



DATE: 02/20/2024 TIME: 10:30 a.m. LOCATION: Executive Boardroom

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Janet Howard, Chair | Tamika Duplessis, Ph.D., | Joseph Peychaud |
| Maurice Sholas, M.D., Ph.D., | Chadrick Kennedy |

Operations Committee Meeting Agenda

I. Roll Call

II. Discussion Items

- A. People Plan Update – David Benson, PFM
- B. Performance Evaluation Program Update – Juli Sholar, SWBNO HR Director

III. Action Items

- A. Resolution (R-048-2024) 2024 SWBNO Holiday Schedule

IV. Public Comment

V. Adjournment



Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO)

Workforce Model: Phase 1 Assessment

January 2024

**PFM Group Consulting LLC with
The Caulfield Consulting Group**

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New Orleans, LA 70130



Table of Contents

- ◆ Project Background
- ◆ SWBNO and its Workforce
- ◆ The SWBNO Workforce Model
 - SWBNO Human Resources and City Civil Service departments: structure and resources, roles and responsibilities
 - SWBNO engagement and success with Civil Service rules/decision-making
- ◆ Project Focus Areas
 - Recruitment; retention; career development and pathways; compensation practices; accountability structures; and diversity, equity and inclusion
 - Processes, SWBNO HR/Civil Service roles and responsibilities, impact of Civil Service rules, workforce perspectives (focus group feedback and employee survey results)
- ◆ Key Themes and Preliminary Opportunities
- ◆ Next Steps

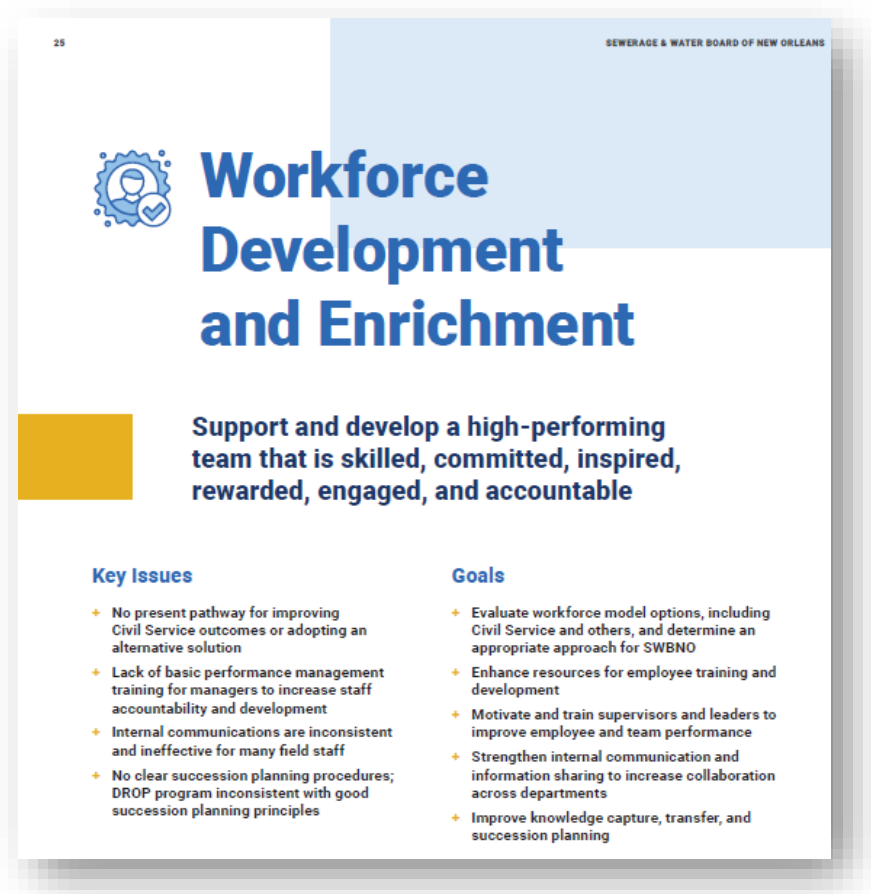


Project Background



Project Overview

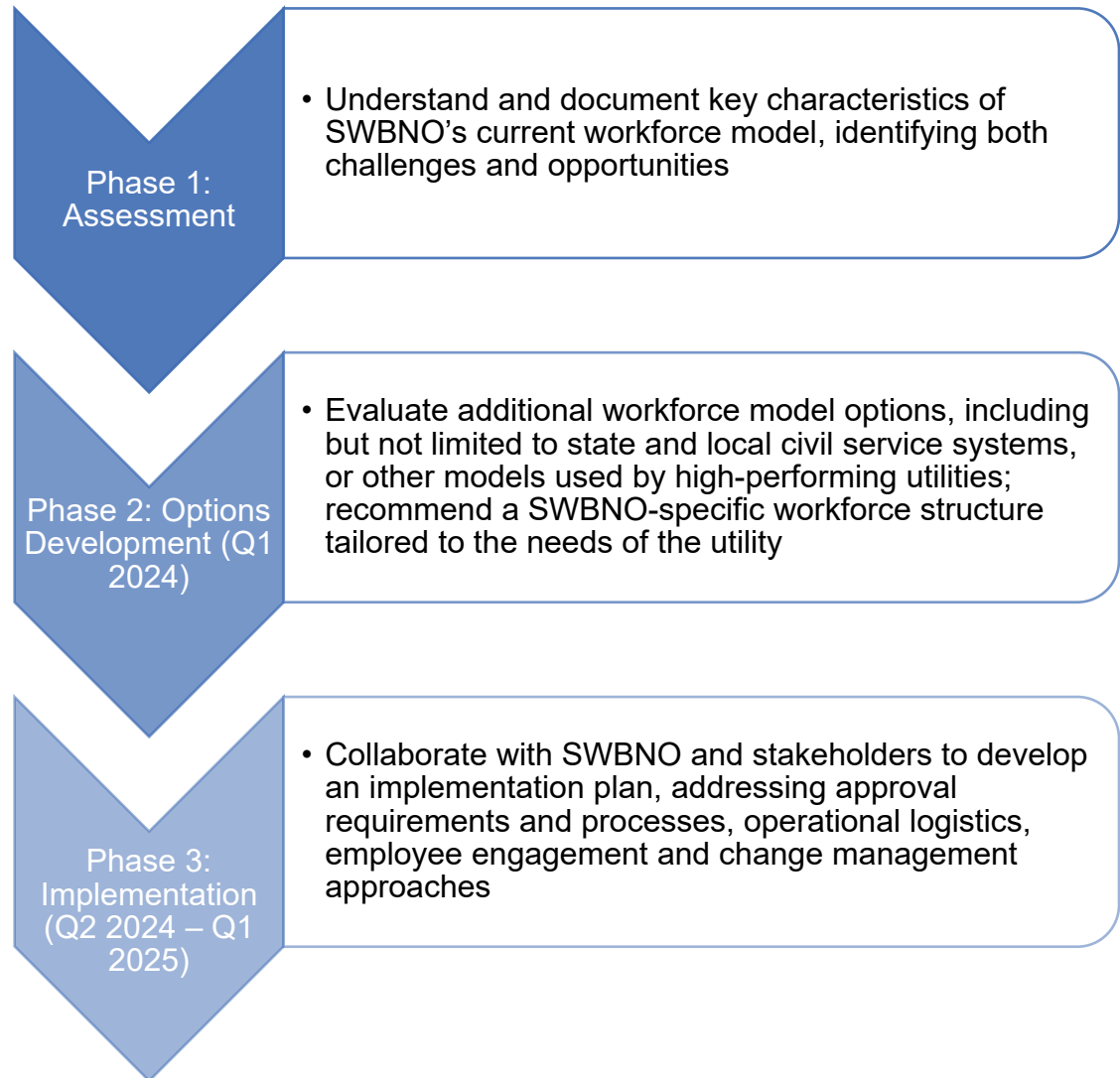
- ◆ The Greater New Orleans Foundation engaged PFM to support the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) with Workforce Model Analysis, Development, and Implementation
- ◆ Key issues and goals highlighted in SWBNO 2022-2027 Strategic Plan
 - “No present pathway for improving Civil Service outcomes or adopting an alternative solution”
 - “Evaluate workforce model options, including Civil Service and others, and determine an appropriate approach for SWBNO”





Project Steps

- For this Phase I Assessment, PFM:
 - Reviewed and analyzed data and documents from SWBNO and the City's Civil Service Department
 - Interviewed SWBNO and Civil Service leadership
 - Conducted employee focus groups and an employee survey
 - Held five meetings with a Steering Committee of SWBNO staff from across the organization
- This report highlights key themes and preliminary recommendations for improvement regarding the current workforce model





Project Goals

- Identifying the right workforce model for SWBNO and how to make it work effectively provides a “People Plan” to empower employees and provide the best service to customers
- See excerpt from April 2023 *Pipeliners* at right

Having the right workforce model is important. Our workforce model determines how the Sewerage and Water Board handles:



Compensation



Retention



Career Development and Training



Accountability and Supervision



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Recruitment

A great workforce model allows us to retain good employees with competitive compensation and better pathways for professional growth and development. It will also help us improve accountability and management structures, attract new talent where we need it, and broaden our diversity, equity, and inclusion practices. The People Plan embodies our commitment to supporting employees' values while empowering a high-performing, satisfied workforce.



SWBNO and its Workforce



SWBNO Overview

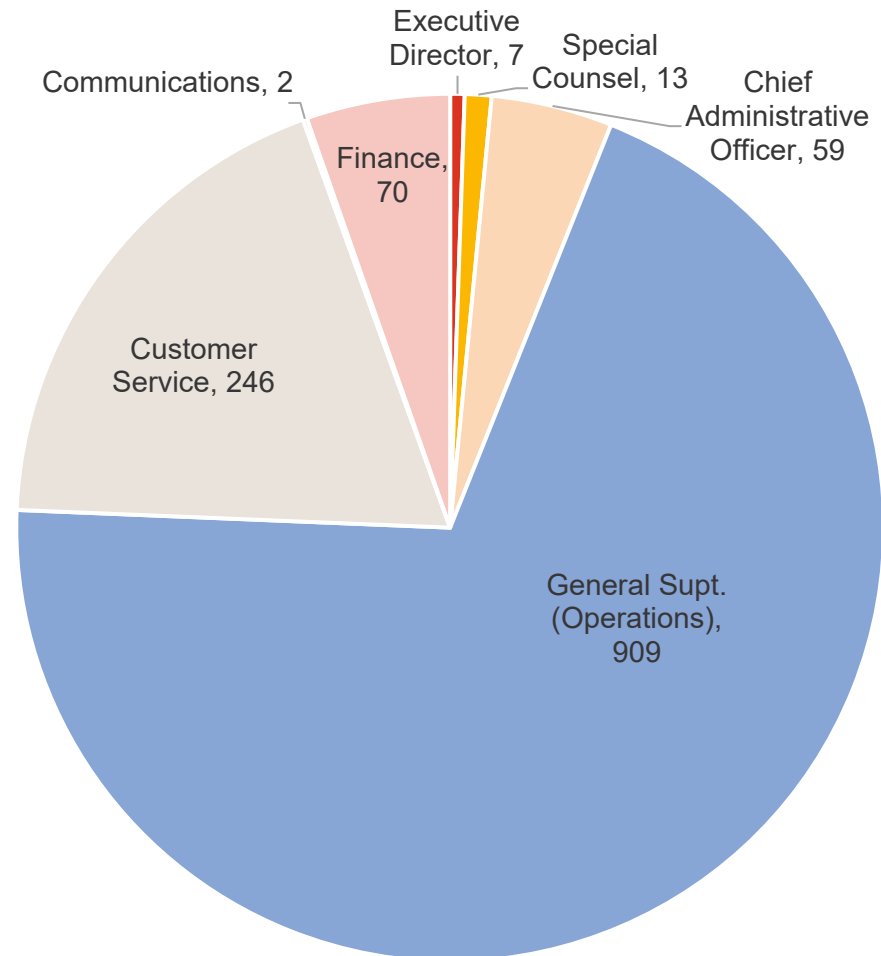
- Established by the Louisiana State Legislature in 1899, SWBNO is a public utility that operates and maintains the city's network of water and sewer systems, as well as its major drainage pipes, canals, and pumps
- Today, SWBNO serves hundreds of commercial clients and over 375,000 residents who rely on the utility to deliver high-quality drinking water and effective wastewater and stormwater management
- The organization's service area includes 364 square miles of New Orleans, as well as about 2,550 acres (or approximately 4 square miles) of adjacent Jefferson Parish
- The Louisiana Legislature holds significant authority over SWBNO
- More than 80 state laws define the duties and powers of SWBNO and other entities associated with the utility, including the City of New Orleans



SWBNO Overview: Workforce

- SWBNO has approximately 1,300 employees
- HR department also serves an estimated 800 retirees via pension administration
- More than two-thirds (69.6 percent) are in operations roles within the Office of the General Superintendent
- Another 18.8 percent of staff are in Customer Service
- About one in 10 SWBNO employees work in administrative/support functions including HR, Finance, Communications, Legal, and the Executive Director's Office

SWBNO Workforce - By Department



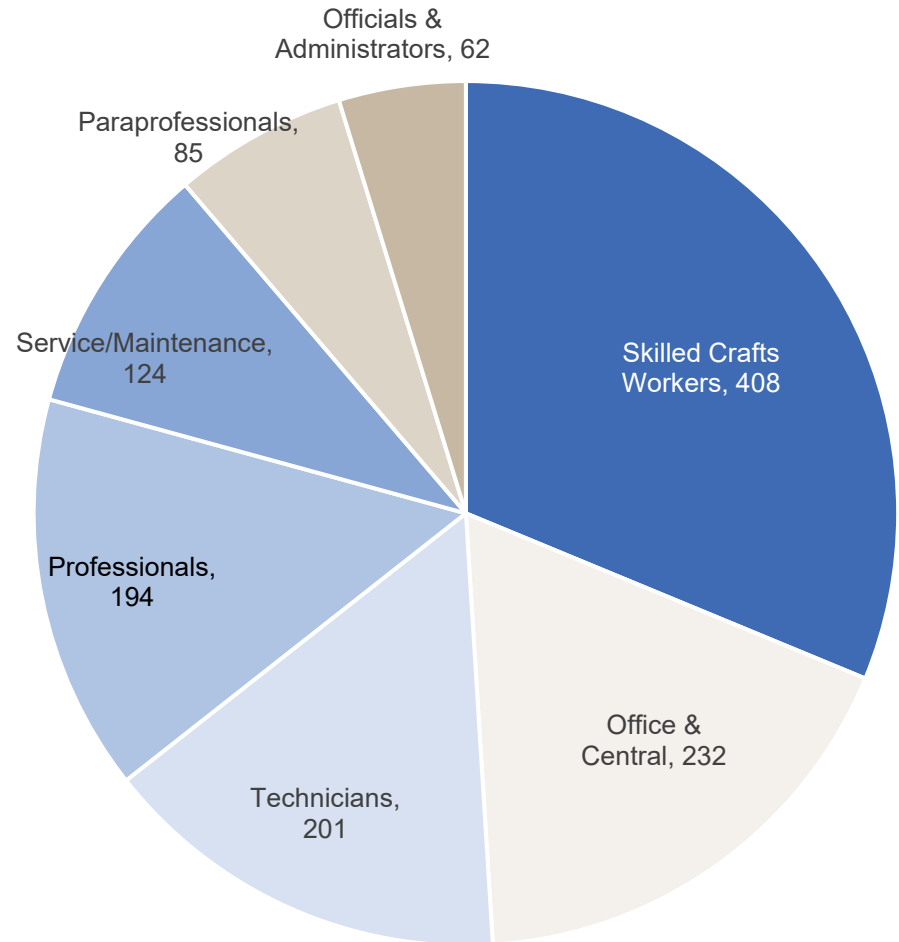
Source: SWBNO Employee Roster as of June 23, 2023



SWBNO Overview: Workforce

- Given SWBNO's operational focus, skilled crafts workers, technicians, and service/ maintenance personnel represent more than half of the workforce by occupational group
- Strong engineering presence in the professional ranks makes utility unusual compared to most other City departments and brings specific recruiting and retention challenges (different than general analyst/finance/administrative and managerial staff)
- Customer service and general support also require a significant number of office/clerical staff
- As SWBNO seeks to improve its human resources approach, it is important to be mindful that different occupational groups can require different recruitment, retention, development, and other strategies

SWBNO Workforce - By Job Class



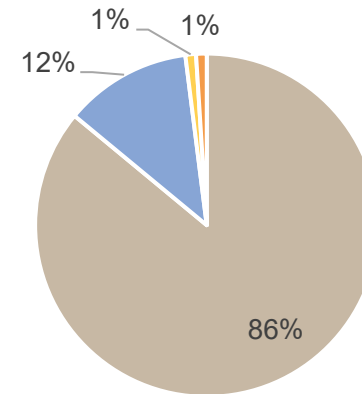
Source: SWBNO Employee Roster as of June 23, 2023



Workforce Demographics

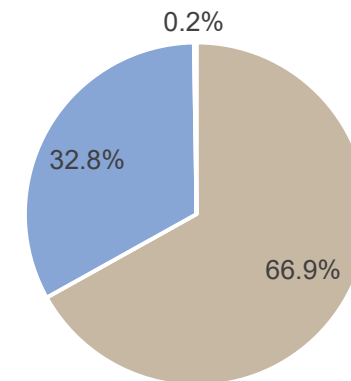
- At a high level, SWBNO's workforce is more racially diverse than Orleans Parish and the rest of New Orleans City government, but employs a lower percentage of women
 - Race:** Employees identifying as Black or African-American make up 86 percent of the SWBNO workforce, while 12 percent are white
 - Parish is 59 percent Black or African-American
 - City workforce is 57 percent Black, 28 percent white
 - Asian people and people of Hispanic or Latino descent are underrepresented in both the City and SWBNO workforces
 - Gender:** Women make up 33 percent of SWBNO's workforce while the Parish population is 53 percent female
 - Occupational influences are likely a factor given the industry; literature notes this as a common challenge for utilities
- Data disaggregation by occupation could further inform this analysis

SWBNO Employees by Race



■ Black or African-American ■ White ■ Hispanic or Latino ■ Asian

SWBNO Employees by Sex



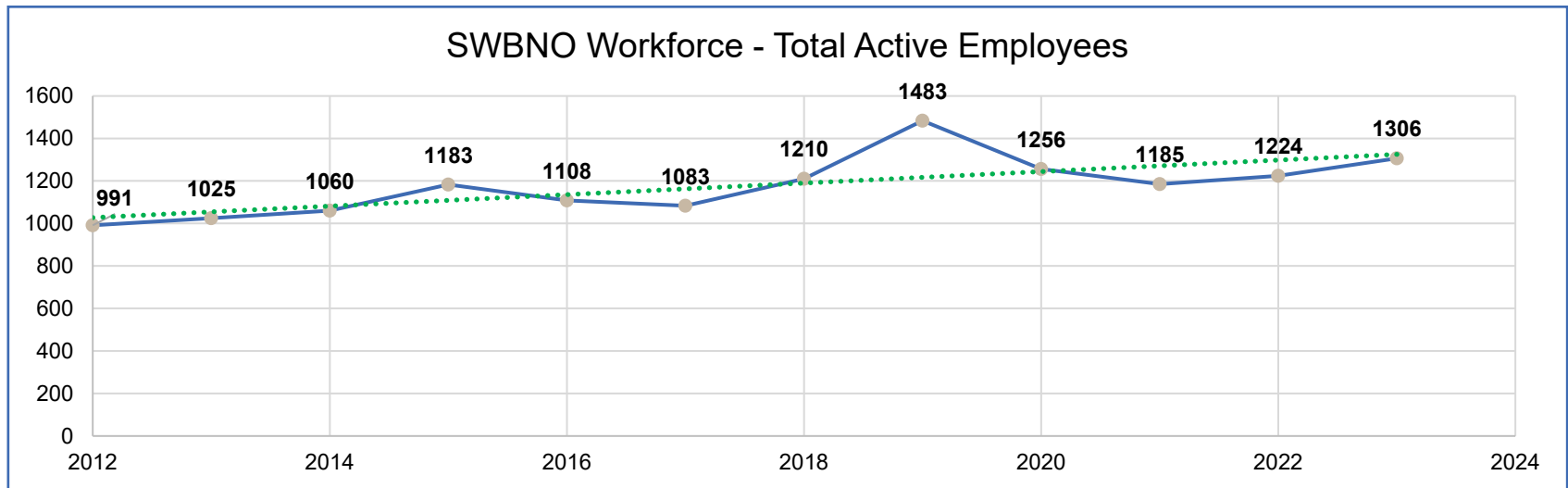
■ Male ■ Female ■ Unspecified

Sources: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/orleansparishlouisiana>; New Orleans Civil Service Department 2022 Annual Report; Women in Water Utilities: Breaking Barriers, World Bank, 2019. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/909401573683550813-0090022019/original/WWUInfographics07110819.pdf>. Accessed Jan. 16, 2024.



Trends

- SWBNO headcount has generally trended upward over the past decade
 - Total employee count of 1,306 in June 2023 is up 6.7 percent from 2022 and 10.2 percent from 2021 after dipping during the COVID-19 pandemic and Great Resignation (note February 2024 update from SWBNO HR indicates 1,260 employees)
 - While total employment has not regained its 2019 peak of 1,483 employees, SWBNO headcount is now back above every year from 2012 through 2018



- Although employee counts can be indicative of overall workforce sustainability, headcount change can also appropriately reflect decreases due to factors such as automation and other efficiency improvements or increases due to service expansion and mandates

Note: 2012-2021 figures from SWBNO ACFR for years ending December 31, 2020 and 2021, accessed at <https://www.swbno.org/documents/Reports/2021%20Annual%20Comprehensive%20Financial%20Report.pdf>; ; 2022 figure from Civil Service Department 2022 annual report; 2023 count from SWBNO employee roster.



Workforce Perspectives

- To gain insight into SWBNO workforce perspectives, PFM conducted seven focus groups in late June 2023 along with an online employee survey made available for three weeks late in 2023 (Nov. 27 to Dec. 20)
- In the online survey, 373 responses were received (nine respondents reported being temporary or contract employees) – an estimated response rate above 25 percent of the full-time workforce
- While this represents an adequate response rate overall, it should be noted that the survey participant group skews toward office and headquarters roles, with lower response rates from field roles
 - Such differences between the respondent group and the overall workforce should be considered when evaluating results
 - In terms of employee tenure, distribution of survey respondents was generally similar to SWBNO's workforce

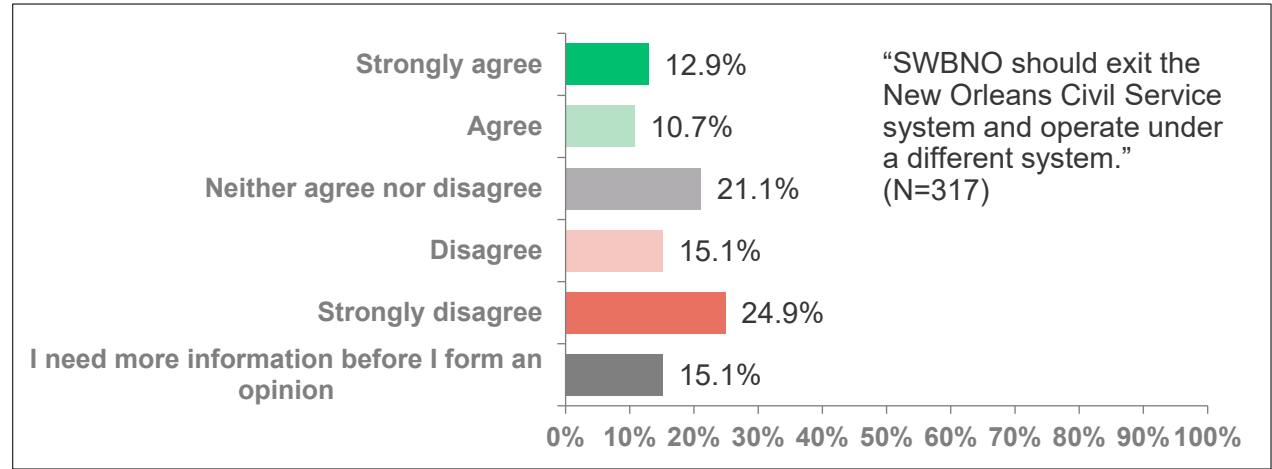
**Employee Survey Response Rate Comparison
(based on survey data and employee roster as of June 2023)**

	SWBNO Overall	Survey Respondents
Job Type		
Water/Drainage/WW/Networks/Support Services/Power/Facilities Maintenance	62.9%	39.7%
Engineering/Project Management	7.4%	15.7%
Administration	29.8%	44.5%
Work Location		
St. Joseph	24.1%	32.4%
Carrollton WP	24.6%	33.0%
Central Yard/Algiers WP/Other	51.3%	21.2%
Gender		
Male	67%	51.8%
Female	33%	47.4%
Other	N/A	0.8%
Race		
White	12%	24.1%
Black or African-American	86%	66.4%
Other/two or more races	2%	9.5%



SWBNO Perspectives on Civil Service: Range of Opinions on Independence

- Employee survey does not indicate a clear consensus regarding SWBNO's participation in the New Orleans civil service system
- More than 40 percent of survey respondents expressed opposition to leaving the New Orleans Civil Service system, with nearly 24 percent indicating support for operating under a different system and more than 36 percent indicating no opinion or a need for more information



Employee Survey Comments

*"I believe a **revamping of our relationship and how we can drive the ship a little more** can go a long ways"*

"Civil Service needs to be modernized, not de-coupled from SWB"

*"I think this would be a complete move in the wrong direction and we would lose far more people. **Our internal HR system could not handle it** if this happened"*

***"If Civil Service is allowed to perform as it was intended the City would flourish.** However, those who seek to eliminate Civil Service want the ability to terminate and not show cause. if the progressive discipline model is used to its potential, problem employees can be terminated justly"*

*"We have good employees leaving because we can't promote them as they deserve, we can't hire who we need to hire, and we can't fire who we need to fire so **we will continue to struggle as long as we are saddled with Civil Service**"*



SWBNO Workforce Model



SWBNO and City Civil Service

- SWBNO's Human Resources Department (HR) supports and administers recruitment, selection, compensation, benefits and accountability processes for SWBNO employees
- At the same time, most activities fall under the oversight and/or rely on actions of the Civil Service Department of the City of New Orleans
- Civil Service is included in the Louisiana Constitution as a bulwark against political patronage and abuse, providing direction and employee protections
 - Lays out process for appointment of New Orleans Commission members and provides for removal by City Council, sets basic requirements for appointment of personnel director by commission
 - Defines classified vs. unclassified employees, with provision for local addition of unclassified positions by Commission (may also revoke)
 - Requires permanent appointments and promotions in classified service to be based on merit, efficiency, fitness and length of service as determined by examination (competitive where practical)
 - Grants *“power to adopt rules for regulating employment, promotion, demotion, suspension, reduction in pay, removal, certification, qualifications, political activities, employment conditions, compensation and disbursements to employees, and other personnel matters and transactions; to adopt a uniform pay and classification plan; to require an appointing authority to institute an employee training and safety program; and generally to accomplish the objectives and purposes of the merit system of civil service...”*



SWBNO Human Resources Overview

- 2023 budget for SWBNO HR was \$3.43 million, down from \$4.64 million in 2022 budget
- Department is structured as a generally centralized HR function with authority for ensuring HR policy compliance and responsibility for delivering traditional HR services
- Staffing as of January 2024 included 33 employees (23 full-time SWBNO employees and 10 temporary staff), up from 16 employees and 10 temporary staff in mid-2023
 - New director joined department in mid-2023 after extended period of leadership by an interim director
 - Department's recent history of employee turnover highlighted by staff in focus groups, interviews and survey responses
- Some processes are paper-based, manual and inefficient, including portions of timekeeping and payroll processes
- Publicly available data reporting is generally limited to information in board reports and other board/committee packet items
 - Monthly statistics sometimes presented individually and sometimes in tables (e.g., separation by type updated monthly in a table covering the full year); data could be shown in chart form to highlight trends over time for Board and executive leadership



SWBNO Human Resources Overview

- ◆ Department is organized around six primary functions

Recruitment/Compensation/Classification (11 staff: eight employees, three temporary)

- The recruitment group is responsible for requisitions for new positions, applications, maintenance of the register of SWBNO-specific positions, and background checks. The compensation group is responsible for compensation for classified and unclassified employees. The classification group primarily responds to requests for job studies that are to be submitted to Civil Service.

