults did not get asked this question and are marked as “Undesignated.”

8 Dual-users are defined as [a] landline respondents who have a working cell phone, or [b] cell phone respondents who have a regular land line phone where they currently live.

9 PSRAI’s disposition codes and reporting are consistent with the American Association for Public Opinion Research standards.

10 PSRAI assumes that 75 percent of cases that result in a constant disposition of “No answer” or “Busy” are actually not working numbers.



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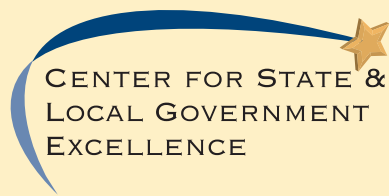
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Helping state and local governments become knowledgeable and competitive employers

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The Center for State and Local Government Excellence helps state and local governments become knowledgeable and competitive employers so they can attract and retain a talented and committed workforce. The Center identifies best practices and conducts research on competitive employment practices, workforce development, pensions, retiree health security, and financial planning. The Center also brings state and local leaders together with respected researchers and features the latest demographic data on the aging work force, research studies, and news on health care, recruitment, and succession planning on its web site, www.slge.org.

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