Training (three staff: two employees, one temporary)

- Handles all state-mandated training courses for SWBNO employees (e.g., ethics, sexual harassment, etc.). There are approximately six of these required trainings annually. The Division also handles records of performance appraisals, which are a part of the annual employee evaluation system.

Employee Relations (four staff, all employees)

- Responsible for administering grievances, resignations, and terminations, along with any associated hearings or records maintenance. The Division also performs investigations related to employee grievances.

Benefits and Pension (six staff: four employees, two temporary)

- Coordinates leave, FMLA, medical/dental insurance, open enrollment, benefits deductions (confirms amount for payroll), short- and long-term disability, and pension; also tracks sick leave

Payroll (seven staff: three employees, four temporary)

- Tracks and inputs employee time via paper timesheets, administers payroll for employees

Records Retention (one employee)

- Responsible for maintenance and retention of files regarding employee pensions, discipline, termination, background checks, etc.



SWBNO HR Department Issues and Challenges

- **Staffing:** HR staff noted challenges in recruiting for internal HR positions for several reasons:
 - Perceived lower compensation relative to other government and private sector options
 - Positions not being promoted/marketed as HR positions, making it difficult for potential applicant to know what the roles involve
 - Positions requiring staff to join SWBNO as a management analyst or specialist with a master's degree; strong applicants with extensive human resources experience but no degree are ineligible
- **Technology:** Department operates without a true Human Resources Information System (HRIS)
 - HR data is stored in finance-focused system that does not interface with City system
 - Some Civil Service Department (CSD) staff have limited access to SWBNO system for checking compliance and gathering data
 - While data is available, interviews suggest that extracting information from the current system requires significant manual manipulation
- **Metrics:** As a result of staffing and information technology challenges, SWBNO does not routinely track and monitor performance data regarding key HR functions such as recruitment, retention and accountability
- **Role:** HR is established as a centralized unit and given such authority in policies (e.g., grievances, discipline) but some HR-related initiatives are undertaken by operating units
 - Examples: CDL training unit in fleet, SWBNO and City engineers engaging to secure pay increase, some recruiting/classification activity conducted from general superintendent's office (adjusting job titles, recruiting engineers/project managers)
 - SWBNO staff feedback indicated perceived challenges with HR's knowledge and responsiveness



Civil Service Department Overview

- Per the City's 2023 Adopted Budget, the CSD is responsible for the overall administration of the personnel merit system in City government
 - Oversight of a uniform classification and compensation plan, employee disciplinary appeals, employee growth and development courses, performance evaluations, setting minimum qualifications for classified positions, reviewing employment applications and establishing eligible lists for classified jobs, and test development and validation
- CSD operates with a somewhat smaller budget and fewer personnel than SWBNO HR
 - CSD budget for 2023 was \$2.89 million, down from \$3.03 million in 2022 but above the 2021 budget of \$2.36 million
 - Department includes 21.38 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff for 2023, a reduction of 5.54 FTES or about 20 percent from 2022 figure of 26.92 FTES
 - Reductions in budget and headcount largely driven by reorganization and reclassifications (e.g., eliminating three management development specialist I roles while creating two management development analyst I roles and one management development specialist II position)



Civil Service Provides SWBNO-Specific Flexibility: **Hiring**

- Civil Service Commission rules can and do include SWBNO-specific carveouts and flexibility
 - Rule VI (Vacancies, Certification & Appointment)
 - Allows for delegating of certain hiring processes and authority to individual appointing authorities and establishes SWBNO pilot program
 - In 2016, Civil Service delegated several responsibilities to SWBNO for 73 of its job classifications
 - With subsequent additions, list stands at 78 jobs
 - Under this change, SWBNO became responsible for posting and recruiting to fill vacancies, assessing applicant qualifications, and hiring eligible candidates for employment – but Civil Service Department reviews/executes postings in NEOGOV and reviews hiring selections
 - Civil Service Department responsible for auditing SWBNO's compliance with Civil Service rules
 - Audit approach replaced by checking of transactions (e.g., posting)

SWBNO holds delegated hiring authority for nearly 2/3 of its positions (including direct hires)

SWBNO CSD-Delegated Roles by Headcount and Vacancy		
Job Series	Filled	Vacant
Networks Maintenance (3301-3310)	270	35
Pumping Plant (3040-3050)	94	25
Office Worker (0061)*	85	28
Utilities Plant Worker (3016)	64	26
Utilities Maintenance (3401-3411)	62	46
Water Meter Reader (3140-3150)	50	31
Laborer (1510)*	50	23
Steam Plant Engineer (3070-3073)	32	6
Water Purification (3720-3725)	28	9
Environmental Enforcement Technician (3085-3088)	10	7
Power Dispatcher (3055-3058)	9	2
Plumbing Inspector (2231-34)	5	3
Other	46	19
TOTAL	805	260
As percent of SWBNO totals	66.6%	64.7%
Filled as of June 2023; vacancies as of April 2023; *denotes direct hire position		



Delegation of Authority to SWBNO: Limited/Unclear Results to Date

- After initial June 2016 delegation of authority, full implementation was not achieved until spring 2017; CSC meeting minutes indicate turnover in SWBNO HR contributed to delay
- CSC received regular updates on delegation via a recurring agenda item through 2017 and 2018; by fall of 2018, commissioners were expressing concern regarding progress
- In April 2019, commission approved metrics developed between SWBNO and Civil Service Department staff to gauge delegation's success. Through summer 2019, Civil Service staff reported challenges gaining access to SWBNO's data delaying planned review from fall 2019 to early 2020
- Cyberattack in 2019 and 2020 onset of COVID-19 pandemic took precedence; formal evaluation was never completed, although a preliminary report was delivered by Civil Service Department in May 2021

From May 2021 presentation to SWBNO board committee by CSD:

“In 2019, Civil Service staff produced a preliminary report on the effectiveness of delegation. At that time, the data indicated the ***average time from application to placement on an eligible list was 18 days for delegated hires and 8 days for non delegated hires. S&WB and Civil Service timelines both met the targeted range of 21-28 days.***”

Further analysis would be required to evaluate other factors contributing to hiring timelines and overall pros/cons of the delegated approach



Civil Service Rules Provide SWBNO Some Additional Special Flexibility

- Rule IV Section 14 provides that an appointing authority may (with City Personnel Director approval) authorize pay up to 15 percent above minimum (not to exceed the third quartile of the pay range) to retain an employee who has received an outside job offer. While City departments cannot compete against one another, offers from the City to SWBNO employees do count if all other conditions are met (permanent employee, verifiable job offer, documentation regarding employee being unusually qualified or needed). (pp. 47-48)
- Rule IV (Pay Plan) Section 9 includes SWBNO on a list of public safety agencies and agencies substantially responsible for staffing annual special events – CSD approval is required before employees in these agencies can exceed 750 hours of overtime in a year. The standard is 416 hours for employees in other departments. (p. 44)
- Rule IV Section 12 creates a pilot program to offer special monetary compensation in the form of incentive pay to be awarded quarterly for employees who meet specified goals and objectives – Council approved the language October 5, 2000. (p. 47)
 - Employee feedback indicates that the program was stopped for lack of funding prior to 2020
 - New Civil Service rule for 2024 provides \$2,000 one-time payment for any City employees exceeding expectations
- At the same time, Civil Service rules can also limit SWBNO's ability to manage budget, operations, and performance, as indicated in later discussion of Project Focus Areas (e.g., recruitment, retention)



SWBNO HR and Civil Service Department Roles			
		SWBNO HR	Civil Service Department (CSD)
Hiring Process	Job posting	SWBNO posts SWBNO jobs via internal requisition and notifies Civil Service	City posts "Citywide" jobs (clear City equivalents) after approving requisition
	Applicant eligibility	SWBNO HR determines for SWBNO jobs	CSD determines qualified/not and provides eligible list at completion
	Testing		All testing done by CSD
	Interviews	SWBNO hiring managers (HR does not currently participate but may prospectively)	
	Hiring selection	Hiring managers send notes/memo to SWBNO relaying hiring decision	
	Background check	SWBNO HR handles for all jobs	
	Onboarding	SWBNO Recruitment and Classification team; includes background, physical/drug screen	
Compensation	Setting position pay	SWBNO HR follows Civil Service pay plan and rules -- applies minimum unless higher rate is approved by Civil Service Dept. based on qualifications etc.	Approves/denies requests for pay beyond minimum
	Award of incentive/special quals pay and similar	SWBNO verifies and prepares request to CSD	CSD approves or denies
Performance Accountability	Performance evaluations	SWBNO adheres to Civil Service standards	Civil Service sets format and rules
	Grievances	Three options for filing: SWBNO, Civil Service, Dedicated "Lighthouse" phone line; SWBNO may handle regardless of source	
	Disciplinary actions	SWBNO HR follows Civil Service process (handled internally with routine cc's to CSD, potentially state if OIG or termination involved)	Appeals to CSC
	Appeal hearings	SWBNO HR and appellant may present	Civil Service Commission



SWBNO Perspectives on Civil Service

- **SWBNO leadership/management interviews and workforce focus group discussions from mid-2023 indicated a perception that the City's Civil Service system:**
 - Is challenging to understand and navigate because of complex rules, inconsistent decisions and a lack of transparency
 - Constrains SWBNO's recruitment and retention of quality staff
 - Limits and does not support SWBNO's ability to
 - Incentivize high performance by improving compensation
 - Address poor behavior by taking proper disciplinary steps
 - Does not reflect SWBNO's unique nature and needs as a utility
- **Beyond general perceptions of the Civil Service system, SWBNO HR staff also reported specific points of concern in mid-2023 focus group discussions and interviews**
 - Existing routine meetings between SWBNO HR and CSD viewed as ineffective
 - Delays with going through Civil Service for testing
 - Difficulty accessing required trainings
 - Inflexibility in qualifications in education vs. experience
 - Difficulty changing position descriptions for titles shared with the City, which makes it difficult to find individuals with the specific skills needed for a utility



SWBNO Employee Perspectives on Civil Service and SWBNO HR

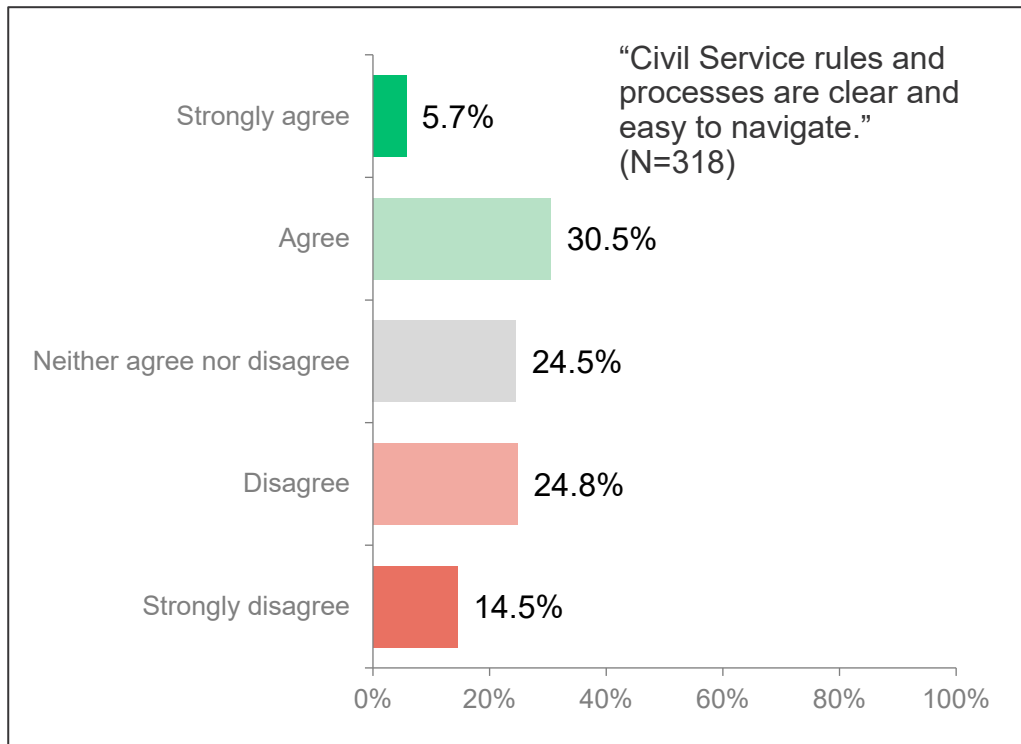
- General employee impressions of CSD and the Civil Service system suggest a lack of clarity about CSD/SWBNO HR's respective roles and responsibilities
- While ratings were generally similar between CSD and HR, at the margins, respondents were more likely to express dissatisfaction with SWBNO HR regarding recruitment, promotions, and fair and consistent discipline, while dissatisfaction with training was directed more toward CSD





SWBNO Perspectives on Civil Service and SWBNO HR

- Survey respondents leaned slightly toward agreement that Civil Service rules/processes are not clear or easy to navigate, but comments also indicated concerns about SWBNO HR's knowledge and use of Civil Service rules, as well as a lack of training/communication/awareness of rules among supervisors and middle management
- Several respondents noted Civil Service rules limiting creation of new positions to allow promotion of employees, but others made reference to new jobs they perceived to have been created to allow promotions



Employee survey feedback

- “The rules themselves are not that bad, but we are not good raising awareness and helping employees navigate them”*
- “SWB's lack of knowledge on how Civil Service operates and the amount of paperwork needed for anything to happen contributes to the incredible slowness of anything happening that involves Civil Service (or it doesn't happen at all)”*



Some Favorable Outcomes When SWBNO Engages With Civil Service

- Based on CSD data, in 2022 SWBNO had better outcomes than the average across other City departments in requests for job studies, temporary special assignment pay, educational incentive pay, and professional certification pay
- SWBNO and City both achieved 100 percent success on requests for special hiring pay rates and clerical skills pay
- On a per-employee basis, SWBNO requested most special pays less often
- SWBNO was more likely to request job studies and clerical skills pay

2022 Civil Service Engagement by SWBNO and City Departments				
Red shading: SWBNO attempts fewer CS interactions than City per employee				
Green shading: SWBNO has higher success rate than City or 100% success				
	SWBNO		City	
Action	Attempts/ 1000 emps	Success rate	Attempts/ 1000 emps	Success rate
Job Studies	30.5	91.7%	8.7	90.6%
Hiring Rates (higher pay at entry to address rec/ret challenges)	3.4	100.0%	9.8	100.0%
Extraordinary or Superior Qualifications, Experience, or Credentials Pay	9.3	54.5%	12.8	63.8%
Temporary Work in a Higher Classification	8.5	80.0%	13.9	76.5%
Temporary Special Assignment Pay	5.1	100.0%	18.8	87.0%
Educational Incentive Pay	14.4	100.0%	31.5	93.1%
Professional Certification Pay	3.4	100.0%	6.3	73.9%
Clerical Skills Pay	2.5	100.0%	0.3	100.0%

Questions for Potential Exploration

- Does the nature of certain SWBNO positions make them more or less suitable for approval of special pays?*
- Is SWBNO more selective in the requests it brings than City departments?*
- What factors drive SWBNO's higher rate of job study requests?*



Employee Perspectives on SWBNO HR

- In interviews and focus groups conducted prior to new HR leadership having transitioned fully into place, participants highlighted concerns about short-staffing and high rates of turnover in SWBNO's HR function
 - These challenges were noted as likely causes of long response times and limited understanding of HR-related processes and rules, whether internal to SWBNO or governed by City Civil Service
- Focus group attendees from operating departments reported longer response times and a lack of support from SWBNO's HR function
 - In some instances, the lack of support provided was transactional (e.g., hiring or promotions stalling when the responsible HR analyst is on vacation). Focus group participants noted longer response times in hiring and other HR processes
 - In other instances, the lack of support can be described as strategic (e.g., a lack of training, standardized materials or policy documents outlining SWBNO HR guidelines)
- Managers and staff reported that they may go around or avoid HR in interpreting and/or implementing policy, sometimes turning directly to Civil Service staff to ensure correct application and reading of rules
 - Some employees and managers suggest that HR is ill-equipped to interpret and implement civil service rules impacting employees. In the words of one SWBNO employee, ***“I don't know if Civil Service is our problem. I think our problem is within”***



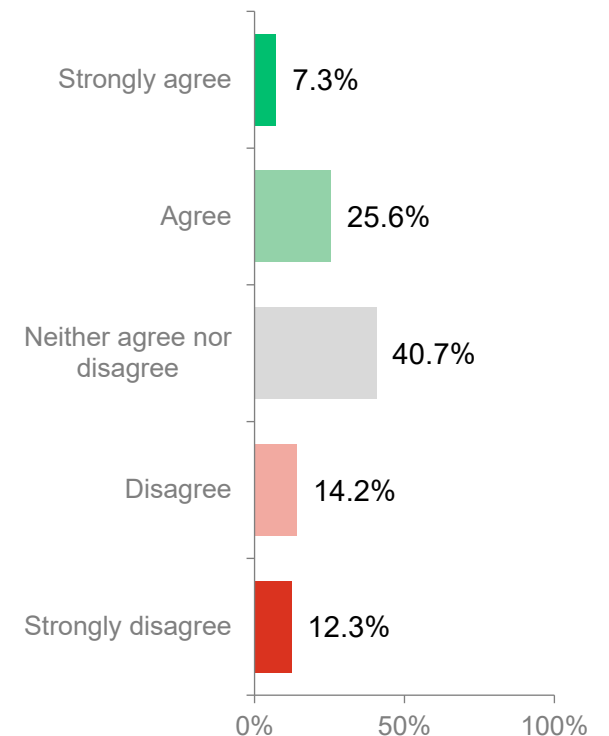
Employee Perspectives on SWBNO HR

- Less than one third of survey respondents agreed that SWBNO HR staff understand Civil Service rules and are valuable advocates
- Several respondents noted staff turnover as a challenge for SWBNO HR, and some indicated they see signs of improvement
- Still, commenters included multiple references to HR staff not responding to employee calls or requiring multiple follow-ups to get a response; one respondent described the department as “disorganized and not user friendly”

Employee Survey Feedback

- *“I don’t think everyone knows Civil Service rules the way that they should - all Human Resource staff needs training”*
- *“SWBNO HR strongly impedes the Civil Service process”*
- *“I believe that they do their best. When there is staff turnover then requests drop through the cracks”*
- *“I may have to ask and follow up, but I eventually get the answer”*
- *“The HR does not really advocate, this is left to other departments”*
- *“So many people come and go they don’t know the rules”*

“SWBNO’s Human Resources staff understand the City’s Civil Service rules and are valuable advocates for SWBNO.”
(N=317)





Project Focus Areas:

Recruitment

Retention

Career Development and Pathways

Compensation Practices

Accountability Structures

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Recruitment

- SWBNO has four distinct hiring processes (CSD is generally responsible for drug and other testing, as well as verifying applicant qualifications, education, etc.)
 - (1) Direct and (2) Unclassified processes requiring minimal Civil Service involvement
 - (3) SWBNO specific and (4) Citywide hiring requiring significant Civil Service involvement
- Hiring processes vary in time required based on job type and CSD engagement
 - Direct hire (for positions including office trainee and laborer): SWBNO HR manages entire process, except for CSD provision of drug testing results
 - Unclassified: unless position is being newly created and requires Civil Service Commission approval, SWBNO HR manages entire process, except for CSD provision of drug testing results
 - SWBNO positions (covers 78 positions delegated to SWBNO by Civil Service): SWBNO process is self-contained, but requires final check/signoff by a CSD liaison who posts the position in the NEOGOV system; CSD also provides drug testing results
 - Citywide positions: CSD must approve requisition and posting and execute in NEOGOV, provide register of eligible applicants to SWBNO HR, and provide drug testing results
- In what appears to be standard practice across the City, SWBNO jobs are posted continuously on the City website (i.e., no closing date); some have been posted since fall 2021 (challenges may include applicants' inability to determine what is actually open and under active recruitment)

From 2021 Civil Service Department report to SWBNO

Under delegation, S&WB is responsible for:

- Posting departmental vacancies to application
- Recruiting for vacancies and workforce development
- Evaluating candidates for eligibility for positions
- Creating the list of eligible candidates
- Certifying the list of eligible candidates for appointment
- Hiring from the list of eligible candidates



Recruitment: Vacancy Rates

- Calculating a vacancy rate for SWBNO is challenging because of data collection and tracking
- As of June 26, 2023, SWBNO HR recorded 402 organization-wide vacancies:
 - 209 were considered “V” for currently vacant
 - 28 were considered “VR” for vacant (but requisition), meaning they are in the process of trying to hire or promote someone into said position
 - 133 provided an incumbent name for the most recent person to hold the position
 - 32 were blank, meaning that the position has been vacant for over three years, a new position was budgeted in the last year, or the incumbent was unknown. (Job studies are required for any new positions and for positions that have been vacant for three years or more)
- The nominal vacancy count is likely higher than actual hiring needs: Anecdotal evidence indicates some of these vacancies are the result of departments partially funding positions for hiring later in the fiscal year or in hopes of holding positions for future use in reorganization or restructuring of roles
- Some departments also address staffing needs with contractors or temporary employees: this may be a positive in some areas, but can be more costly if done as a stopgap and not strategically
- In discussing potential performance metrics, HR staff suggested limiting the vacancy rate to include only positions for which SWBNO is actively recruiting, representing a fraction of the 402 total vacancies shown in SWBNO data
 - This could be done as part of an exercise to identify which jobs should be posted continuously, which should have closing dates, and which postings should be removed

Note: As of early 2024, SWBNO staff report that some vacant positions funded in the annual budget will not be considered vacancies. The distinction is to be highlighted in a “budgeted positions report” based on whether a funded position has an active requisition in place and active recruiting in progress. Vacant but funded positions may be held in the budget as “inactive” for future utilization (e.g., opportunity to promote employee who needs more experience in current role). HR staff are to monitor positions that would require a job study (i.e., vacant for at least three years) and notify operating departments in case job study is to be requested



Recruitment: Vacancies

- Most of SWBNO's recent vacancies can be found in the Office of the General Superintendent (Operations), which has nearly 70 percent of total headcount and more than 60 percent of total vacancies
- The Customer Service Department has the next highest share of vacant positions
 - In 2023, reported vacancies in Customer Service grew by 22.5 percent from prior year
 - With 18.8 percent of total headcount, Customer Service has 21.6 percent of total vacancies
- As noted earlier, most vacancies are not the focus of active recruitment efforts

Year-over-Year Comparison of Vacancies by Department, 2022 - 2023					
Department	2022 Vacancies	2022 % of Total	2023 Vacancies	2023 % of Total	22-23 % Change
Executive Director	7	1.8%	9	2.2%	28.6%
Special Counsel	5	1.3%	5	1.2%	0.0%
Chief Admin. Officer	42	10.6%	29	7.2%	-31.0%
Gen. Support (Operations)	248	62.6%	243	60.4%	-2.0%
Chief Customer Service	71	17.9%	87	21.6%	22.5%
Communications	6	1.5%	4	1.0%	-33.3%
Chief Financial Officer	17	4.3%	25	6.2%	47.1%
Total	396	100.0%	402	100.0%	1.5%



Recruitment: Vacancies

- Five SWBNO positions with the most listed vacancies make up nearly one third (32.4 percent) of total SWBNO vacancies: all five positions are either SWBNO-delegated roles or can be filled via direct hire and without Civil Service engagement

Top Five Vacant Positions, 2023		
Position Title	Total Vacancies	% of Total Vacancies
Office Worker	28	7.0%
Water Meter Reader Trainee	27	6.7%
Networks Maint. Tech 1	26	6.5%
Utilities Plant Worker	26	6.5%
Laborer	23	5.7%

- In total, 15 positions represent more than half (221, or 55 percent) of 402 total reported vacancies
- The majority of SWBNO's high-vacancy positions can be filled with minimal Civil Service engagement
 - Ten of 15 are SWBNO-delegated, two more are direct hire
 - Three of 15 require hiring from City-maintained eligibility lists (management development analyst 1 and management development specialists 1 and 2)

High-vacancy and hard-to-fill positions represent an opportunity to develop creative, focused strategies.

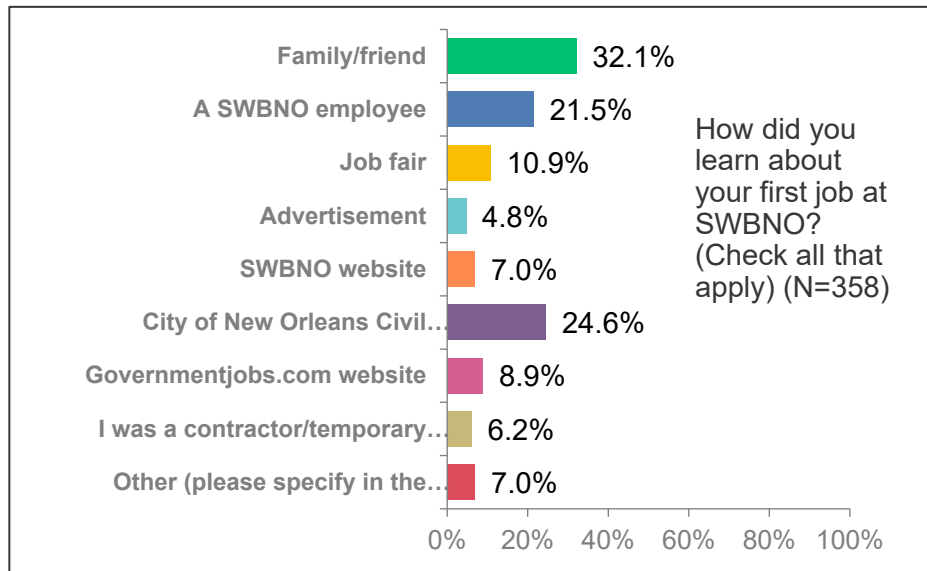
Examples include:

- Emphasize building eligible lists for positions like water meter reader (note May 2021 CSD presentation highlighted lists with multiple eligible applicants available for delegated and non-delegated jobs)
- Identify effective pipelines by analyzing applicant sourcing data and engaging current staff
- Promote SWBNO's benefits and mission (current job descriptions do not always highlight these attributes)



Connections With Personal Networks Drive Recruiting

- SWBNO's recruiting relies primarily on word of mouth, online job postings, and periodic job fairs: more than half of survey respondents heard of their job from a friend/family member/SWBNO employee
 - Partnership with City's Job1 Business and Career Solutions initiative includes postings on Louisiana Workforce Commission website (program also offers development programs for new/growing businesses, partnerships with employers looking to expand/relocate in Orleans Parish, and employment/training services for job seekers)
- SWBNO website generates fewer responses than City website, job fairs or NEOGOV; SWBNO does not use its social media to promote job openings or SWBNO as a place to work aside from occasional job fairs
- Data is not tracked or monitored for strategic recruitment planning and management
- HR planning new outreach for 2024, including emphases on Vietnamese community and veterans; increased marketing of AMI-related roles also anticipated, along with more strategic use of Mayor's Office internships



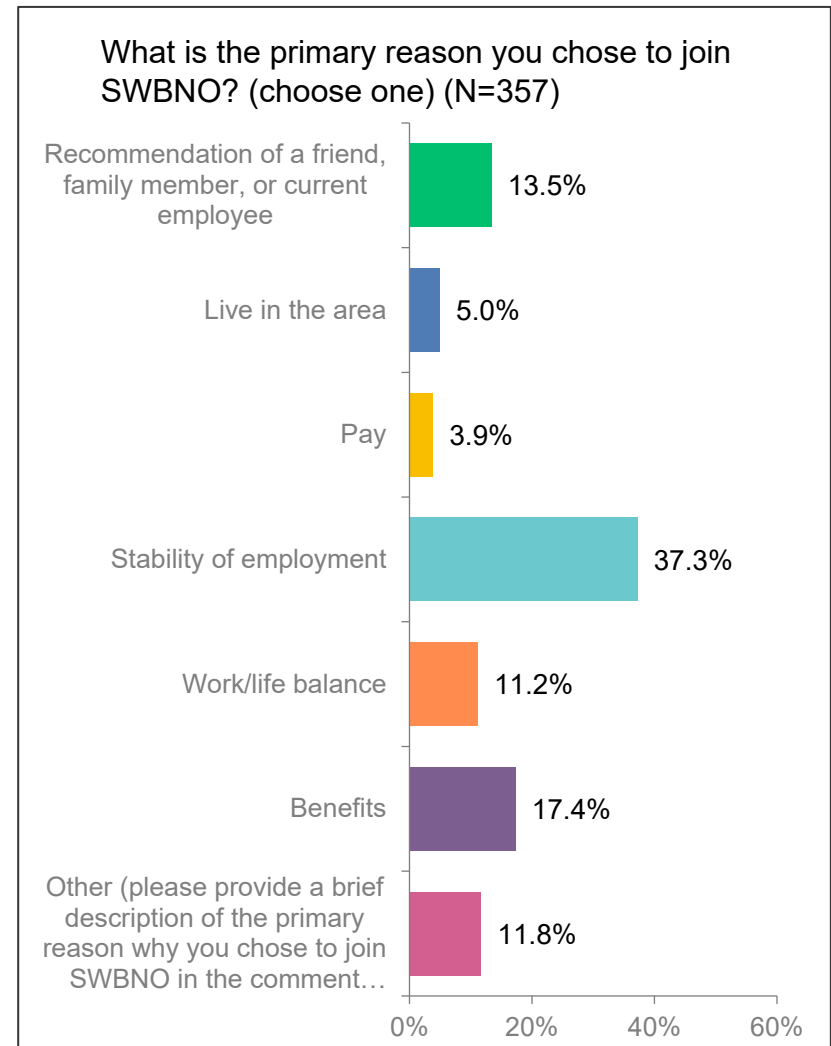
Survey respondents' suggestions for best places to recruit included:

- High schools, community colleges, four-year colleges/universities, trade schools
- Job fairs
- Workforce development orgs (JOB1)
- Promotion from within, hiring contract/temporary staff
- Faith-based and community orgs
- Outside Orleans Parish (i.e., lift domicile requirement)



Job Stability and Benefits Drive Decisions to Join SWBNO

- Employment stability and benefits were the top two reasons for joining SWBNO, with recommendation of a friend/family member/current employee third most common
- Pay and local residency ranked lowest
- Comments in the employee survey's "Other" option highlighted factors including:
 - SWBNO's mission of public service
 - The opportunity to serve the community/New Orleans
 - SWBNO responded to application/offered position before other potential employers

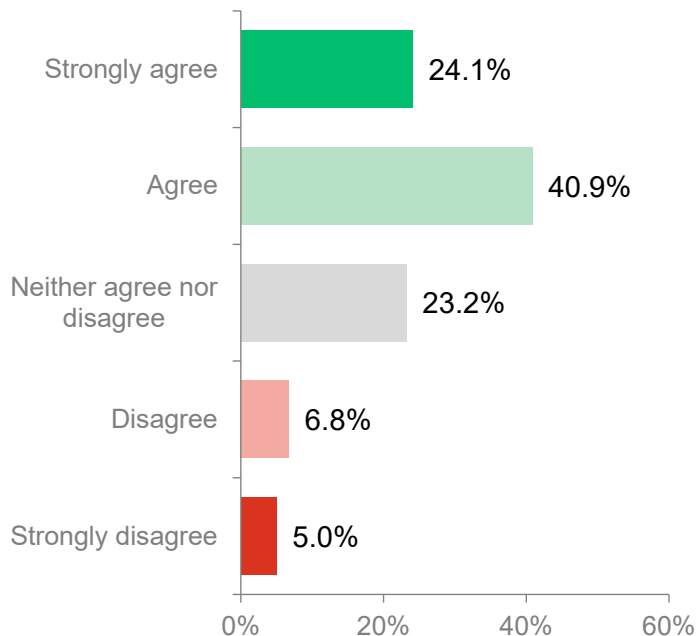




Employees Represent An Effective – and Positive – Recruiting Pipeline

- Nearly two thirds of survey respondents said they would encourage people to consider SWBNO as an employer, while less than 12 percent said they would not
- Positive responses highlighted benefits, growth opportunities, stability, good place to work/good direction, mission/purpose, flexible schedule
- Negative responses noted pay, poor workplace culture/morale, domicile policy

“I would encourage people to consider SWBNO as an employer.” (N=340)



Employee survey comments

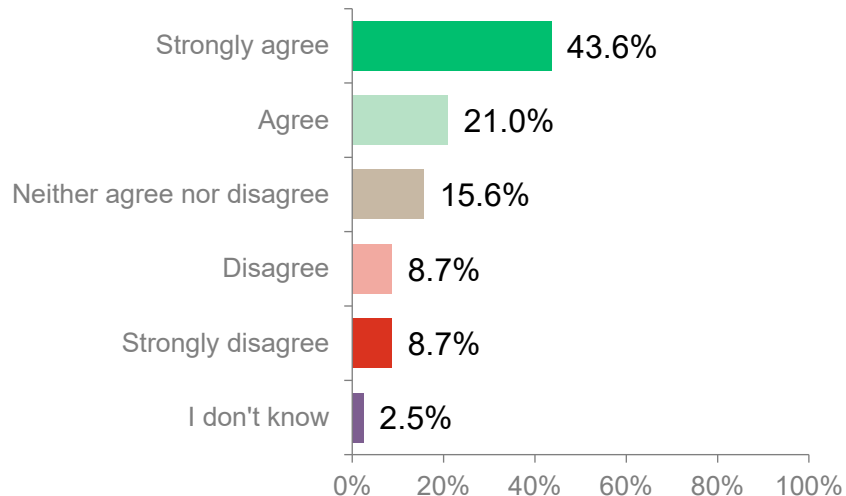
- *“You can learn a ton about the infrastructure of our city, and do some good work improving it”*
- *“I asked people to apply. but almost all said the pay was too low”*
- *“The benefits and job security is something that this company has that many companies do not in the current job market”*
- *“As a general rule, when people inquire about job opportunities at the SWB, the discussion of pay usually concludes the exchange”*
- *“There are more than you could imagine available and willing to work here that can’t because of the residency”*



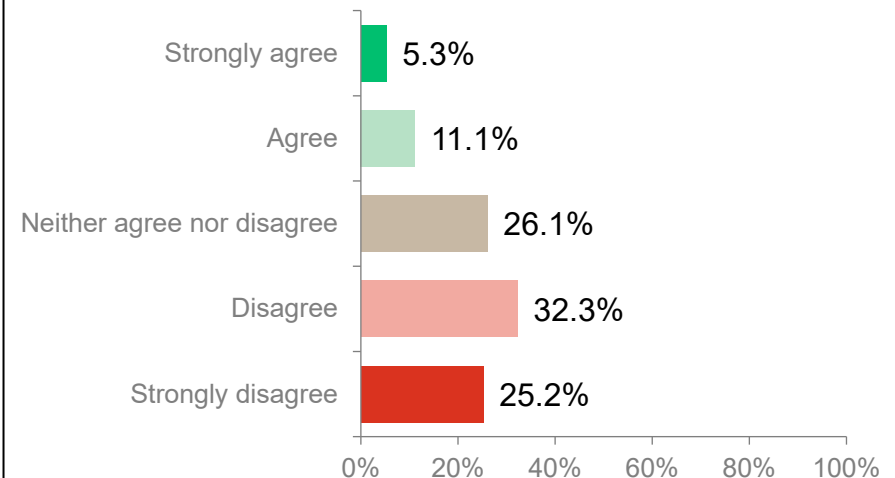
Compensation and Domicile Requirement Impact on Recruitment

- ◆ Compensation competitiveness and the City's domicile requirement were cited as obstacles to recruitment in focus groups and employee survey results
 - Nearly two thirds of survey respondents said the domicile requirement limits recruiting and retention of quality staff, and only 16 percent agreed that starting pay encourages applications from well-qualified candidates
 - Domicile requirement also noted in focus groups and interviews as hampering recruiting of engineers and staff earning salaries below \$40,000

Please select whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “The Orleans Parish domicile (residency) requirement for SWBNO employees limits SWBNO’s ability to hire and retain quality staff.” (N=358)



Please select whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “SWBNO’s starting pay for non-supervisory positions encourages applications from well-qualified candidates.” (N=341)





Slow Hiring Processes Can Hamper Success

- The average time to hire nationally across all industries is 44 days in 2023, up from 42 the year before, according to the Society for Human Resource Management
- SWBNO reports that engaging with Civil Service can extend hiring time
 - City supplies register of qualified applicants for City jobs
 - SWBNO maintains register for SWBNO positions, but CSD approves hiring decisions
- Focus group participants described hiring processes as excessively slow and bureaucratic, involving too many steps and stakeholders
- Staff indicate that if someone within a given workflow is absent, the hiring process becomes siloed and may stall
- Candidates may wait up to two months after completing the hiring process before a final decision is issued and hiring can commence, according to focus group participants
- According to one survey respondent, ***“there is such a delay in hiring paperwork being processed that our department has lost multiple new hires because they have had to take other jobs while WAITING for their onboarding”***

Tracking time to hire would equip SWBNO to identifying bottlenecks (internal and with CSD) and improve process efficiency

- Per CSD, 2022 time to hire for City agencies was 11 days from application to placement on eligible list, 42 days from referral to start date
- 2021: 13 days from application to placement on eligible list, 39 days from referral to start date
- While SWBNO does not have full access to the NEOGOV system, CSD reports that SWBNO can access time-to-hire information from NEOGOV



Recruitment: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- ◆ SWBNO can use key performance indicators to assess needs and design strategies that support efficiency, effectiveness and equity in recruiting talent
- ◆ Suggested KPIs
 - Number of applicants (tracked by source)
 - Percent of applicants meeting minimum qualifications
 - Vacancy rate or percentage of authorized positions open (open positions / authorized headcount)
 - Time to fill open positions (differentiated between SWBNO-delegated jobs and City-recruited jobs)
 - Applicant success (percent of hires retained through probationary period, tracked by source)
 - Percent of vacancies filled by internal candidates

Recruitment KPIs represent the organization's objectives and provide the data that helps the recruiting team understand where they currently stand, what needs to improve and which steps are necessary to follow organizational goals.... Combining the results of all areas of the recruitment process and recruitment activities can give a clearer picture of what can be improved and how. KPIs are indicators that provide crucial insights into the strengths of an organization's hiring strategy.

-- "Talent Connections Toolkit: Building and Sustaining Partnerships Between Government Employers and Higher Education," Government-To-University Network in Kansas City with The Volcker Alliance and Mid-America Regional Council, September 4 2023. Accessed at <https://www.marc.org/document/g2u-talent-connections-toolkit>.



Project Focus Areas:

Recruitment

Retention

Career Development and Pathways

Compensation Practices

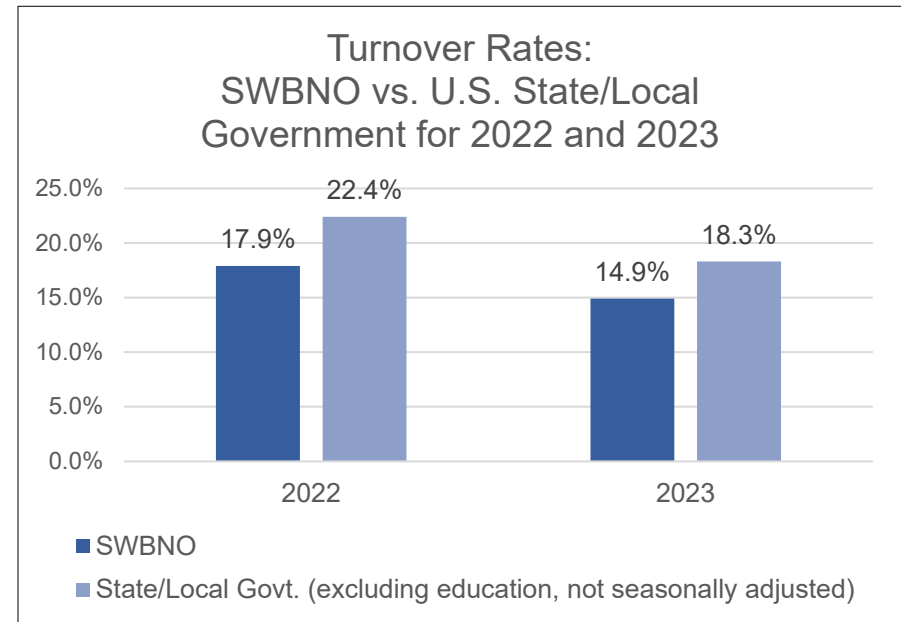
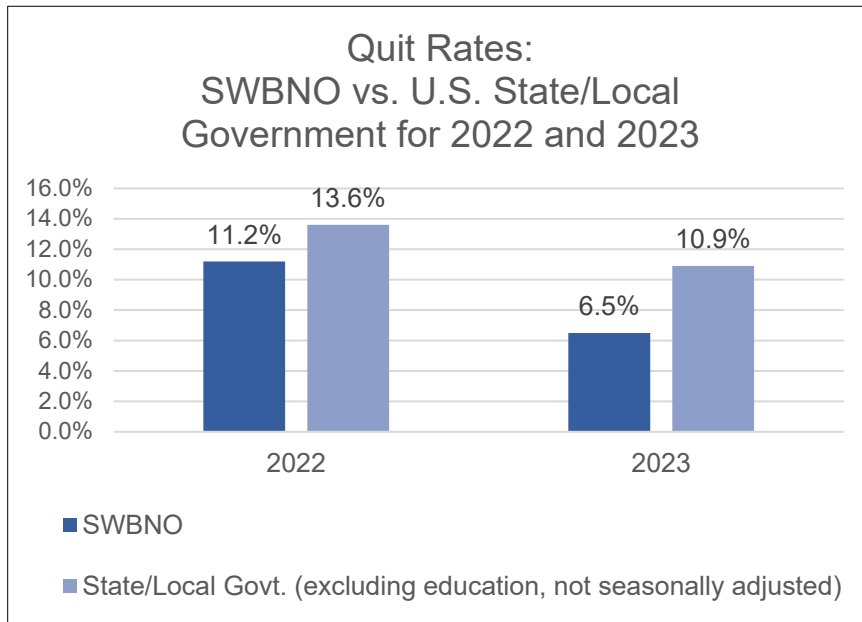
Accountability Structures

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Retention: Recent Turnover May Be Slowing

- SWBNO's turnover (inclusive of retirements) and quit (voluntary resignation) rates dropped from 2022 to 2023 and are lower than national state/local government rates
 - SWBNO turnover slowdown driven by fewer resignations and retirements, while DROP departures and terminations increased
- PFM also reviewed turnover and quit rates for the transportation, warehousing and utilities sector: separations are significantly higher in that sector than in the state/local government sector compared to SWBNO below



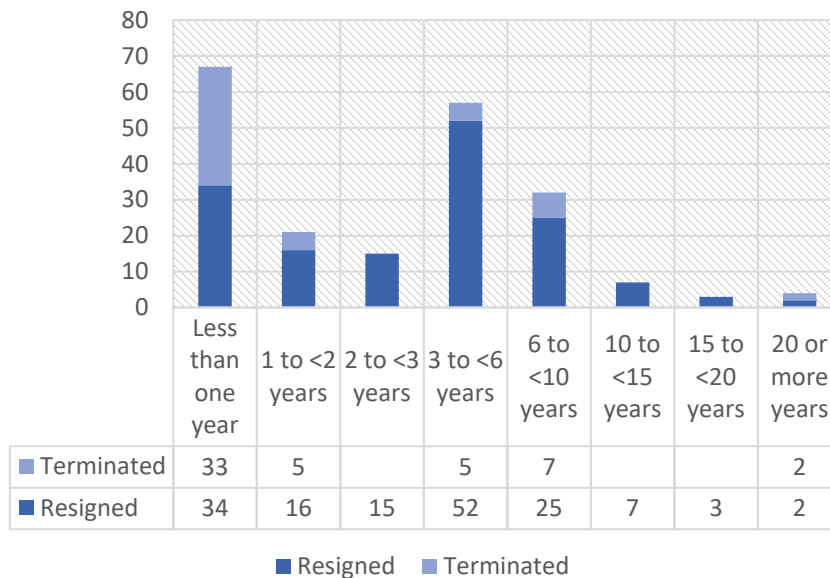
Turnover rate = All separations / total headcount; Quit rates = Voluntary resignations / total headcount
Sources: SWBNO Board Reports from HR, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (Nov. 2023 data preliminary, Dec. 2023 data estimated based on 11-month average and trends)



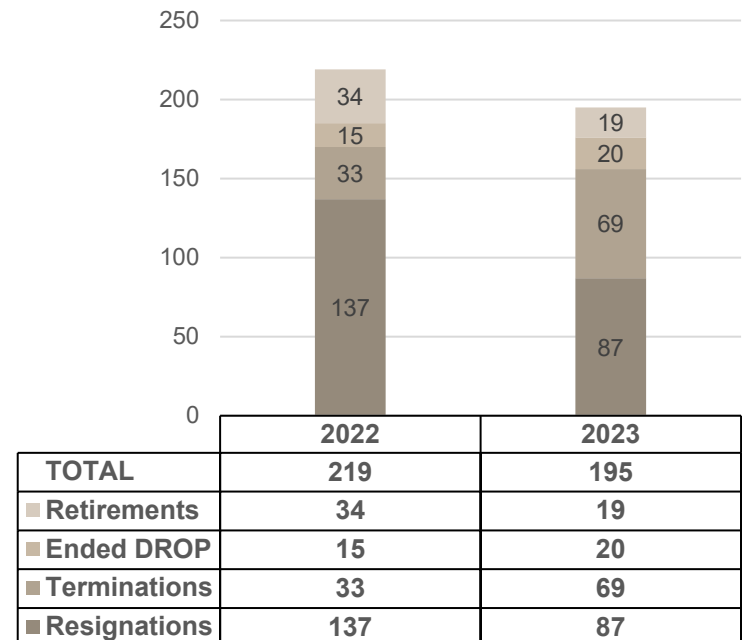
Retention: Most SWBNO Employees Are Relatively New to Organization

- Most SWBNO resignations and terminations occur in the first six years of employment, with about one third occurring in the first three years
 - Nearly two thirds of terminations occur in first year of employment (probation period)
 - Resignations are most likely to occur in year 1 or years 3-6
 - Retirement average tenure 29.2 years, median 34.7 years

Resignations and Terminations
by SWBNO Employee Tenure,
January 2022 - June 2023



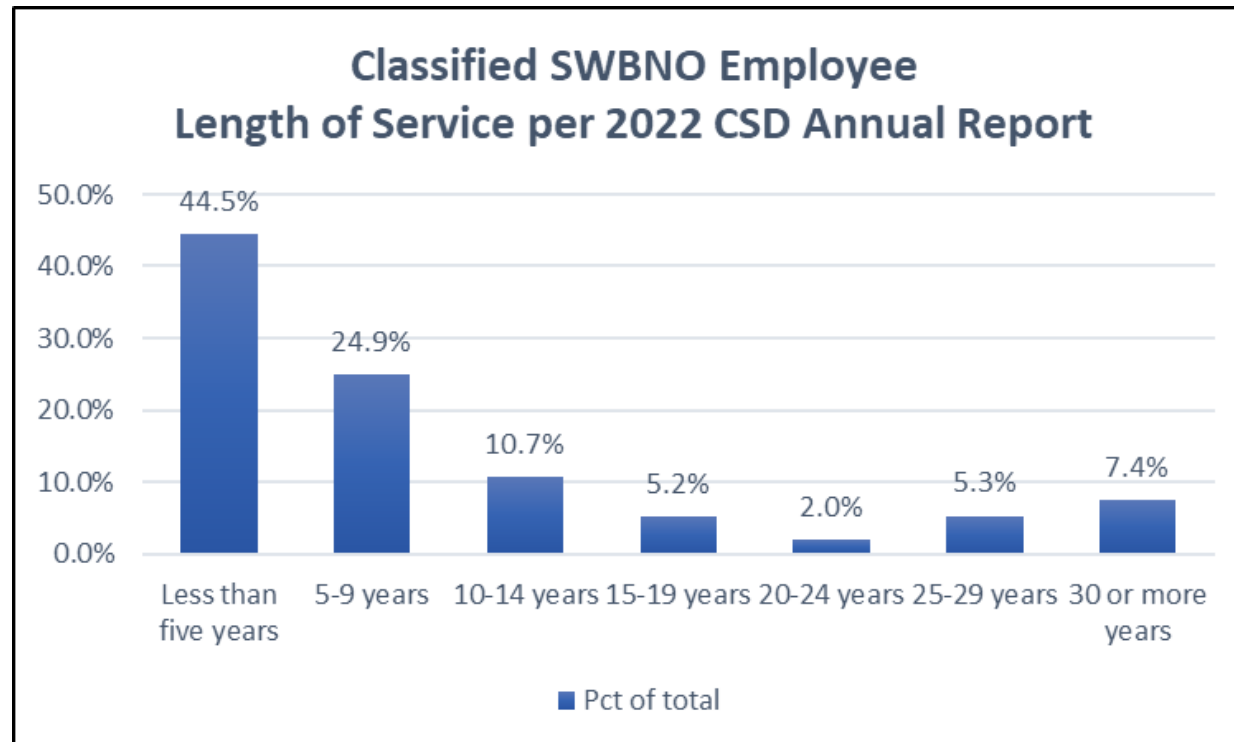
SWBNO Separations by Type
2022 and 2023





Retention: **Most of SWBNO's Workforce Is Relatively New**

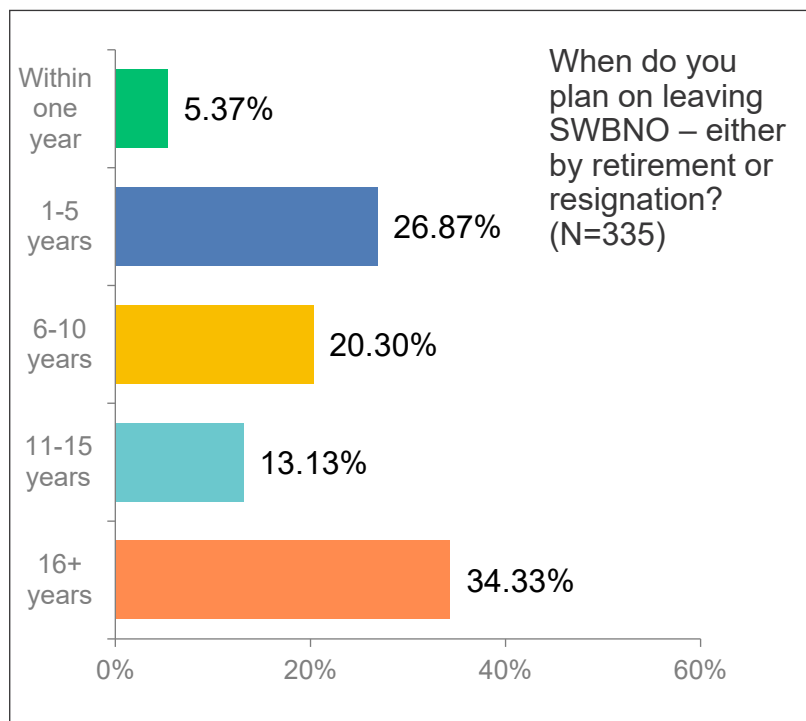
- ◆ Almost 70 percent of SWBNO employees have worked at the utility for nine years or less
 - Nearly half have less than five years of tenure with SWBNO, reflecting recent turnover and high turnover in the early years after hiring – as well as efforts to rebuild staffing after headcount decline during the pandemic





Retention: Most SWBNO Employees Intend to Stay Six Years or More

- More than one third of survey respondents indicated plans to stay 15 years or more, and another 13 percent plan to stay more than 10 years.
 - Seventy-one percent of survey respondents said they plan to retire from SWBNO with a pension
 - Focus groups cited compensation as a primary driver of retention issues; perception of inadequate/inconsistent disciplinary processes, inequitable promotional procedures and inability to advance were also noted
- Strong benefits, job security and job mission (clean water and flood protection for New Orleans) were cited as positive factors in retaining staff



Employee Survey Comments

- ***“I would love to stay long enough to retire with a pension, but **may have to leave if my unsustainably low salary doesn't improve**”***
- ***“Overall I love my job. However, if leadership continues to neglect accountability in lower levels of management, I can see myself leaving a little earlier. Also, not standing up for us in the media can affect my decision as well”***
- ***“I believe I will stay regardless, but I would be more certain of that if I could live in a nearby parish”***
- ***“The benefits at SWB are amazing and are worth staying even if the pay isn't great”***
- ***“Hopefully, I can get the position I want and flourish with SWBNO next year; if not, I will look into other government agencies”***



Retention: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- SWBNO can build on current retention data collection to conduct analyses that highlight areas of concern and focus
 - “Few HR metrics are better than turnover rate at showing whether a company is delivering a positive employee experience. Looking at the historical pattern of employee turnover can also be helpful for resource planning, such as budgeting for hiring and training.... A high turnover rate can signal potential issues, such as poor candidate selection, ineffective managers, low compensation or a lack of advancement opportunities.”
 - “To identify what underlying issues may be plaguing your company, you’ll need to determine who is heading for the exits and why.... To gain insights, dig into data such as demographics, salary history, performance reviews and exit survey responses.”
- Suggested measures include:
 - Turnover rate (all separations/headcount)
 - Quit rate (voluntary resignations/headcount)
 - Mean/median tenure (average or median years of employment overall and at separation)
 - Vacancy rate or percentage of authorized positions open (open positions/authorized headcount)



Project Focus Areas:

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Career Development: Pathways

- ◆ SWBNO identifies 27 different career pathways offering progressions of two to 10 positions as employees gain experience and training/credentials
 - **Experience**
 - Some positions require years of experience in or outside of SWBNO (e.g., water treatment operators with appropriate license can progress based on time at SWBNO or equivalent amount of “related experience in a water purification plant”)
 - Other positions are more detailed (e.g., promotion to Water Meter Reader and Services Technician Lead requires 18 months as 3142 – Water Meter Reader and Services Technician)
 - **Licenses/certifications:** Some roles require professional licensing or certification (e.g. water treatment operator, certified professional accountant, professional engineer, electricians, plumbers, CDL for some equipment operators)
 - **High school/college degrees:** Positions generally require at least high school degree or GED, but most do not require college-level study (some college coursework or degree required for professional/science-focused roles)
 - **Civil Service courses** may be required to advance (e.g., office worker hired with high school degree or GED needs three years experience and seven Civil Service courses in topics like basic grammar/proofreading, customer service, and business mathematics to move up to Office Assistant)
- ◆ Per Civil Service, most positions are open to current employees (promotional) and outside applicants
- ◆ Employees must meet posted qualifications to be placed on eligible list, but placement on list does not guarantee promotion (SWBNO determining factors include job performance and attendance)

Note: Under the new approach being developed by HR for assessing vacant positions, the vacancies referenced may be categorized as “budgeted positions” rather than vacancies for which recruiting is ongoing



Career Development: **Pathway Example #1 – Steam Plant Engineer**

Steam Plant Engineer 1 • \$42,905, 10 employees, 2 vacancies

- **Permanent status with SWBNO. 6 months related experience in a high-pressure steam driven pumping plant.**
- Required Licenses/Certifications: 3rd Class or higher steam boiler or steam engine license

Steam Plant Engineer 2 • \$51,178, 17 employees, 2 vacancies

- **Permanent status with SWBNO as Steam Plant Engineer I. 4 years experience in a high-pressure steam plant.**
- Required Licenses/Certifications: 2nd Class Steam Boilers license or a 2nd Class Steam Turbines License

Steam Plant Engineer 3 • \$68,069, 4 employees, 1 vacancy

- **Permanent status as a Steam Plant Engineer II with SWBNO. 5 years responsible experience in a high- pressure steam plant.**
- Required Licenses/Certifications: 1st Class boiler or turbine operating engineer's license
- Applies to both Boiler engineers and Turbine engineers

Steam Plant Engineer 4 • \$84,416, 3 employees, 1 vacancy

- **Permanent status as a Steam Plant Engineer III with SWBNO and 6 years Responsible full-time experience in a high-pressure steam plant.**
- Applies to both Boiler engineers and Turbine engineers

Note: Under the new approach being developed by HR for assessing vacant positions, the vacancies referenced may be categorized as “budgeted positions” rather than vacancies for which recruiting is ongoing



Career Development: **Pathway Example #2 – Networks Maintenance Tech**

Networks Maintenance Technician I • \$36,109, 127 employees, 26 vacancies

- **1 year of maintenance or construction**
- Required Licenses/Certifications: Valid Drivers' License

Networks Maintenance Technician II • \$39,161, 63 employees, 3 vacancies

- **1 year as Networks Maintenance Technician I; documented certification of required on-the-job skills**
- Required Education: High School Diploma or G.E.D or COMM 100; COMP 410 or 400

Networks Senior Maintenance Technician I • \$42,810, 16 employees, 1 vacancy

- **1 year as Networks Maintenance Technician II or 3 years in maintenance/construction in water distributions or wastewater collections**
- Required Licenses/Certifications: Class "A" CDL; PBSV 210,220; COMP 401; SUPV 610,690; PDVP 930

Networks Senior Maintenance Technician II • \$46,086, 39 employees, 1 vacancy

- **2 years as Senior Maintenance Technician I or Equipment Operator IV or 5 years in maintenance/construction in water distributions or wastewater collections**

Networks Master Maintenance Technician I • \$47,337, 5 employees

- **2 years as Senior Maintenance Technician II or 7 years in maintenance/construction in water distributions or wastewater collections**

Networks Master Maintenance Technician II • \$56,104, 8 employees, 1 vacancy

- **2 years as Master Maintenance Technician I or 9 years in maintenance/construction in water distributions or wastewater collections**
- Required Licenses/Certifications: All the previous plus SUPV 640; MGT 871

Note: Under the new approach being developed by HR for assessing vacant positions, the vacancies referenced may be categorized as "budgeted positions" rather than vacancies for which recruiting is ongoing



Career Development: **Pathway #3 – Office Support Specialist**

Office Worker • \$ 29,123, 90 employees, 28 vacancies

- **Requires High School diploma or G.E.D.**

Office Assistant • \$32,173, 24 employees,

- **Required Experience: 3 years as Office Worker**
- Required Courses: COMM 110 or 111 and 112; GCLE 310; PBSV 210. 220, 230. COMP 410

Senior Office Assistant

- N/A (no education/experience/civil service requirements provided)

Office Support Specialist • \$33,173, 24 employees, 1 vacancy

- **Required Experience: 1 year as Office Assistant**
- Required Courses: All of the above **plus** COMM 130

Senior Office Support Specialist • \$35,031, 10 employees, 3 vacancies

- **Required Experience: 1 year as Office Support Specialist**
- Required Courses: All of the above **plus** SUPV 610, 620 and one of either SUPV 640, 650, 680, 690, or COMM 120

Principal Office Support Specialist • \$37,647, 31 employees, 6 vacancies

- **Required Experience: 1 year as Senior Office Support Specialist**
- Required Courses: All of the above

Project Office Support Specialist • \$39,400, 1 employee, 1 vacancy

- **Required Experience: 1 year as Principal Office Support Specialist**



Career Development: **Required Training for Advancement**

- ◆ SWBNO staff report challenges in accessing Civil Service courses
 - Classes required for promotion may be unavailable or available only on short notice – this can prevent employees from attaining credentials they need to advance (focus group participants reported that the 2023 Civil Service course catalogue was not available until June 2023)
 - CSD indicates plans to use existing City technology to allow more self-service options for scheduling
 - SWBNO and CSD are also coordinating to allow SWBNO staff to teach required Civil Service courses – 2023 CSD catalog indicates one trainer at SWBNO vs. multiple trainers in some City departments
- ◆ SWBNO staff also indicated that some required courses include content not relevant to the positions for which the courses are required
- ◆ Most SWBNO career pathways do not appear to require Civil Service courses
 - ◆ CSD reports that some positions are exempt from testing, including minimum skill roles (e.g., laborer or office worker); some career series promotional positions (e.g., power dispatcher); and positions requiring professional licensing or certification (e.g., attorney or engineer)
- ◆ Some Civil Service courses, generally fundamental in nature, offer a test-out option



Career Development: Employee Development

- SWBNO HR manages required trainings for staff (e.g., sexual harassment awareness and prevention, OSHA, ethics, cybersecurity) – estimate approximately six trainings/year
 - HR increased focus on training supervisors and managers on conducting performance planning and evaluations in NEOGOV system, contributing to dramatic improvement in participation
- SWBNO does not generally offer apprenticeships or similar programs, while cross-training, training in new technology, and other skills development appear mostly ad hoc and reactive
 - New technology training generally provided by vendors and not coordinated with HR
 - Responding to complaints from supervisors whose employees needed forklift certification, Operations staff secured a vendor to provide the requisite training in 2023 and served approximately 24 people – expectation is to offer every two years – training was not coordinated with HR
 - Cross-training was initiated in 2023 for boiler operators (planned obsolescence of boilers set for end of 2024) but hurricane preparations and saltwater intrusion interfered; plan is to restart this year
 - Fleet services includes a CDL training unit
 - Delgado College partnership supports water purification certification
- SWBNO staff may participate in industry conferences (e.g., engineers in AWWA, metering staff related to new system), but there does not appear to be a strategic or comprehensive approach to using conferences for professional development – FY 2024 budget reduces funding for travel and training but still allowed with documented relevance
- Focus group participants suggested that training for equipment, processes and technologies is limited
 - Field/trades workers indicated challenges with adequate training for new processes
 - Other focus group participants indicated that newer employees do not receive adequate training, requiring other more experienced staff to take on more work
- HR reports plans to access technical assistance for development of training programs, as well as identifying skills gaps in organization and pursuing grant funds or partnerships to support training (potential for funding through Job1)



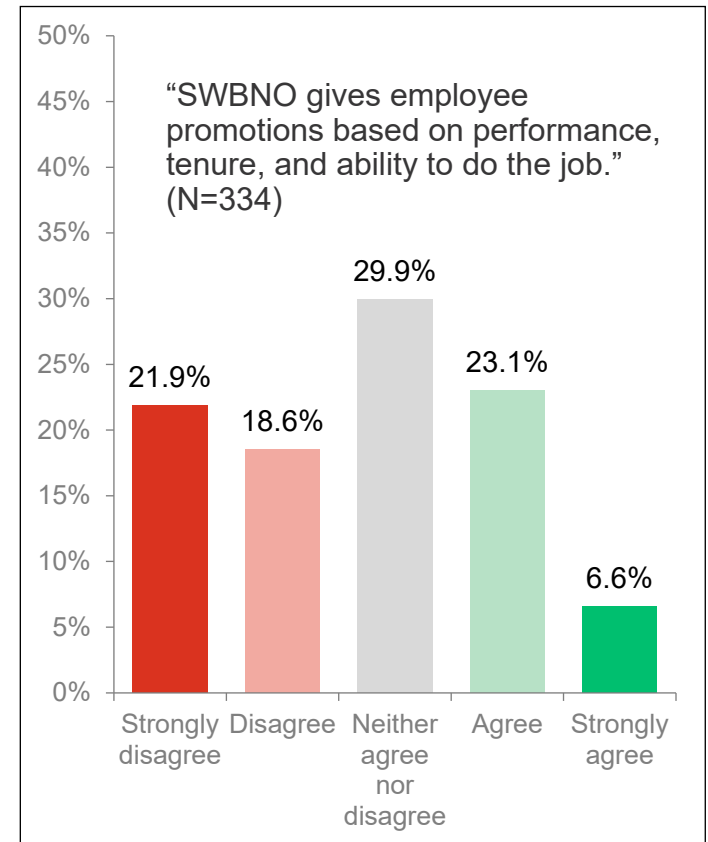
Career Development: Other Issues

- SWBNO job descriptions are not updated routinely
 - Staff indicate that updates only occur if requested by hiring managers/operating departments
 - Board presentations indicate that certain job descriptions are being updated in line with new metering system
 - CSD approves revisions to job descriptions – SWBNO hiring manager typically responsible for initiating and securing approval from SWBNO HR Director before forwarding to CSD
- Focus group feedback included discussions of issues with creating new jobs and tailoring titles and descriptions to suit SWBNO's unique needs, but additional staff conversations indicate that there are examples of these things being accomplished
 - Examples of successful efforts include Utility Senior Services Manager (Information Systems) role and Informational Technology Specialist 3 position adjusted to incorporate SCADA system focus – some City departments reportedly also tailor Management Development Analyst roles
 - Further inquiry with managers and HR staff may inform question of whether this represents a process and/or training challenge
- SWBNO does not appear to take a strategic approach to developing talent for promotion vs. hiring laterally from outside the organization
 - Engineering and project manager interns are exceptions; also engage summer interns in engineering but this occurs outside SWBNO HR
 - SWBNO also draws some interns from City summer program – SWBNO HR assigns after soliciting department requests but SWBNO does not actively identify and ask for interns
- HR indicates new emphasis on budgeted positions vs. true vacancies will also promote more frequent review and updating of job descriptions in partnership with operating departments and CSD; initiative is also to be used to improve employees' and managers' understanding and utilization of career development and pathway opportunities



Career Development: Employee Perspectives

- Focus group participants characterize advancement as slow, according to staff who said people frequently leave SWBNO because they are “stuck” in their current jobs
- Employees may pass up promotional opportunities to retain overtime
- Focus group feedback indicated a perception that the promotional process is administered unfairly, with promotions awarded based on personal connections rather than merit
 - Some managers are perceived as not advocating for their employees to be promoted because they don’t want employees to “catch up” to them
 - Some staff suggested that supervisors need training by CSD to better navigate promotion process
- More than four in 10 survey respondents said promotions are not based on performance, tenure and ability to do the job
 - Still, 75 percent of survey respondents indicated they plan to pursue a promotion the next time one becomes available



In a recent national survey, 44.9 percent of employees indicated satisfaction with their employer’s promotion policy, while 52.7 percent expressed satisfaction with their potential for future growth*



Career Development: Employee Perspectives

- Career development/advancement generated more employee survey commentary than most other topics, suggesting an opportunity for SWBNO HR to foster more communication and clarity with management and employees

Employee survey comments

- *"For some job series **it's not clear** whether they are promotional based on time in title or whether some other criteria are in play (education, Civil Service courses) and every time we ask to promote some titles, we get a different reason why it can't be done. There is no rhyme or reason, and we can't promote people who deserve it. We've had to consider creating entire new job classifications in order to get promotions for our staff."*
- *"**It is unclear** if it's SWBNO's departmental structure on top of Civil Service or just Civil Service making transitioning to the next level in your title so difficult and so much paperwork for management. Many of the job paths max out at a level that is still not compensated adequately."*
- *"Promotions to management are given as a mode of retaining employees and many of those people do not have the skill sets to manage people. There needs to be avenues for valued individuals to make more money without managing employees."*
- *"**Never been told about any promotions.** When asked about them was told to wait 6 months. After 6 months was then told I could have been taking courses for promotion/pay raise."*
- *"Promotion requirements are clearly defined but **there is no way to track** what promotions you are eligible for easily."*
- *"I was stated that you must test to receive promotions in orientation, but no further information was provided, not handouts, spreadsheets on the steps and processes to promotion from where we started to where we could end up, no guidebook or manual on courses given, who is eligible and when we are able to start applying for the courses. It's all unclear."*
- *"**There is not set guidance** (that should come from HR) about how to properly evaluate employees, select candidates for promotion, whether it is automatic or competitive, what that means. HR has cheat sheets on all of this information but does not share it with managers or employees.... The way the job positions are posted are also sometimes unclear, but CS allows for clarity when requested."*
- *"The oversight which should be a function of our HR department is not happening."*



Performance Management

- Civil Service rules require annual performance planning and evaluation for classified employees
 - Evaluations performed by an evaluating supervisor; second level evaluator (evaluating supervisor's supervisor) approves performance plan and evaluation after they are reviewed with employee
 - Employees evaluated on “overall performance based on goals, work tasks, and competencies determined by the evaluating supervisor to be requirements of the employee's job”
 - Supervisory employees also evaluated on their administration of the performance evaluation system: “All supervisory employees shall have ‘successful administration of the performance evaluation system’ as one of the performance goals” and “failing to establish a performance plan for one's employee(s) will result in the supervisor(s) receiving an overall ‘Does Not Meet Expectations’ designation”
- New Civil Service rule mandates one-time payments of \$2,000 to employees whose performance is identified as exceeding expectations
 - Each organizational unit is required to budget 2 percent of combined base pay rates of all filled permanent classified positions in the unit as of January 1 of each year to fund merit pay
 - Evaluating supervisors and second level evaluators who fail to administer performance evaluation system in accordance with Civil Service rules are not eligible for a merit increase



Performance Management

- SWBNO has not routinely performed employee performance planning or evaluation
 - HR leadership indicates that files include fewer than 50 performance plans for SWBNO staff – performance plans are necessary for evaluation
- Focus group feedback indicated employees did not regard the process as important after prior merit raise initiative was paused prior to the pandemic and never restarted
- For cycle ending January 31, 2024, SWBNO HR focused on training managers across the organization how to use performance evaluation system
 - System is electronic, but SWBNO relies on uploaded information from paper forms where evaluators or employees have limited technology skills and/or access
- Training and communication push supported strong improvement – SWBNO performance planning participation is estimated at close to 90 percent, up from reported performance in the single digits in recent years (1,122 performance plans completed on time for 2024)

Performance evaluations are essential for promoting high performance among employees and managers

*“The purpose of reviews is two-fold: an accurate and actionable evaluation of performance, and then development of that person’s skills in line with job tasks. ... Across fields, research shows that **people become high performers by identifying specific areas where they need to improve and then practicing those skills with performance feedback....***

*For the giver of feedback, the **process is key to getting people to practice the right things, prioritize opportunities and clarify accountabilities owned by the individual versus the manager or the company. It’s also key to effective leadership.***”

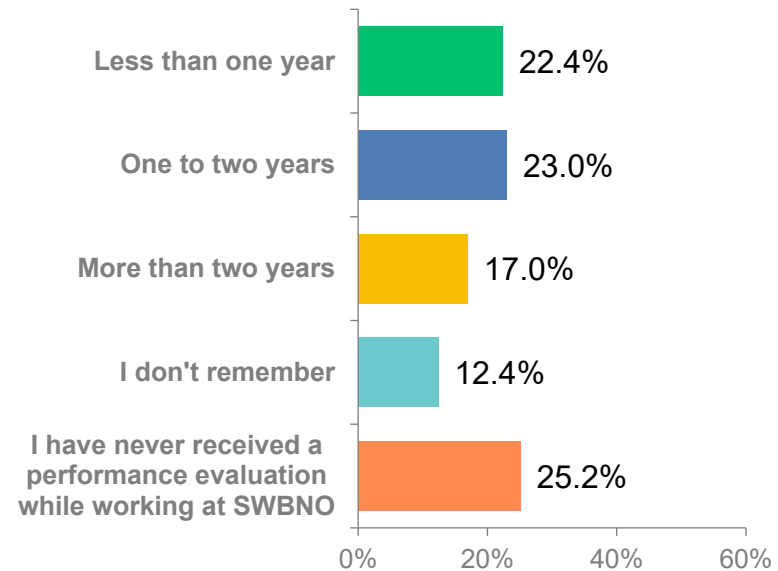
-- “How to Conduct a Great Performance Review,” Frank V. Cespedes, July 18, 2022. Accessed at <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/how-to-conduct-a-great-performance-review.aspx>.



Performance Management

- Less than one quarter of survey respondents reported receiving a performance evaluation in the past year
- More than a quarter of respondents said it has been at least two years since their performance evaluation or they don't remember the last one
- Twenty-five percent said they have never received a performance evaluation at SWBNO

How long has it been since your manager or supervisor provided you with a performance evaluation? (N=330)



“I understand my role but have no idea about performance evaluation – my requests for same have never been granted.”

– Survey respondent



Career Development: **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

- The Society for Human Resource Management suggests a variety of KPIs to measure employee training and competency and organizational talent management and succession planning
 - Competency rate: degree to which employees in key positions have the competencies necessary to achieve their performance objectives ((# of incumbents with competency ratings of Acceptable or better/ # of incumbents who have received competency assessments) x 100
 - Percentage of employees participating in City and/or SWBNO trainings
 - Average training hours per employee
 - Percentage of employees completing required trainings
 - Performance review completion rate
 - Average performance rating
- SWBNO can also use post-training feedback from participants to gauge success (e.g., percent of trainings rated “useful” or “very useful,” percent of trainees reporting applying new training within six months of participation)

“HR Metrics (based on functional areas),” from Change Management: Leading Successful Transformations. Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), 2019. Accessed at <https://www.shrm.org/learningandcareer/learning/publishingimages/pages/forms/allitems/shrm%20HR%20metrics.pdf>.



Project Focus Areas:

Recruitment

Retention

Career Development and Pathways

Compensation Practices

Accountability Structures

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Compensation

- ◆ State Constitution requires Civil Service to adopt a uniform pay and classification plan (equal pay for work of equal value, with appropriate consideration of market-based pay, and appropriate incentives and recognition for high performance)
 - Civil Service Commission and City Council must approve changes to plan
 - May 2021 Civil Service report to SWBNO cites court decision requiring same pay schedule for employees in same classification, regardless of whether they are employed in different departments
- ◆ Beyond salary, SWBNO employees have access to a variety of pay flexibilities or enhancements, according to a May 2021 Civil Service Department report to SWBNO
 - Educational Incentive Pay
 - Professional Certification Pay
 - Clerical Skills Pay
 - Higher Classification Pay (Temporary Pay)
 - Meter Reading Incentive Pay Program
 - Safety Program Pay
 - Chemical Handling Pay
 - On-Call Pay
 - Special Entrance Rate Pay (Hiring Rate): used to address recruitment and retention problems based on documentation of market justification
 - SWBNO positions with special entrance rates include water meter reader, accounting, engineering job series, as well as HR administrator and comptroller
- ◆ New one-time incentive payment for exceeding expectations on performance evaluations offers additional opportunity for rewarding high-performing employees



Compensation

- Classified positions are placed in pay scales based on position; hiring salary generally set above minimum of range
 - Merit increases are tied to performance evaluations (and have not been funded in recent years)
 - Employees receive longevity pay increases of 2.5 percent at one year of service, then at five-year intervals (five, 10, 15, 20, 25, etc.)
 - City plans a new compensation study in 2024; last one was in 2017 and led to 10 percent across-the-board raise
- SWBNO employees recently received a one-time 5 percent cost of living bonus along with a 5 percent base salary increase
 - Part of a three-year raise totaling 10 percent, with 2.5 percent raises in 2023 and 2024
- SWBNO has been successful in recent requests for compensation adjustments based on recruitment and retention challenges
 - Examples include Utility Service Manager, Utility Services Administrator (and senior versions of both roles, along with 16 field leadership positions in departments including Water Purification, Networks, and Power Dispatching)
- Compensation enhancements may also occur as a result of external Citywide studies
 - Engineers recently saw their pay increased as a result of collaborative work between engineers within SWBNO and in other City departments (anecdotal evidence indicates SWBNO HR did not play a central role)
 - Similarly, SWBNO fleet employees recently received compensation increases as a result of evaluation of fleet roles across the City organization (SWBNO staff benefited but SWBNO was not engaged in the effort)
- Civil Service rules can generate “ripple effect” raises in competitive market
 - Recent hire of a new employee at market-competitive rate opened door to equity concerns from other employees arguing comparable roles mean they should receive comparable pay (i.e., raises); effort was successful



Compensation

- SWBNO annual salaries range from \$25,508 to \$323,603; median salary is \$38,914
- Two thirds of SWBNO employees make between \$25,000 and \$45,000 annually; 80 percent earn between \$25,000 and \$55,000 a year
 - Note: does not include on-call or overtime
- Overtime and on-call pay can be significant supplements to salary
 - In 2022, SWBNO spent \$13.4 million on employee overtime (approximately \$10,300 per employee)
 - As of Q2 2023, 329 employees (about 25 percent of workforce) drew overtime
 - Payroll data from early 2023 indicate some employees may earn 2.5 to three times base salary when overtime and on-call pay are included
 - Recruitment and retention difficulties reportedly drive overtime costs
- Per CSD 2022 Annual Report:
 - Average 2022 full-time classified employee salary SWBNO \$43,891, City \$53,877
 - Average 2022 salary for all full-time employees: SWBNO \$45,868, City \$57,341

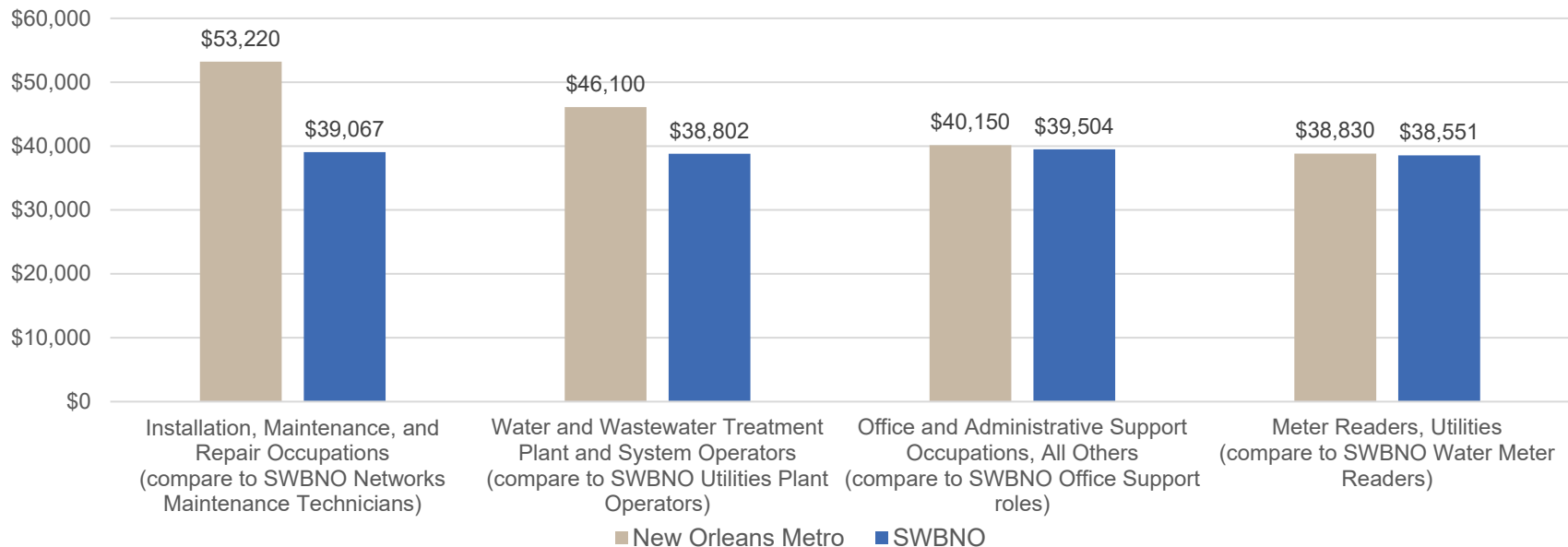
SWBNO Annual Base Salary Distribution	
Base Salary Range	Number of Employees
\$25,000-\$35,000	434
\$35,000-\$45,000	432
\$45,000-\$55,000	180
\$55,000-\$65,000	101
\$65,000-\$75,000	47
\$75,000-\$85,000	32
\$85,000-\$95,000	20
\$95,000-\$105,000	17
\$105,000-\$115,000	12
\$115,000-\$125,000	9
\$125,000-\$135,000	6
> \$135,000	14
Source: Employee Roster as of June 23, 2023	



Compensation: New Orleans Metro vs. SWBNO

- Comparison of selected SWBNO compensation to New Orleans metro salaries in comparable roles suggests that compensation is competitive with market in some roles but may be less competitive in trades and field work
- Figures do not include impact of 2.5 percent across-the-board raise awarded in January 2024, recruitment and retention hiring rate increases granted in late 2023 by CSC, nor any wage gains in the broader labor market since the most recent available May 2022 data

Annual Mean Wages, Select Occupations – New Orleans Metro vs. SWBNO



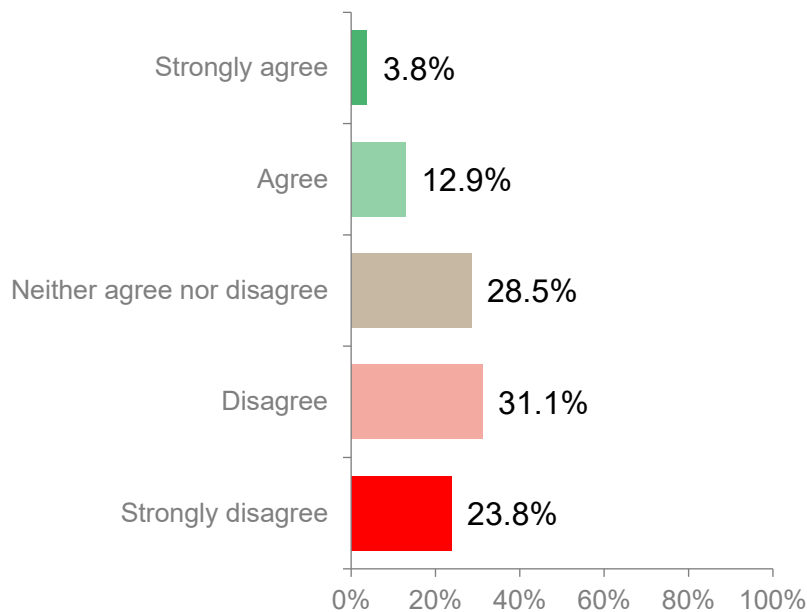
Note: New Orleans metropolitan area annual wage data adapted from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics survey from May 2022.



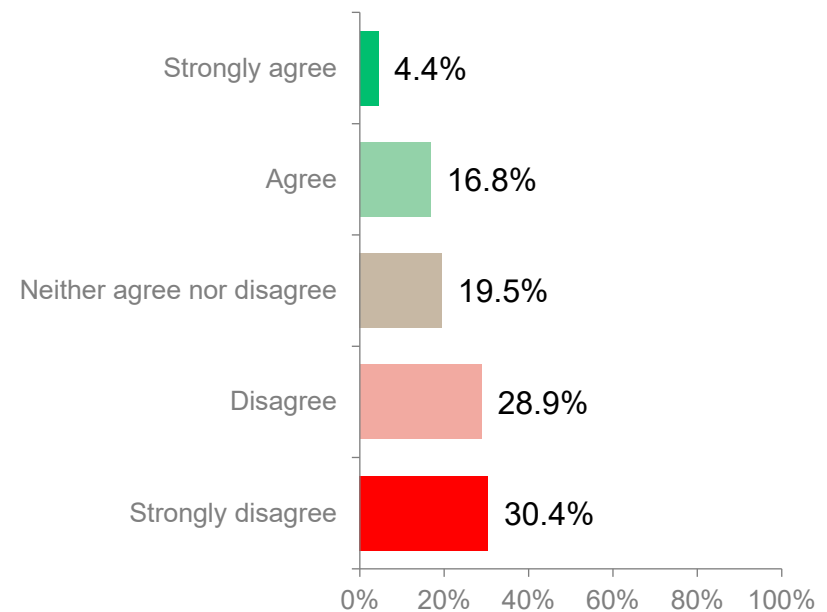
Compensation: Employee Perspectives

- Most survey respondents indicated that they consider SWBNO's compensation unsatisfactory
- Nearly 55 percent cited a lack of significant difference in pay between new and more tenured employees, and almost 60 percent said their pay increases have not matched their performance and years with the organization
- In a recent national survey, 57.6 percent of employees indicated satisfaction with their wages*

"There is enough of a difference in pay between an employee who has been with SWBNO for a long time, and an employee who was just hired." (N=341)



"Since starting at SWBNO, I have received pay increases that match my performance and years with the organization." (N=339)



*Job Satisfaction 2023 Survey, The Conference Board.



Compensation: Employee Perspectives

- Employees in all focus groups asserted that SWBNO wages are lower than what is offered by other public and private sector employers, and cited compensation as a hindrance to recruitment and retention
 - Focus group participants noted that contract and temporary staff may be paid a higher hourly rate than SWBNO employees performing the same roles
 - On-call and overtime pay are important supplements to base pay – focus group attendees said that staff will decline promotions to salaried roles because they do not want to lose the additional income
 - Some employees indicated they should be compensated more for their job or for taking on additional or hazardous work (e.g. informally taking on more responsibility in a colleague's absence, working in confined spaces or around hazardous substances)
 - Some employees expressed concern over a rising cost of living that outstrips pay increases, especially when SWBNO employees are required to live in the city
- SWBNO leadership pointed to challenges negotiating increased pay for new hires and finding qualified applicants to join (and stay with) SWBNO at current compensation levels

Employee survey respondents indicated concern with front-line and middle management's transparency regarding pay, promotions and opportunities:

- *“Lower level management (and) supervision lacks in this area and also upper management is strong; Middle management is very weak”*
- *“They truly try but are not supported by HR for these communications. Since they have not been briefed on what they need to know they cannot properly utilize the rules nor translate them to their employees”*
- *“I don't think most managers here understand the pay, promotions, and opportunities well enough themselves to be able to communicate them-it's too complicated and arbitrary for most managers to grasp while trying to deal with departmental tasks.... I regularly do not have the answers to those kinds of questions and there is no clear guidance from Civil Service since we get different answers from them on any given day”*



Compensation: Health Benefits Competitive

SWBNO		Comparison Data
Medical benefits	Members have access to UnitedHealthCare Choice Plus medical network	82% of private-sector employees in Louisiana had access to employer-provided health insurance (2020-22 three-year average) [1]
Employee medical premium cost-sharing	Biweekly contribution rates (2024): EE Only: \$113.64/month EE + Family: \$269.38/month	Average employee contributions per enrolled employee at Louisiana private sector establishments in 2022: EE Only: \$142/month Family: \$521/month [1]
Deductibles	\$0 deductible in network, \$250 single and \$750 family deductible out of network	Nearly 93% of Louisiana private-sector employee health care plans had a deductible in 2022 [1] Average individual deductible: \$1,859 Average family deductible: \$3,863
Supplemental health benefits	Vision and dental coverage included with medical plan Dental plan is UnitedHealthCare PPO	27% of private industry workers nationally have access to vision coverage, with availability remaining below half even among establishments with 100+ workers (38%) [2] 35% of state and local government workers in AR/OK/TX/LA region had access to dental care benefits in 2023 [3]
Rx co-pays	Generic: \$7 Non-Preferred: \$20 \$100 deductible per person (max of 3) for brand drugs only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National average Rx co-pays for covered workers in three or four-tier plans (private and public sectors combined): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$11 generic; \$36 preferred brand; \$66 non-preferred brand; \$125 specialty [4]
Office co-pays (Primary Care)	\$20 (also \$20 for specialist)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National average (private and public sectors combined): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$25 HMO, \$26 PPO, \$29 POS [4]

[1] Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Medical Expenditure Panel Survey; [2] Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Compensation Survey, Benefits in Private Industry, 2023. [3] U.S. BLS National Compensation Survey – Benefits, <https://beta.bls.gov/dataViewer/view/timeseries/NBU3150000000001428239>. [5] Kaiser Family Foundation Employer Health Benefits 2023 survey.



Compensation: Retirement Benefits

	SWBNO	Comparison Data
<i>Retirement (Current Tier)</i>	<p>Employees are enrolled in the SWBNO Employees' Pension Trust Fund, a defined benefit plan – employees contribute 6 percent of salary vest at five years of service</p> <p>SWBNO contributes 21 percent of payroll</p> <p>Can retire with 30 years of service, at 65 with five or more years of service, at 70 regardless of years of service, or when age and years of service equal or exceed 80 (including potential buyback of prior creditable service)</p> <p>Standard benefit is 2.5 percent of average compensation multiplied by first 25 years of service, and 4 percent per year of service in excess of 25 years (retiree with 30 years of service can draw 82.5 percent of average compensation in retirement) – benefit cannot exceed 100 percent of average compensation</p>	<p>15% of U.S. private industry workers have access to a defined benefit plan</p> <p>67% have access to a defined contribution plan</p>
<i>Post-Retirement Medical (Current Tier)</i>	<p>Retirees also have access to health insurance (does not include vision/dental)</p> <p>Premiums (2024): Pensioner: \$181.69/month Pensioner and Family (spouse not on Medicare): \$358.35/month</p>	<p>15% of private industry workers have access to retiree healthcare benefits under age 65</p>

*Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Compensation Survey, Benefits in Private Industry, 2023



Compensation: Paid Leave

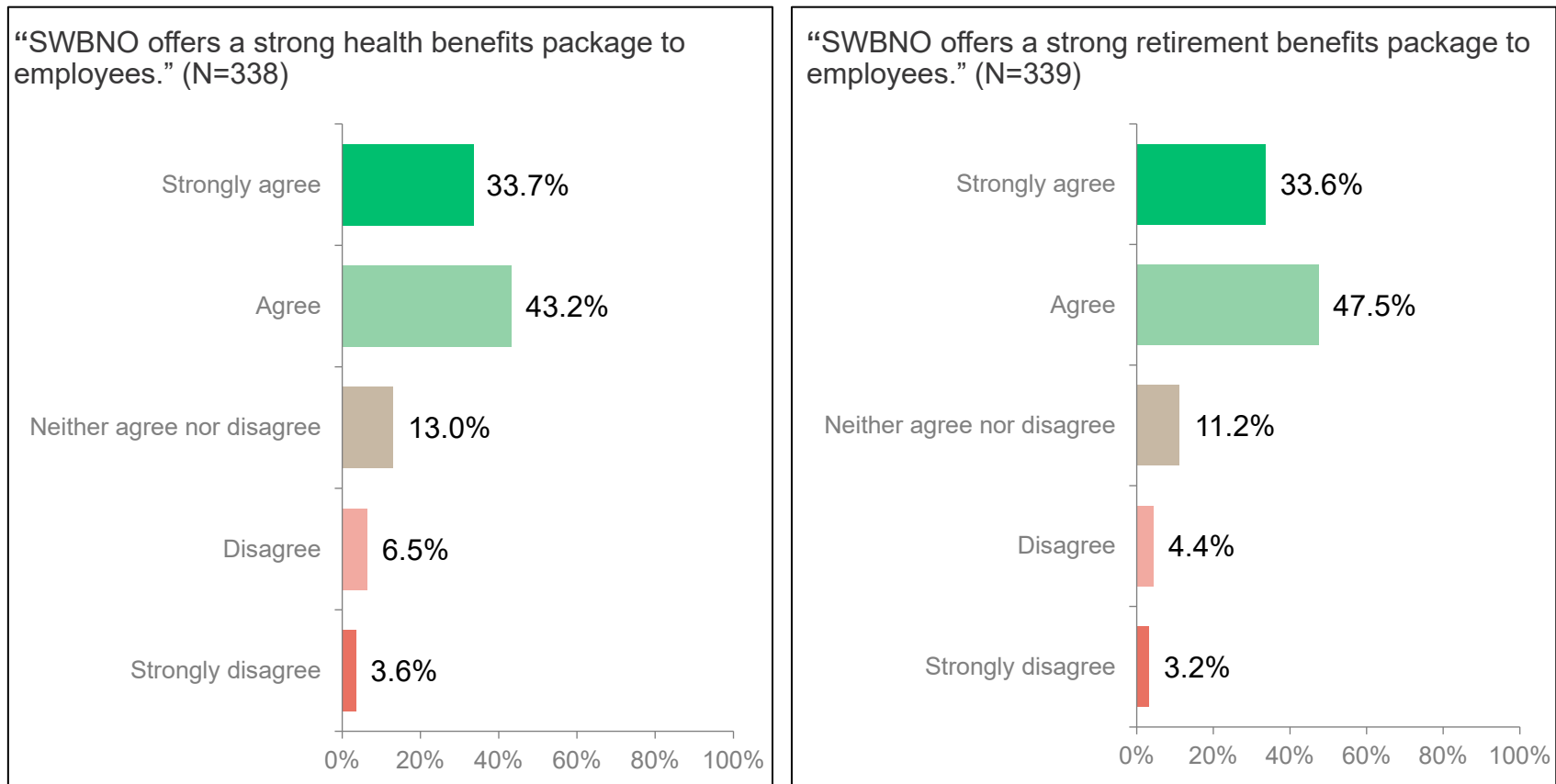
	SWBNO	Comparison data
Holidays	14 observed holidays per calendar year	Median of 8 paid holidays among U.S. private establishments with 100+ workers
Annual Leave	Full-time (40 hours/week) employees earn .5 hours per biweekly pay period (13 days per year); After 5 years: 3 bonus days/year (16 total) After 10 years: 6 bonus days/year (19) After 15 years: 9 bonus days/year (22) After 20 years: 12 bonus days/year (25)	Median among private U.S. establishments with 100+ workers: After 1 year: 10 days per year After 5 years: 15 days per year After 10 years: 20 days per year After 20 years: 21 days per year
Sick Leave	Full-time (40 hours/week) employees earn .5 hours per biweekly pay period (13 days per year). Bonus days awarded annually at six (two bonus days/year) and 16 years (seven bonus days/year) of service	86% of U.S. private industry workers in establishments with 100+ workers have access to paid sick leave Median of 56 hours (7 sick days) among establishments with 100+ workers**

* Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Compensation Survey, Benefits in Private Industry, 2023



SWBNO Employees Give High Ratings to Benefits

- More than three quarters of survey respondents agreed that SWBNO offers a strong health benefits package, and more than four of five said the same about retirement
- In a 2022 national survey, 58.7 percent of workers indicated satisfaction with their health plan, while 50.2 percent expressed satisfaction with their pension or retirement plan*



*Job Satisfaction 2023 Survey, The Conference Board.



Compensation: **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

- ◆ The Society for Human Resource Management recommends several KPIs for compensation and total rewards
 - Annual base salary increase from one time period to another (e.g., year over year):
(Targeted base salary spend after increase/Current base salary spend) X 100
 - Compa ratio and average compa ratio (measures relationship of current salaries to midpoints of salary rates): calculated as pay rate/midpoint of range at individual level, then totaled and averaged across all employees
 - Compensation ratios
 - Direct compensation ratio is all pay (including differentials and incentives) / pay range midpoint
 - Indirect ratio substitutes investment in benefits, leave, etc. for pay (total value divided by pay range midpoint)
 - Annual change in benefits spending
 - Organization share of health care premiums



Project Focus Areas:

Recruitment

Retention

Career Development and Pathways

Compensation Practices

Accountability Structures

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Accountability Structures: Grievances

- Employee grievance procedure addressed in 2019 SWBNO policy memorandum from executive director giving HR Director authority to implement and interpret policy; Civil Service Department does not have a role in grievances
- Grievance defined as “a complaint by an employee about an alleged violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of any personnel policies or rules or regulations; or a concern of unfair treatment in the workplace”
 - Examples include workplace conditions, inequitable application of policies, procedures by same supervisor, retaliation for participation in grievance process, violations of equal opportunity law and complaints of discrimination
- SWBNO HR began reporting grievance counts in monthly Board reports in April 2023; 10-month count was 29, or an average of 2.9 grievances a month from March through December
- Policy is generally similar to City policy, although SWBNO process has fewer steps and concludes lower in the hierarchy
 - Four-step SWBNO process: 1) Informal discussion with supervisor; 2) written complaint to supervisor; 3) written complaint to department head and/or senior executive; 4) appeal to Employee Relations Manager/HR Director
 - Direct reports to Executive Director first meet with ED, then can submit written grievance to President Pro Tempore of Board of Directors
 - City employees can advance a grievance to the chief administrative officer for a final and binding decision
 - SWBNO policy Includes specific list of items not to be grieved, including performance evaluations, flexible work options decisions, reductions in workforce, restructuring, changes in reporting line, reasonable work activity based on job, and failure to promote unless policies or procedures were not followed or applied fairly.
 - City policy simply specifies that matters under the authority of the Civil Service Commission may not be grieved



Accountability Structures: **Employee Discipline**

- SWBNO has its own employee code of conduct and progressive discipline policies aligned with Civil Service rules
- Civil Service rules provide several potential actions in response to employee failure to maintain standards of service, including termination, involuntary retirement, reduction in pay, demotion, suspension up to 120 days, fine, and/or letters of reprimand
- Classified employees may appeal disciplinary actions and discrimination based on protected class to the Commission; impacts of layoffs are not considered disciplinary actions and are not appealable. (Rule II, Section 4.1)
- SWBNO progressive discipline policy is outlined in 2019 memo from executive director
 - HR director authorized to implement and interpret policy
 - Managers/supervisor responsibilities include investigating infractions or incidents, recommending disciplinary actions, keeping a record of and tracking disciplinary actions
 - Employee Relations Manager has right to pursue remedies against departments for failing to comply with directives resulting from investigations, failing to address grievances, and failing to inform employees of new/updated policies (includes possible disciplinary action against department heads, managers and supervisors)



Accountability Structures: Employee Discipline

- SWBNO policy encourages verbal counseling as initial step, then outlines seven progressive discipline steps (applied as applicable; may skip steps and move to more severe consequences for serious infractions)
 - Letter of reprimand
 - Fine
 - Reduction in pay
 - Suspension without pay
 - Demotion
 - Involuntary retirement
 - Termination
- SWBNO also requires that employees be issued a Notice of Intent to Recommend Disciplinary Action, allowing response to potential actions (discipline may or may not be recommended based on response)
- Policy includes a multi-page list of examples for applying progressive discipline in various circumstances

Examples of progressive disciplinary steps for offenses listed in SWBNO Progressive Discipline Policy

Unable or unwilling to perform job activities for which paid (first/second/third/fourth offenses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbal counseling/letter of reprimand• Five-day suspension• 10-day suspension/termination• Termination
Fighting, initiating or being involved in and found at fault	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10-day suspension• Termination
Sleeping on the job	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 30-day suspension• Termination
Falsification of any records or reports, including time cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Termination
Refusal to carry out any reasonable instructions given by a supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbal counseling/letter of reprimand• Three-day suspension• Five-day suspension• Termination



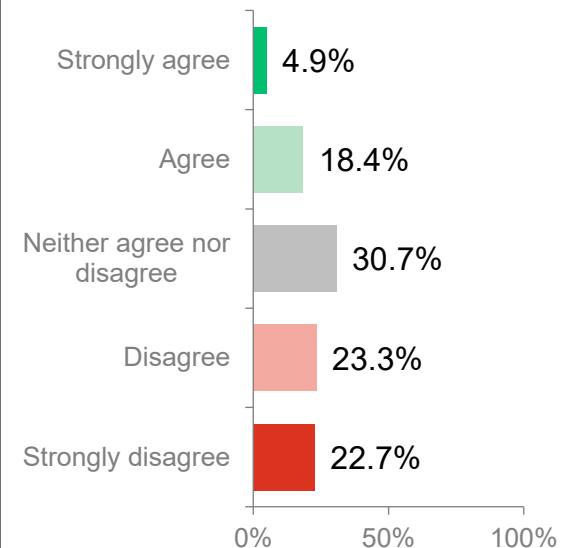
Accountability Structures: Employee Discipline

- Over the last 10 months of 2023, SWBNO averaged about six terminations and four suspensions per month; slightly more than two proposed disciplinary actions were dismissed per month
- Terminations occurred more often than mediations and counseling/support sessions combined

Average/month (Mar.-Dec. 2023)	Terminations	Suspensions	Demotions	Mediations	Counseling/ Support Sessions	Proposed Actions Dismissed
	6.2	3.9	0.2	1.3	3.5	2.3

- Addressing poor behavior and terminating underperforming employees were described as difficult by focus group participants from various departments
- Some employees reportedly use grievances as retaliation against supervisors for pursuing corrective action – ***“I don’t write people up anymore,” one manager said***
- Focus group participants indicated a perception that poor performers and disruptive employees can keep their positions and set a bad example for newer employees
- Survey respondents were more likely to disagree than agree that:
 - The current system is effective
 - SWBNO’s disciplinary process is clear, fair and well-communicated
 - Disciplinary actions are consistent, fair and easy to understand

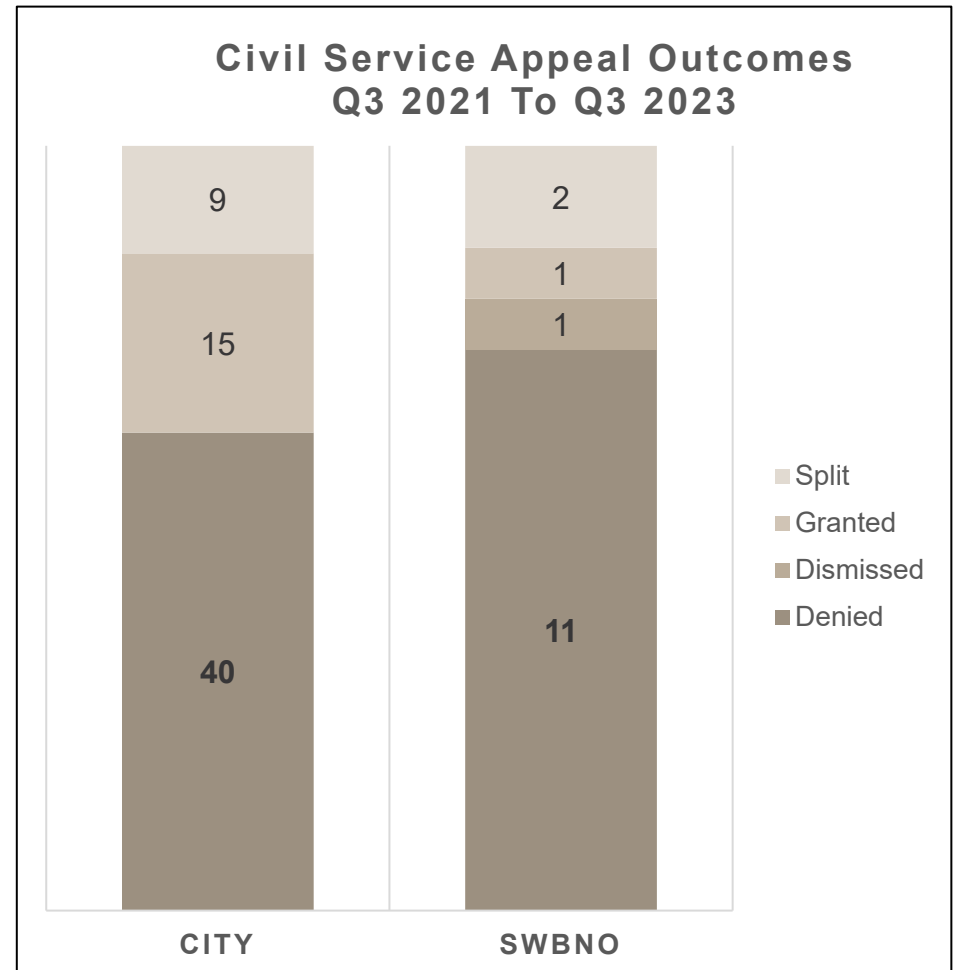
“The current disciplinary system is effective in holding all employees accountable for their actions.” (N=326)





SWBNO Performs Relatively Well in Civil Service Appeal Hearings

- SWBNO was more successful in appeal hearings than City departments in Civil Service Commission decisions from Q3 of 2021 through Q3 of 2023
 - Appeals occurred with similar frequency based on total staffing
- Of 15 appeals regarding SWBNO decisions, 73.3 percent were denied (SWBNO action upheld)
 - One of 15 SWBNO employee appeals was completely granted (6.7 percent), two more granted in part
- Other City departments were involved in 64 appeals – 62.5 percent were denied
 - Fifteen of 64 appeals were completely granted (23.4 percent), another nine in part





Accountability: Employee Perspectives

Employee survey feedback indicated issues with understanding, communication and consistent implementation of SWBNO's progressive discipline policy

- ***"All employees are not held accountable because some of them are not disciplined by managers/supervisors"***
- ***"The disciplinary actions taken by SWBNO managers and supervisors are not consistent. One manager may seek disciplinary action if an employee reports to work 10 minutes late. Another manager may deem 10 minutes late as acceptable"***
- ***"There is no standardized process when issuing disciplinary action, it depends on who is in charge of conducting disciplinary action in Employee Relations which is usually fair"***
- ***"HR, civil service, and upper management will sweep things under the rug, just let them be. Due to concerns of grievance backlash"***
- ***"The current system is broken. There's too much counseling reports and written warnings. You need entirely too much of that before you can request a letter of reprimand from HR and 9 out of 10 times they deny it. HR is not dealing with these personnel they haven't got a clue what's really going on"***
- ***"It's only communicated after you get in trouble. Very little mitigation occurs"***

The need to train supervisors and managers in the disciplinary policy was highlighted in several survey comments

- ***"Our managers could use some more support and some case studies on how to handle different situations. Would also be helpful to have manuals and go-bys to support"***
- ***"The process is very well defined, but the managers need training and guidance from HR which isn't happening"***
- ***"The framework is in place and defined well. Now time to train, implement, hold accountable"***
- ***"All managers need training. Including myself. It's trial and error"***



Accountability: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- SWBNO can measure its success in communicating expectations and holding employees accountable for meeting them
 - Performance review completion rate (total reviews/eligible employees, percent of managers and supervisors completing all required performance evaluations)
 - Average performance rating
 - Disciplinary actions by type (total and per FTE) – track suspensions, terminations, demotions, mediations, counseling sessions
 - Grievances (total and per FTE) – Note that this approach should also be used to gauge any employment practices complaints (e.g., sexual harassment) if those are not characterized as grievances
 - Percent of disciplinary actions appealed
 - Employee appeals upheld by Civil Service Commission as percent of all appeals by SWBNO employees

As a component of employee relations, SHRM recommends assessing employee

engagement: *“Degree to which employees are engaged with and committed to the strategy and objectives of the organization and demonstrate their commitment to organization success through the contribution of their skills, knowledge, abilities and performance”*

While SHRM notes that surveys are often annual at best and can be flawed (more engaged employees more likely to respond, surveys may reflect attitudes and opinions rather than behaviors), they can be augmented with “stay surveys” and other more frequent check-ins to track employee engagement

-- “HR Metrics (based on functional areas),” from Change Management: Leading Successful Transformations. Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), 2019. Accessed at <https://www.shrm.org/learningandcareer/learning/publishingimages/pages/forms/allitems/shrm%20HR%20metrics.pdf>.



Project Focus Areas:

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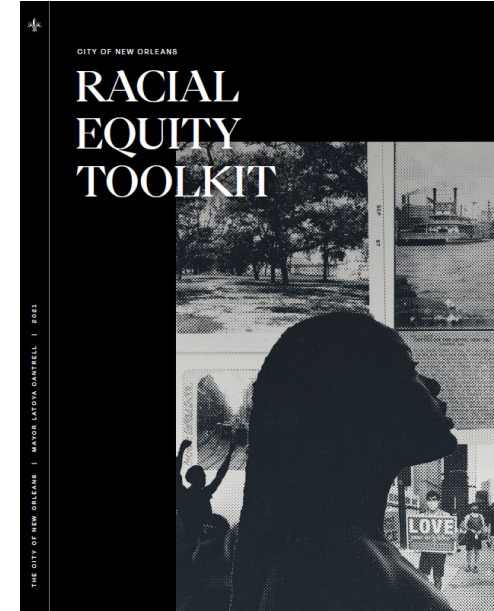
Accountability Structures

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- As indicated earlier, SWBNO's workforce is racially diverse
 - Women are underrepresented compared to the Orleans Parish population, but industry literature cites this as a common challenge based on factors such as occupational mix
- However, SWBNO leadership indicate awareness that the organization is less diverse in the leadership ranks
- SWBNO does not currently offer any DEI programming or initiatives
- American Water Works Association plans to develop new standard for “developing a DEI strategy, recruitment, culture, workforce, leadership, accountability, workspace design, operations, system reliability, affordability, and community relations and engagement”
- There are opportunities to do more to track, report and foster DEI
 - For example, the City of New Orleans Racial Equity Toolkit, while community-focused, offers helpful suggestions for strategic, inclusive stakeholder engagement and equity-based budget analysis

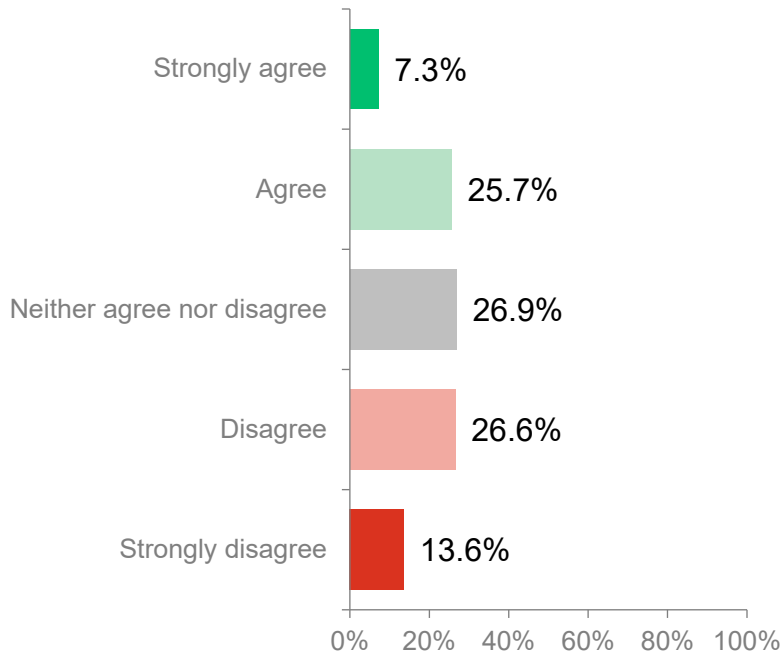




Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Employee Perspectives

- More than 40 percent of survey respondents indicated that they do not believe SWBNO's career progression system offers equitable opportunity to all employees, however, accompanying employee comments suggest that this perception may be more closely related to perceived favoritism than about any identity-based characteristics

"SWBNO's career progression system offers equitable opportunities for career growth among all employees."
(N=331)



Employee survey comments and focus group feedback reflect a perception that personal connections are among the factors impacting equitable advancement for staff

- "Promotions aren't merit based. Promotions seem to be based on relationships"*
- "I've noticed a lot of unfairness and how the system is being monopolized to benefit family and friends"*
- "Nepotism/favoritism, and general biases exist, and it permeates and affects growth opportunities for some"*
- "The statement is objectively and demonstrably false, as evidenced by disparities between the racial compositions of the overall workforce and management"*



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

SWBNO can gauge and report DEI success by applying an equity lens to HR data and KPIs

- Track employee cohorts across key HR metrics by “race, gender, ethnicity, and where appropriate other dimensions of diversity such as sexual orientation and veteran status.”

Recruitment and retention: Who applies? Who is hired? Who stays? Is representation diverse across job types and fields?

Career development and pathways: Is training equitably accessible for all? Who advances and who does not?

Compensation: Are mean and median pays comparable across different groups with similar roles, qualifications and tenure?

Accountability: Do performance evaluation results show differences across various groups? Are grievances, disciplinary actions and results of appeals generally consistent across various employee groups?

Source: “7 Metrics to Measure Your Organization’s DEI Progress,” Lee Jourdan, Harvard Business Review. May 4, 2023. Accessed at <https://hbr.org/2023/05/7-metrics-to-measure-your-organizations-dei-progress>



Key Themes and Preliminary Opportunities



Key Themes

- There is widespread frustration with the status quo for talent management at SWBNO, including concerns regarding vacancy levels, adequacy of pay to recruit and retain high quality personnel, career development and training, performance management and accountability
 - Inconsistent communication and application of SWBNO and Civil Service rules undermines trust
 - Perceptions do not always mirror reality (e.g., belief that most SWBNO disciplinary actions are overturned by Civil Service Commission is not supported by data)
 - Some staff indicate that HR functions are showing signs of improvement; new initiatives include improvement in performance planning participation and efforts to distinguish budgeted positions from vacancies for which recruiting is under way
- Data and metrics to document current challenges (and successes), identify root causes, and inform potential solutions are all limited
 - Data is collected, but not reported or analyzed in a manner that could inform strategic initiatives



Key Themes

- Navigating any civil service system is inherently complex, with additional layers and restricted managerial control
- To address these challenges, SWBNO has been granted significant flexibility and autonomy within the City's Civil Service framework to manage many of its own key processes
 - This flexibility can be a strength to build upon, with enhanced workforce planning, improved technology, training and professional development, and better metrics
 - Recent increases to hiring rates for some SWBNO positions and plan to designate SWBNO trainers are signs of improving coordination
- Other identified SWBNO strengths include competitive benefits; existing models for career pathways; and the commitment of many employees to extended careers with the utility
- The domicile policy likely represents a significant impediment to recruiting
- With strengthening of SWBNO HR, SWBNO will be better positioned to operate successfully regardless of the organization's workforce model



Preliminary Opportunities Identified

- ◆ Adopt a more data-driven approach to evaluating and communicating trends and changes over time (see Appendix for KPI summary)
 - Consider reporting data on hiring, separations and other HR-related activities via charts that will highlight trends and patterns over time for SWBNO Board and leadership
- ◆ Develop strategic approaches to recruitment and retention using data
 - Adopt a workforce planning approach that targets high-turnover or hard-to-fill positions for strategic recruiting and hiring
 - Consider highlighting organization mission and benefits in job postings
 - Opportunity to work with area high schools/colleges/universities and associations such as the National Society for Black Engineers to increase/expand recruiting pipelines
- ◆ Identify specific City or Civil Service rules/interpretations/procedures that limit SWBNO success and propose changes using SWBNO's pilot agency status in Civil Service rules
 - Where positions overlap, work in tandem with appropriate City departments (similar to engineer compensation increase)
 - Identify key positions in need of updated job descriptions/specifications/classifications
 - Domicile requirement
 - Replace mandate with incentive for residing in parish (similar to airport staff), and/or
 - Institute automatic waiver for positions below a certain pay grade



Preliminary Opportunities Identified

- Conduct a market-based review of SWBNO wages and salaries, either through participation in the City's planned 2024 compensation study and/or via an independent third-party analysis that could be shared with CSD
 - Opportunity to rebalance compensation portfolio (e.g., shift some resources from health benefits to pay)
 - Important to maintain quality of SWBNO's benefits while undertaking any analysis of rebalancing
- Emphasize training for SWBNO managers and supervisors in performance planning and evaluation, staff development, and grievance/disciplinary processes
- Engage communications function in promoting SWBNO as an employer on social media



Next Steps

- ◆ Phase 2: Options Development (expected completion no later than April 2024)
- ◆ Key steps include:
 - Benchmarking and evaluation of six comparator utilities selected with guidance and approval from SWBNO leadership
 - Identify workforce models most likely to benefit SWBNO and compare/analyze across structures/features, cost for transitioning, employee feedback/considerations, DEI considerations, relevant experience from other utilities, highlighted best practices, feasibility considerations, and legal/legislative requirements.
 - Drawing on research and analysis outlined above, and with feedback/consultation from Steering Committee, develop a recommended SWBNO-specific workforce structure tailored to the utility's needs.
 - **Deliverable: A final report recommending the model, or combination of models and practices, that would be most likely to support and promote a skilled, committed, inspired, rewarded, engaged and accountable workforce across the utility.**
- ◆ PFM has begun outreach to six comparator utilities selected with guidance and approval from SWBNO leadership



pfm



Appendix



KPI Approach

- ◆ Begin building data collection, analysis and reporting capacity with long-term goal of acquiring proper human resources information system (HRIS)
 - HR leadership reports planning process is underway for new HRIS, but SWBNO can improve use of NEOGOV system, including tracking time from application to placement on an eligible list, and time from consultation of list to hire
 - Tracking time to fill will be more difficult so long as SWBNO posts all jobs continuously (not able to track from posting to hire)
 - Effective Utility Management program suggests that utilities track measures across three components of employee and leadership development
(https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2017-01/documents/eum_primer_final_508-january2017.pdf)
 - Employee retention and satisfaction (e.g., turnover, salary competitiveness)
 - Management of core competencies (e.g., performance planning and evaluations, training and certifications)
 - Workforce development (vacancy rates, succession planning, positions filled from within)
 - Identify key performance indicators (KPIs) for tracking, drawing from SWBNO strategic plan and PFM-recommended measures



Suggested KPIs

Recruitment	Retention	Career Development and Pathways
Number of applicants (tracked by source)	Turnover rate (all separations/headcount)	Competency rate: degree to which employees in key positions have the competencies necessary to achieve their performance objectives [(# of incumbents with competency ratings of Acceptable or better/ # of incumbents who have received competency assessments) x 100]
Percent of applicants meeting minimum qualifications	Quit rate (voluntary resignations/headcount)	Percentage of employees participating in City and/or SWBNO trainings
Vacancy rate or percentage of authorized positions open (open positions / authorized headcount)	Mean/median tenure (average or median years of employment overall and at separation)	Average training hours per employee
Time to fill open positions (differentiated between SWBNO-delegated jobs and City-recruited jobs)	Vacancy rate or percentage of authorized positions open (open positions/authorized headcount)	Percentage of employees completing required trainings
Applicant success (percent of hires retained through probationary period, tracked by source)		Performance review completion rate*
Percent of vacancies filled by internal candidates		Average performance rating*

*Performance review completion rate and average performance rating are included in Career Development Pathways and Accountability Structure sections as relevant to both; definition included on next slide.



Suggested KPIs

Compensation Practices	Accountability Structures	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Annual base salary increase from one time period to another (e.g., year over year): $[(\text{Targeted base salary spend after increase} / \text{Current base salary spend}) \times 100]$	Average performance rating and performance review completion rate (total reviews/eligible employees, percent of managers and supervisors completing all required performance evaluations)*	<p>Gauge and report DEI success by applying an equity lens to HR data and KPIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track employee cohorts across key HR metrics by “race, gender, ethnicity, and where appropriate other dimensions such as sexual orientation and veteran status.” <p>Recruitment and retention: Who applies? Who is hired? Who stays? Is representation diverse across job types and fields?</p> <p>Career development and pathways: Is training equitably accessible for all? Who advances and who does not?</p> <p>Compensation: Are mean and median pays comparable across different groups with similar roles, qualifications and tenure?</p> <p>Accountability: Do performance evaluation results show differences across various groups? Are grievances, disciplinary actions and results of appeals generally consistent across various employee groups?</p>
Compa ratio and average compa ratio (measures relationship of current salaries to midpoints of salary rates): calculated as pay rate/midpoint of range at individual level, then totaled and averaged across all employees	Grievances (total and per FTE) – Note that this approach should also be used to gauge any employment practices complaints (e.g., sexual harassment) if those are not characterized as grievances	
Compensation ratios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct compensation ratio is all pay (including differentials and incentives) / pay range midpoint Indirect ratio substitutes investment in benefits, leave, etc. for pay (total value divided by pay range midpoint) 	Disciplinary actions by type (e.g., suspensions, terminations) – total and per FTE	
Annual change in benefits spending	Percent of disciplinary actions appealed	
Organization share of health care premiums	Employee appeals upheld by Civil Service Commission as percent of all appeals by SWBNO employees	

*Performance review completion rate and average performance rating are included in Career Development Pathways and Accountability Structure sections as relevant to both; definition included on next slide.



Accountability Structures: Grievance Process Comparison vs. City

	SWBNO	City
Governing policy	Memo from Executive Director	Memo from Chief Administrative Officer
Responsible party	The HR Director is responsible officer and has authority to implement and interpret policy. Employee Relations Manager is responsible for monitoring grievances to resolution, mediating between parties, and recommending grievance appeal decisions to HR Director.	Department heads responsible for ensuring policy is posted in permanent and conspicuous location where all employees have access and for ensuring that new and current supervisors as well as all employees are informed of grievance policy/procedures, “preferably during employee on-boarding.”
Definition of grievance	A complaint by an employee about an alleged violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of any personnel policies or rules or regulations; or a concern of unfair treatment in the workplace. Examples include workplace conditions, inequitable application of policies, procedures by same supervisor, retaliation for participation in grievance process, violations of equal opportunity law and complaints of discrimination.	A formal employee complaint concerning a violation of departmental policy, working conditions, or alleged violations of City Policy, including alleged abuses of discretion by supervisors in the treatment of employees and disputes raised by an employee as to the interpretation, application, or enforcement of specific employee provisions or rights.
Process Steps (escalating if responses are not satisfactory)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Informal discussion with supervisor 2) Written complaint to supervisor 3) Written complaint to department head and/or senior executive 4) Employee Relations Manager/HR Director <p>NOTE: Direct reports to Executive Director first meet with ED, then can submit written grievance to President Pro Tempore of Board of Directors</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Written grievance to supervisor (5 days for grievance and response) 2) Next level manager 3) Department head/director 4) CAO designated official (may request grievance board or committee) 5) CAO (final and binding decision)
Other	Includes specific list of items not to be grieved, including performance evaluations, flexible work options decisions, reductions in workforce, restructuring, changes in reporting line, reasonable work activity based on job, and failure to promote unless policies or procedures were not followed or applied fairly.	“Matters under the authority of the City Civil Service Commission (dismissals, suspensions, demotions, letters of reprimand, and reductions in pay or involuntary retirement) shall not be subject to the grievance procedure but may be appealable to the Civil Service Commission.”

SWBNO Grievance Policy, May 8, 2019; City of New Orleans Chief Administrative Office Policy Memorandum No. 4 (R) , September 25, 2019. Accessed at [https://nola.gov/chief-administrative-office/policies/policies/no-4-\(r\)-employee-grievance-procedure/](https://nola.gov/chief-administrative-office/policies/policies/no-4-(r)-employee-grievance-procedure/).



Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans People Plan Employee Survey

Conducted Nov. 29 through Dec. 20, 2024



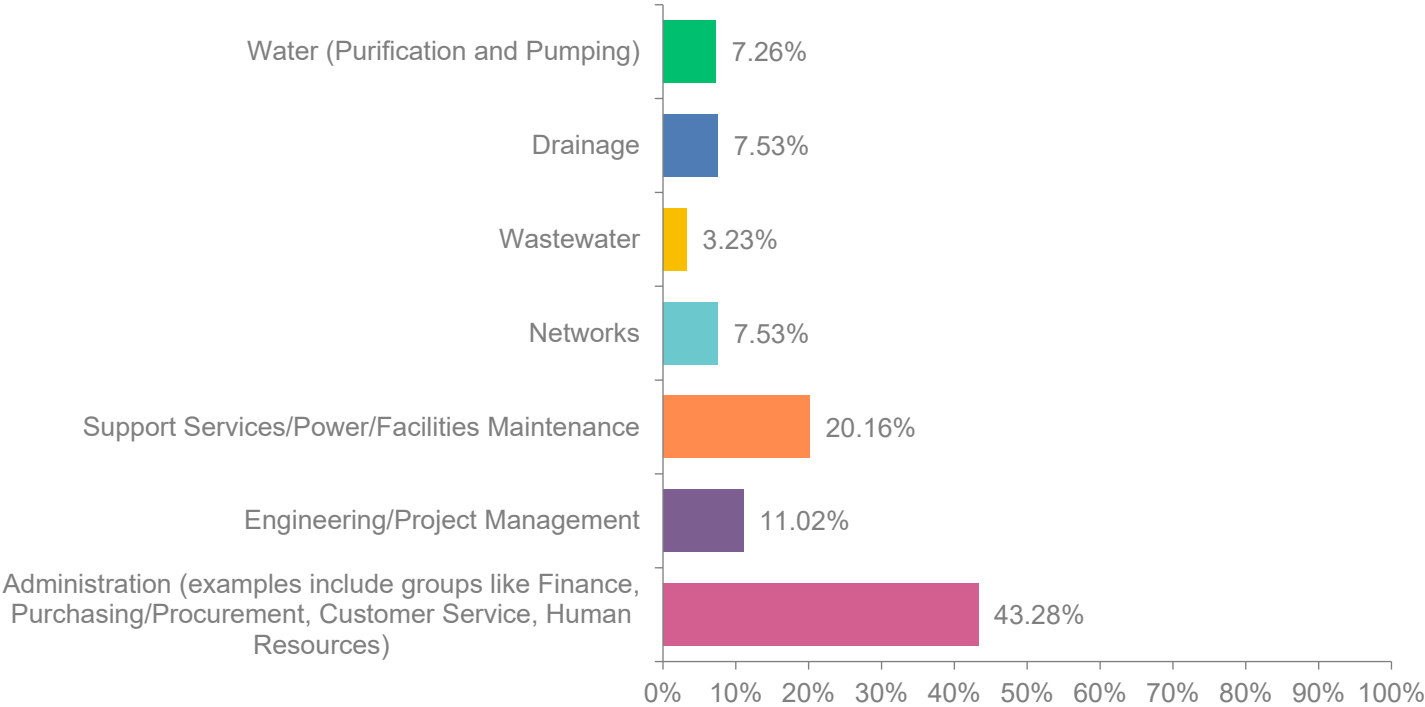
373

- ◆ Total Responses
- ◆ Date Created: Tuesday, November 21, 2023
- ◆ Complete Responses: 373



Q1: Please select the operational division most closely associated with your current position.

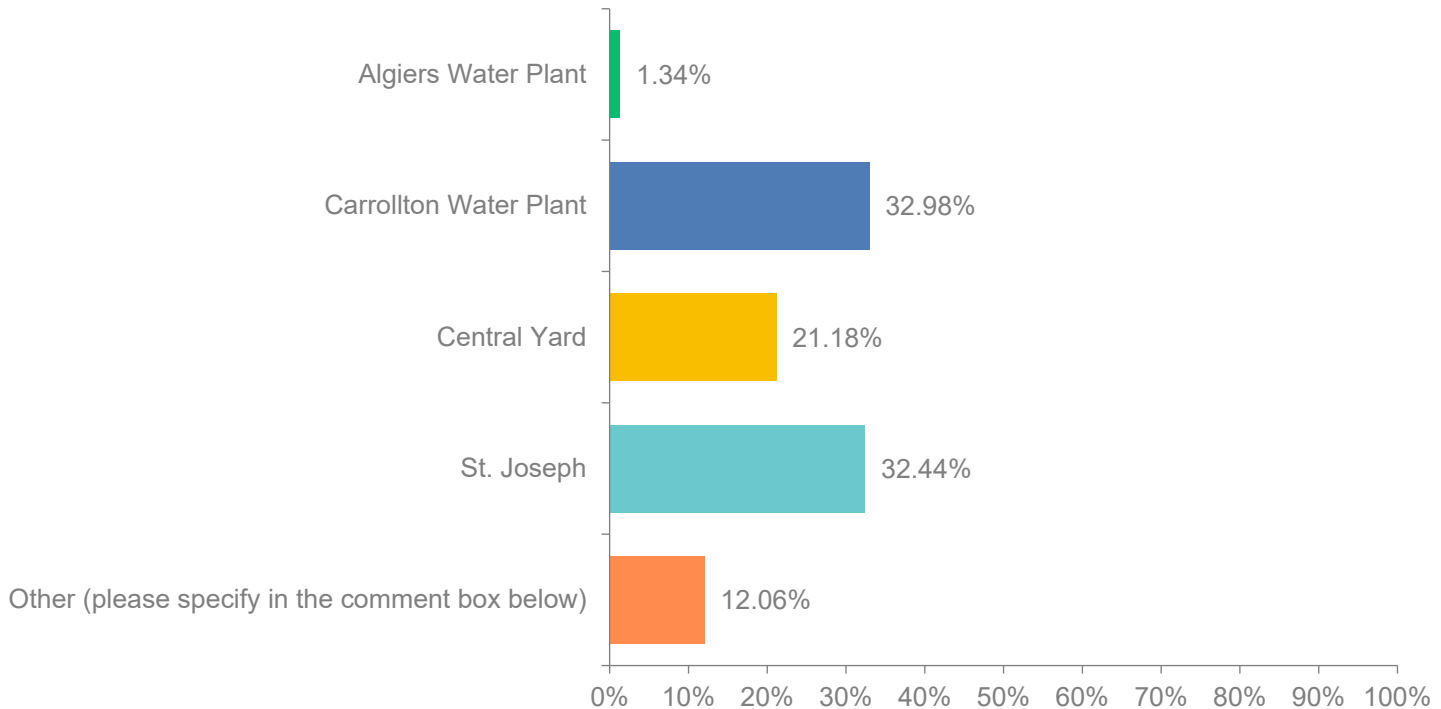
Answered: 372 Skipped: 1





Q2: Please select your primary work location.

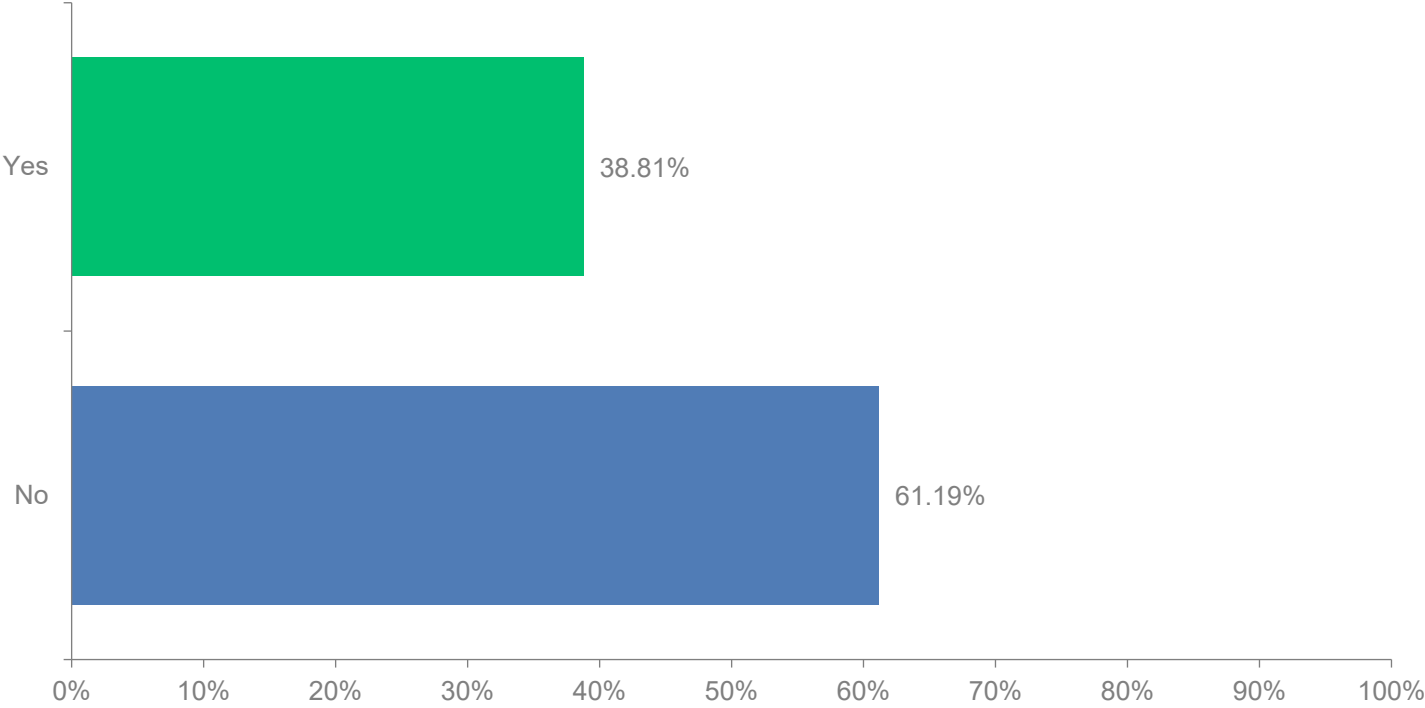
■ Answered: 373 Skipped: 0





Q3: Do you directly supervise any employees?

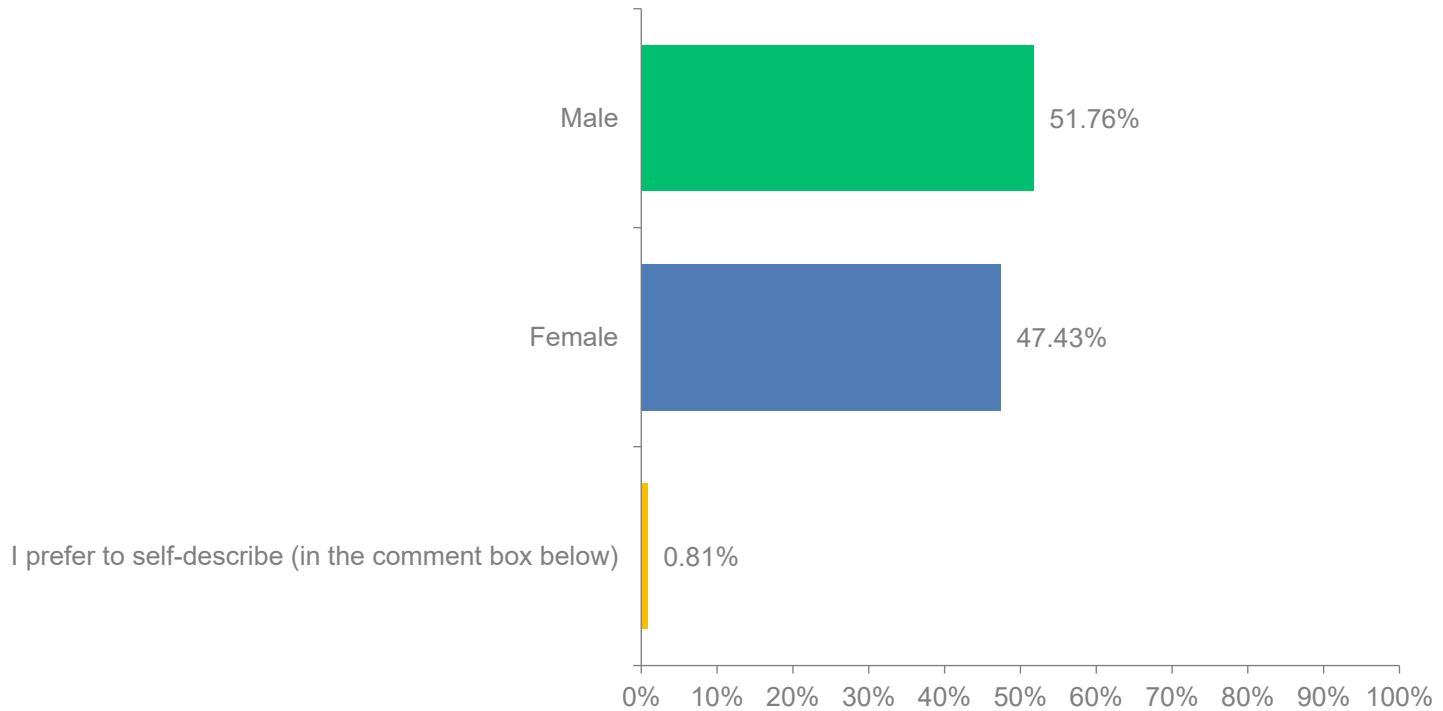
■ Answered: 371 Skipped: 2





Q4: Gender: Please select how you identify.

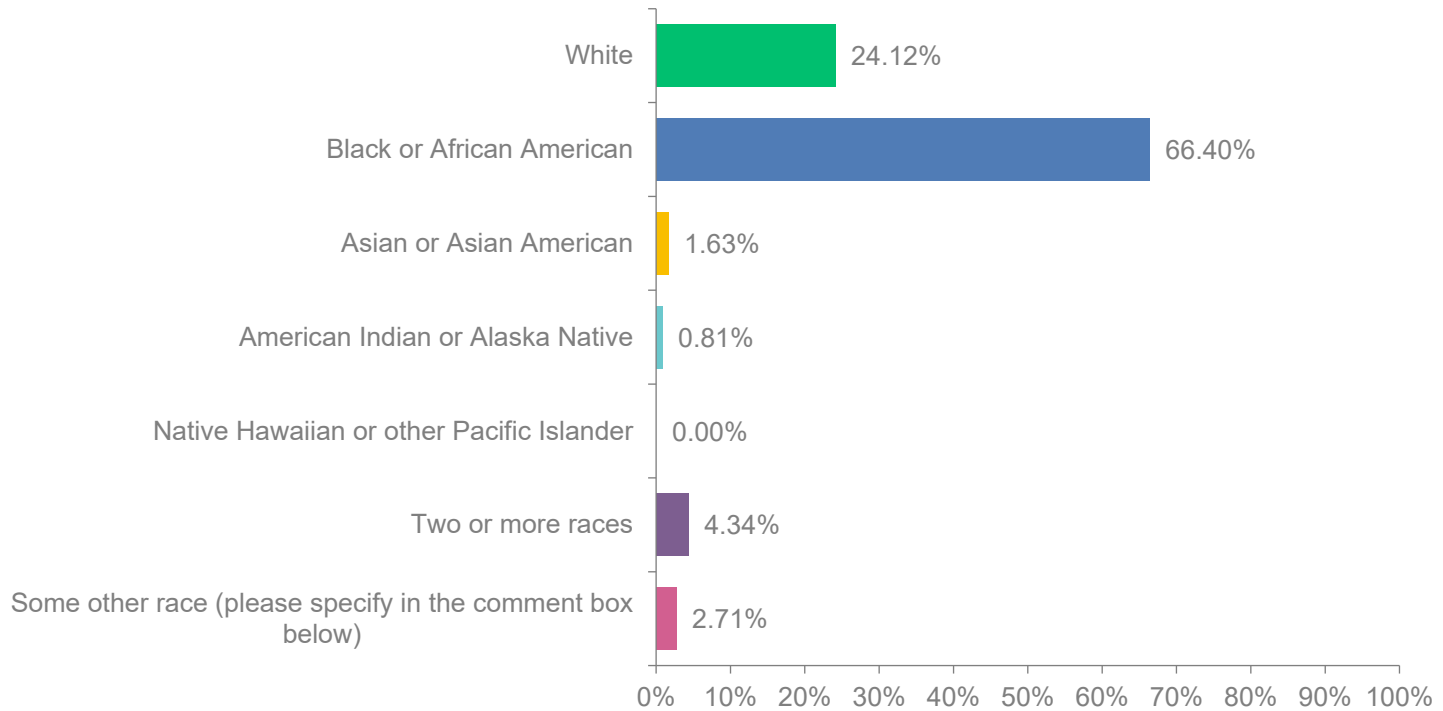
■ Answered: 369 Skipped: 4





Q5: Race: Please select your race.

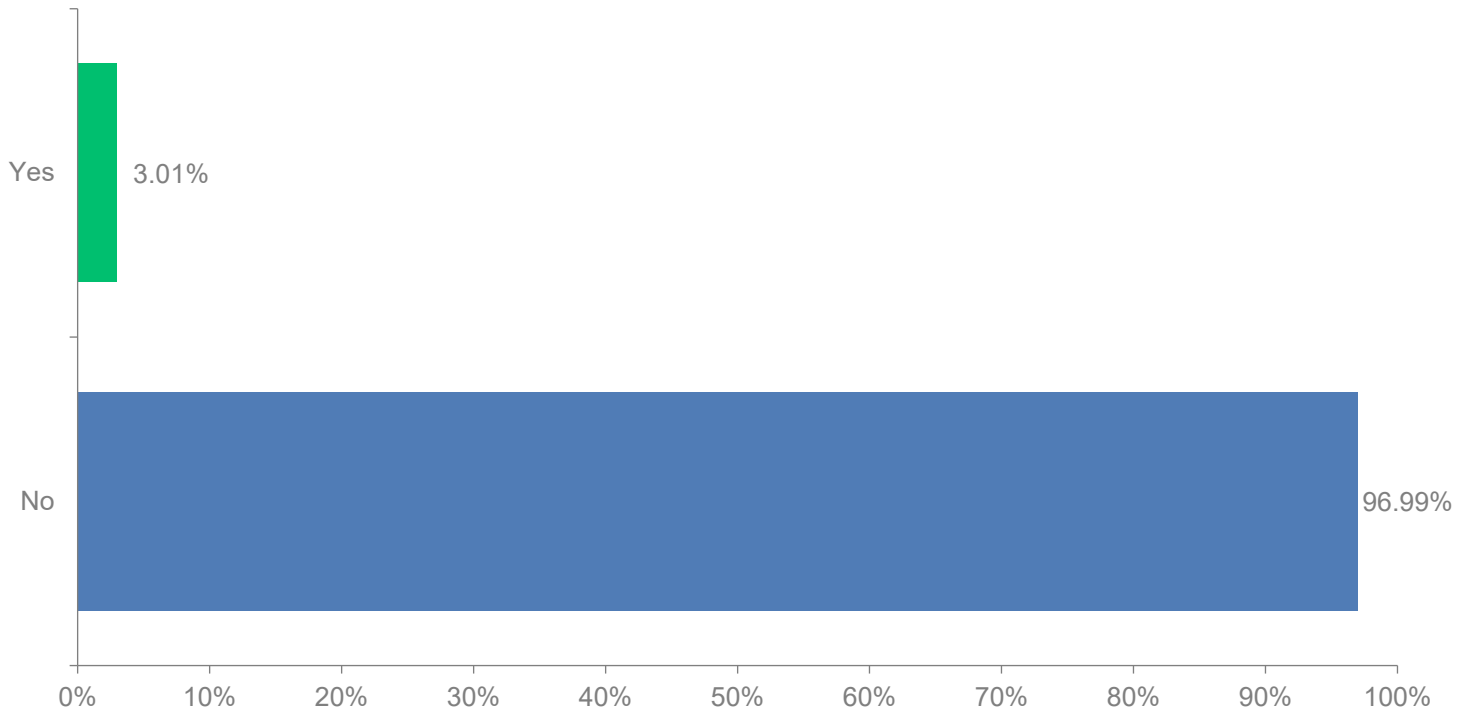
Answered: 369 Skipped: 4





Q6: Ethnicity: Are you of Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin?

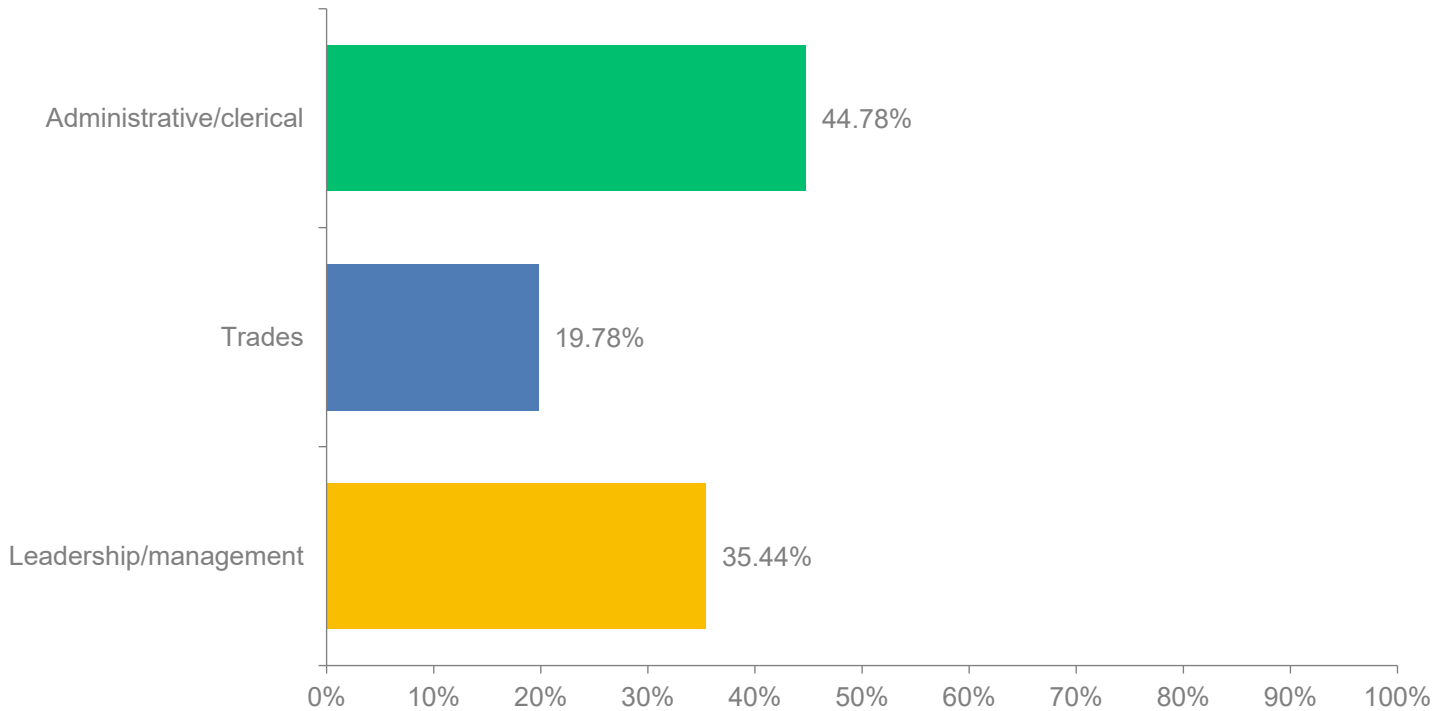
■ Answered: 366 Skipped: 7





Q7: What type of job do you have at SWBNO?

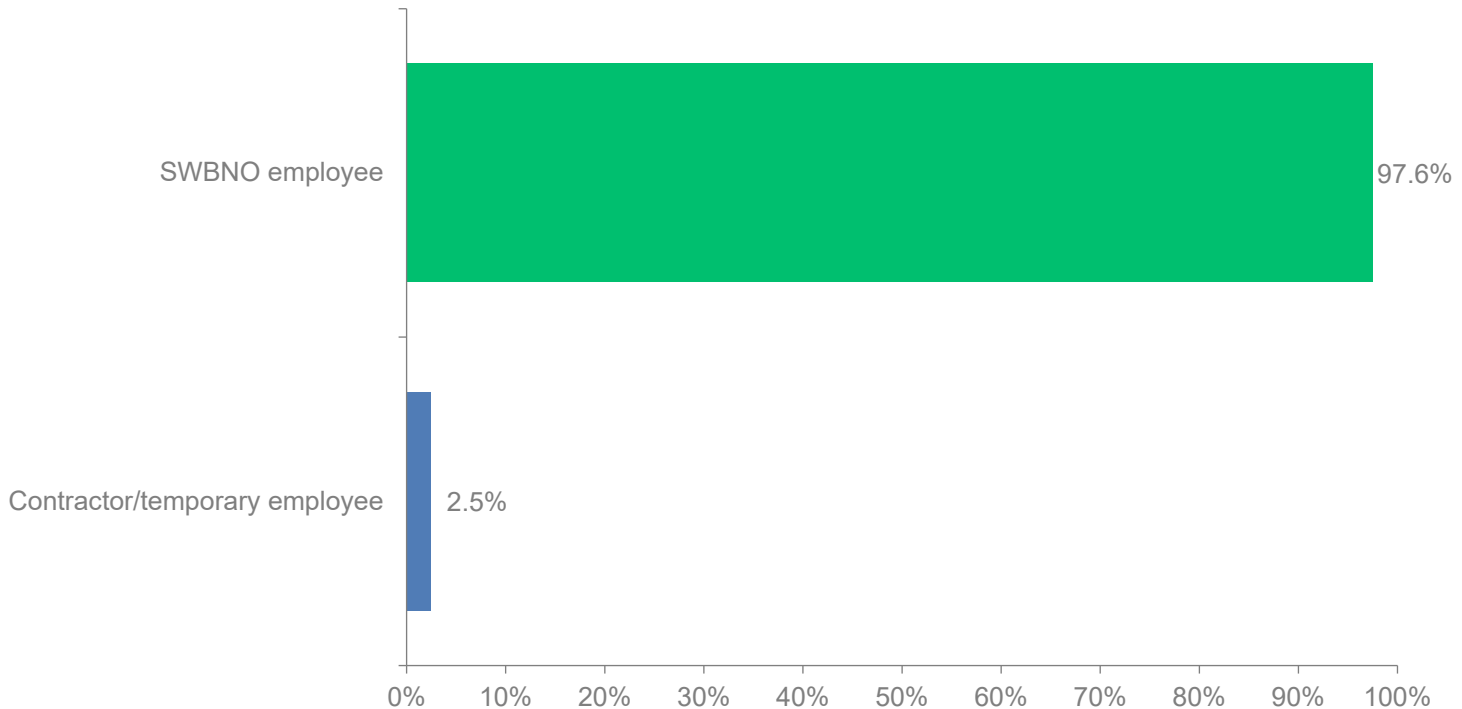
■ Answered: 364 Skipped: 9





Q8: Are you a SWBNO employee or a contractor/temporary employee?

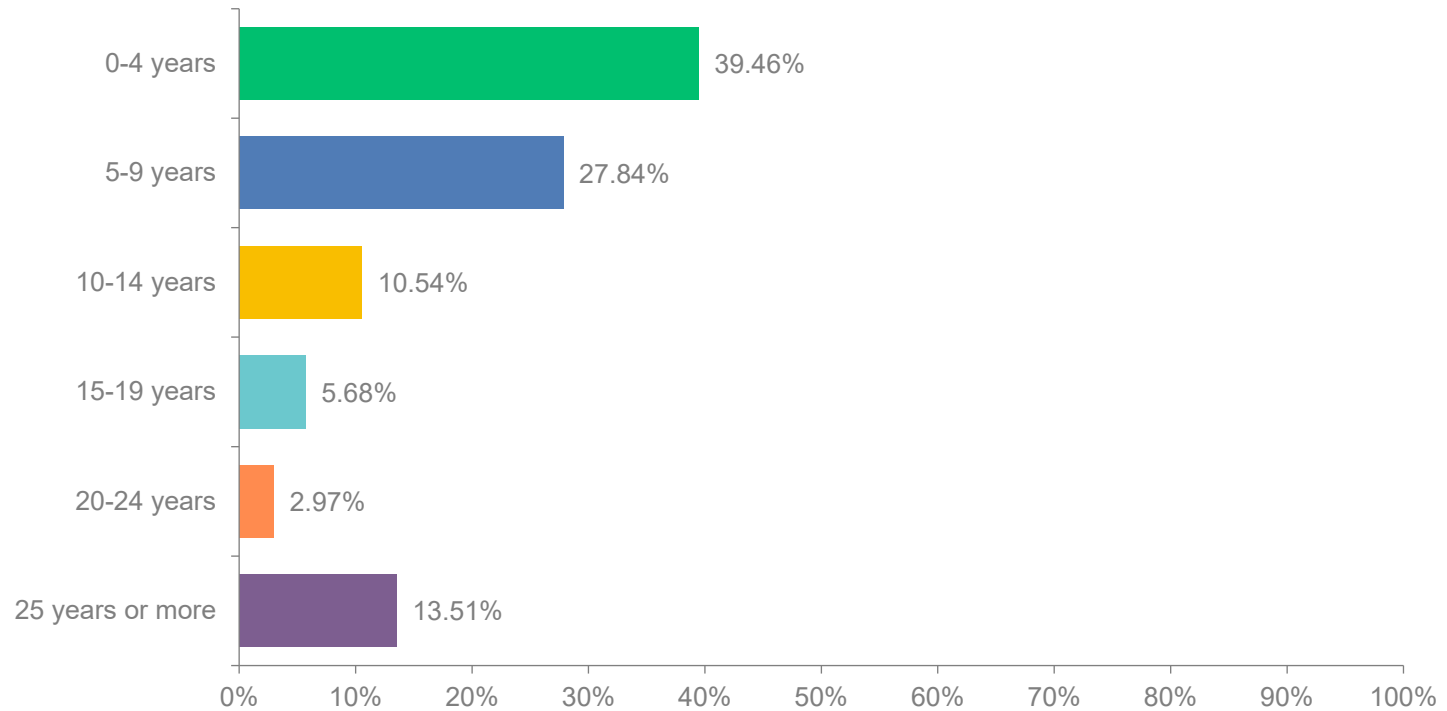
Answered: 368 Skipped: 5





Q9: How long have you worked with SWBNO?

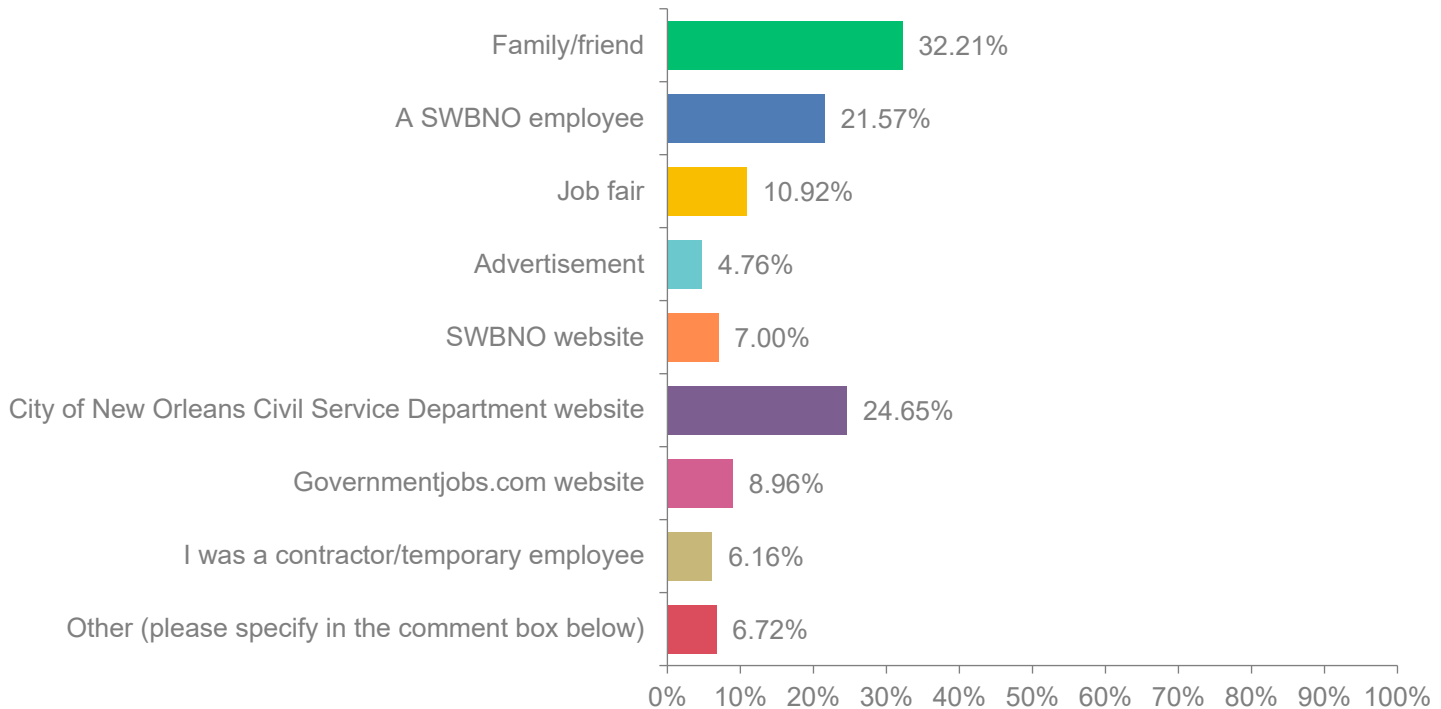
◆ Answered: 370 Skipped: 3





Q10: How did you learn about your first job at SWBNO? (Check all that apply)

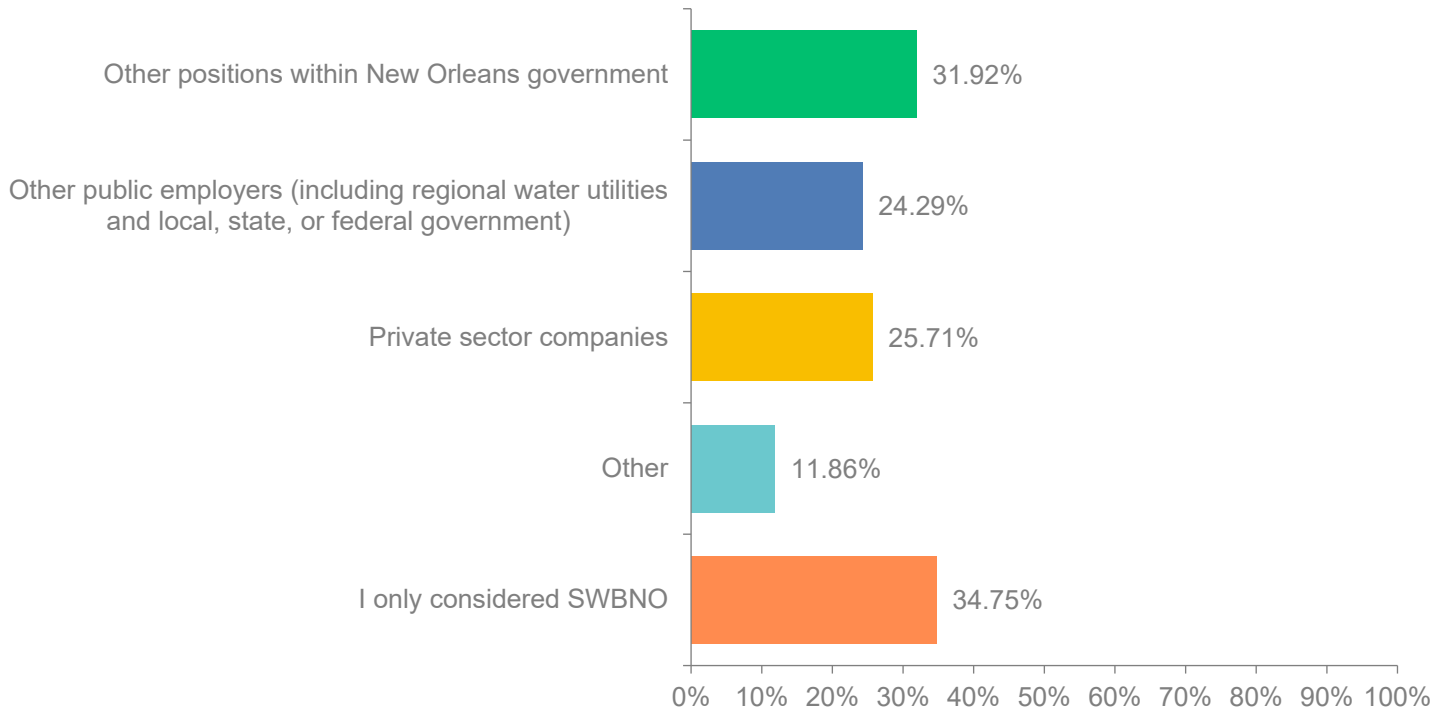
• Answered: 357 Skipped: 16





Q11: Did you consider other employers before choosing SWBNO? (Check all that apply)

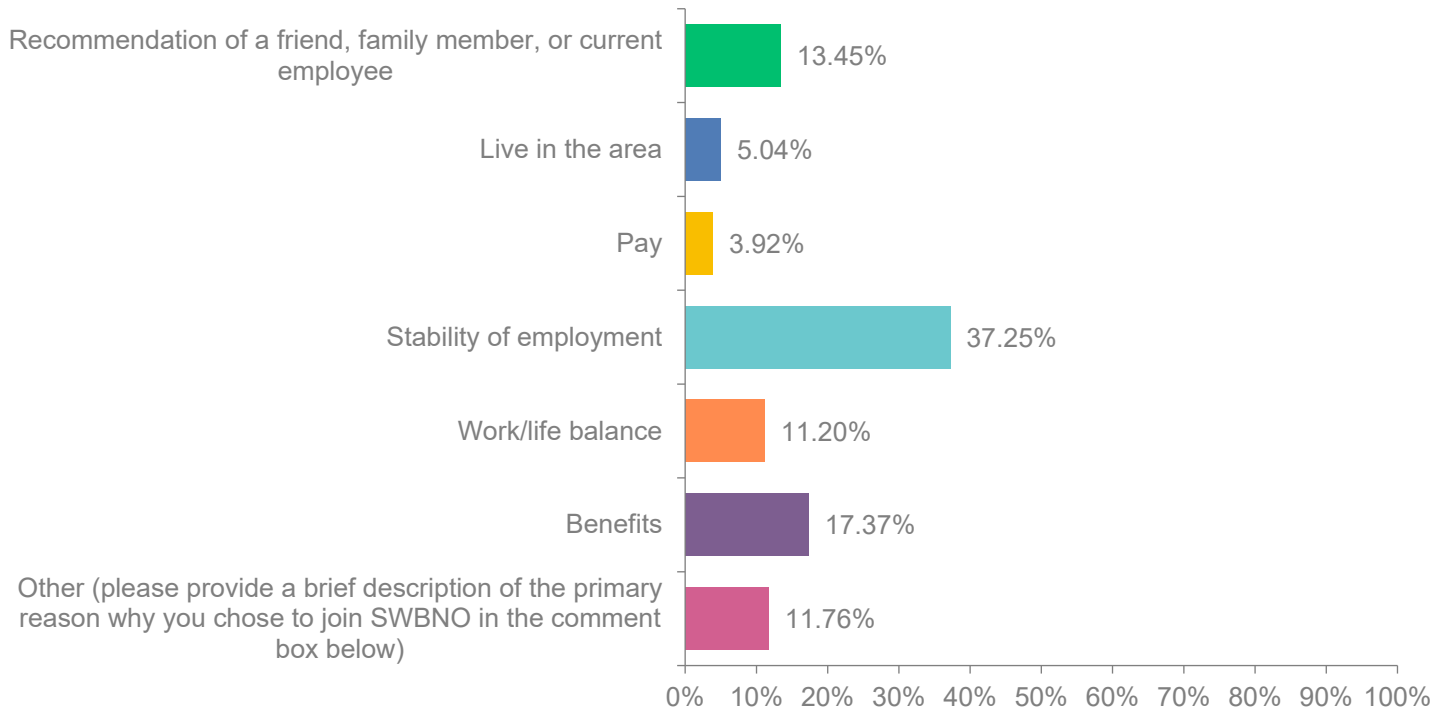
Answered: 354 Skipped: 19





Q13: What is the primary reason you chose to join SWBNO? (choose one)

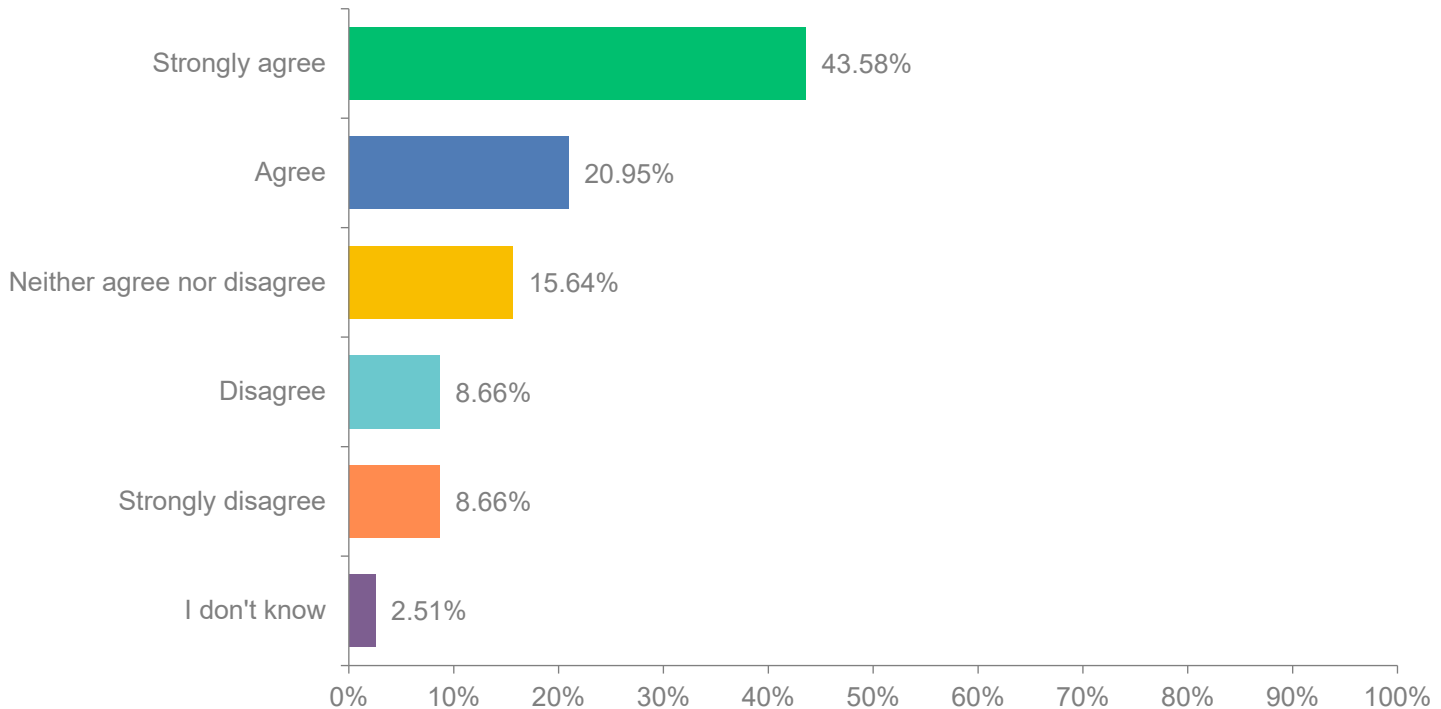
Answered: 357 Skipped: 16





Q15: Please select whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “The Orleans Parish domicile (residency) requirement for SWBNO employees limits SWBNO’s ability to hire and retain quality staff.”

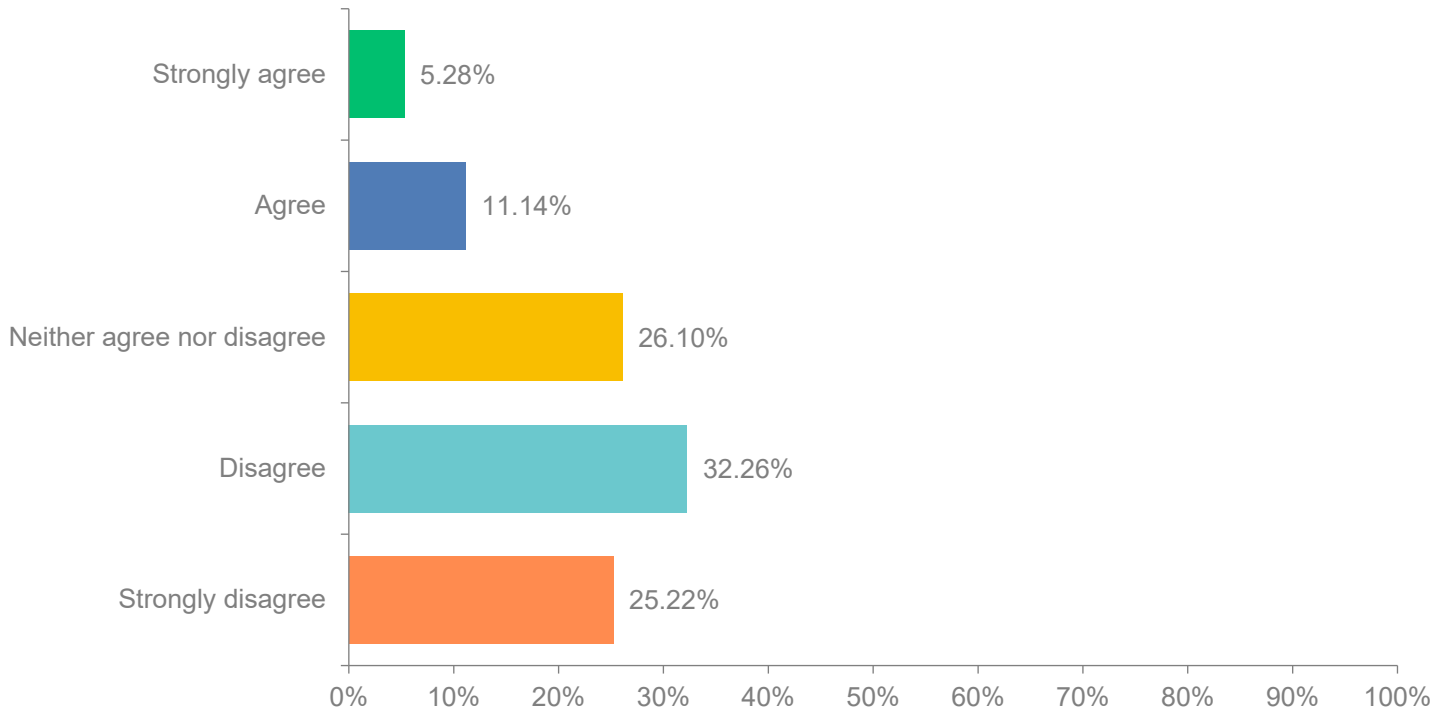
■ Answered: 358 Skipped: 15





Q16: Please select whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “SWBNO’s starting pay for non-supervisory positions encourages applications from well-qualified candidates.”

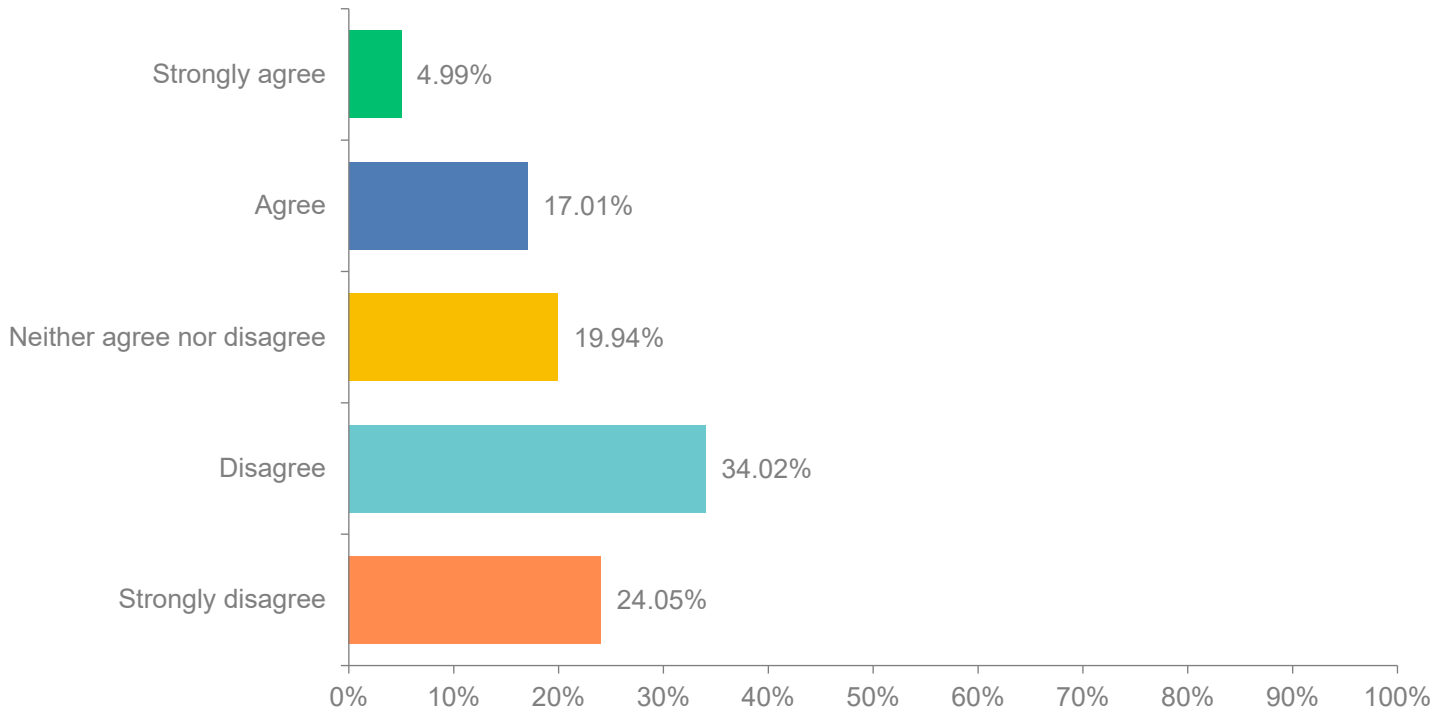
■ Answered: 341 Skipped: 32





Q17: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “Overall, the City’s Civil Service system helps SWBNO to offer salaries that are competitive with pay for similar jobs at other employers in the region.”

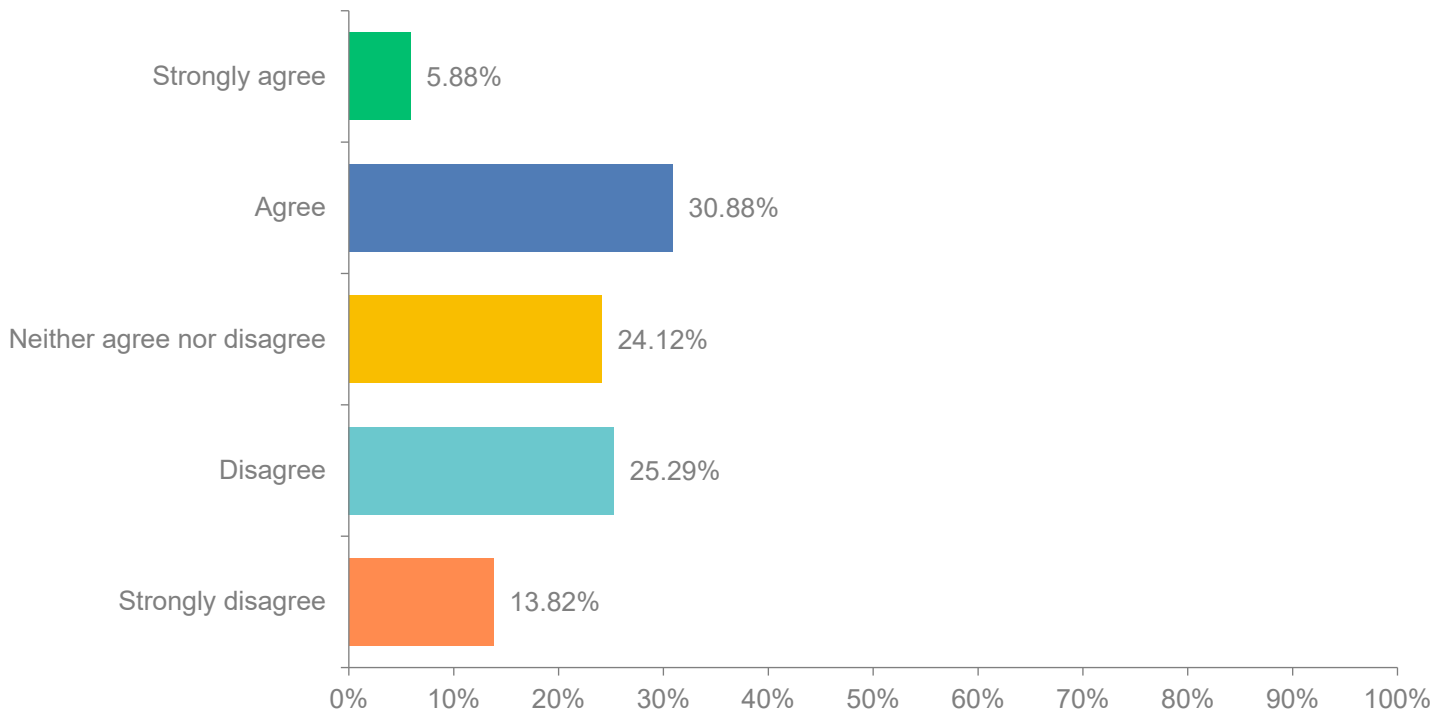
■ Answered: 341 Skipped: 32





Q18: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “SWBNO’s pay plan is transparent and easy to understand.”

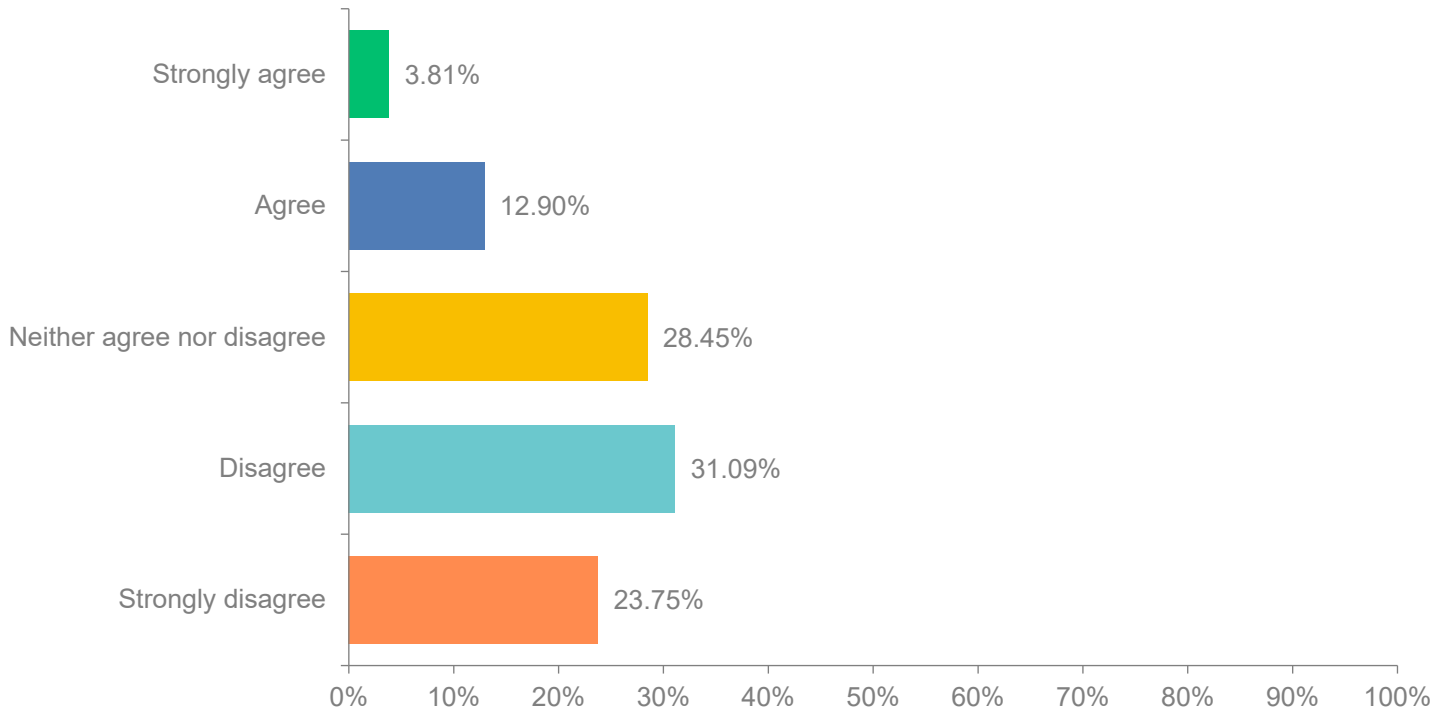
Answered: 340 Skipped: 33





Q19: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “There is enough of a difference in pay between an employee who has been with SWBNO for a long time, and an employee who was just hired.”

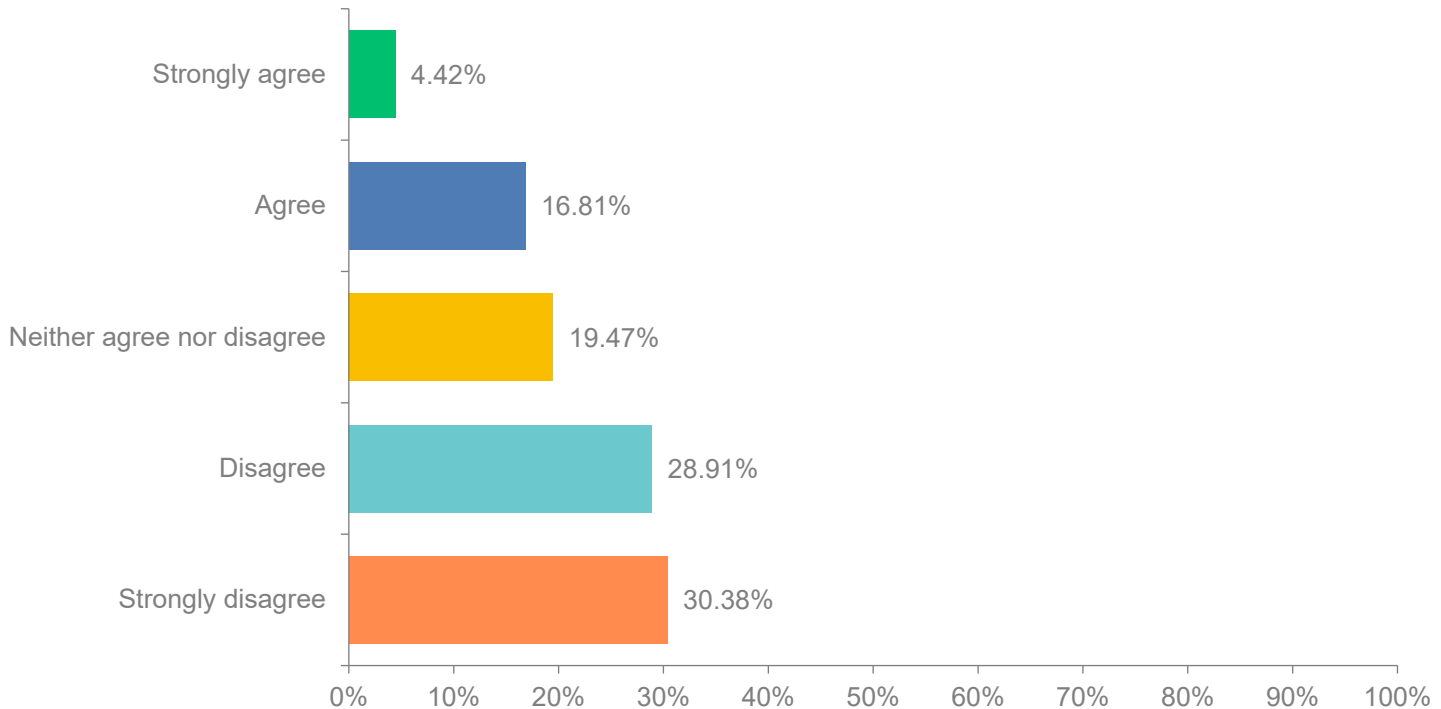
■ Answered: 341 Skipped: 32





Q20: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “Since starting at SWBNO, I have received pay increases that match my performance and years with the organization.”

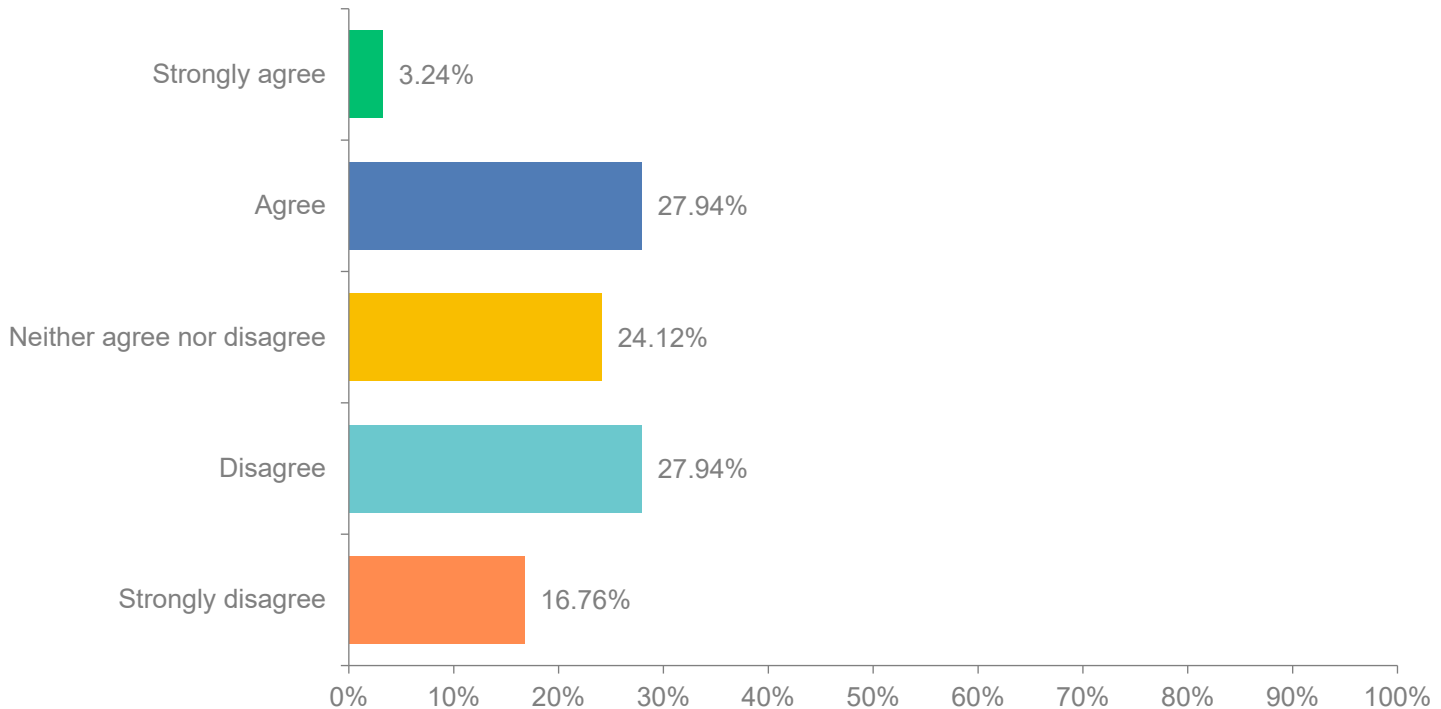
■ Answered: 339 Skipped: 34





Q21: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “When I look at the pay plan, I can reasonably estimate my future earnings in 5, 10, and 15 years.”

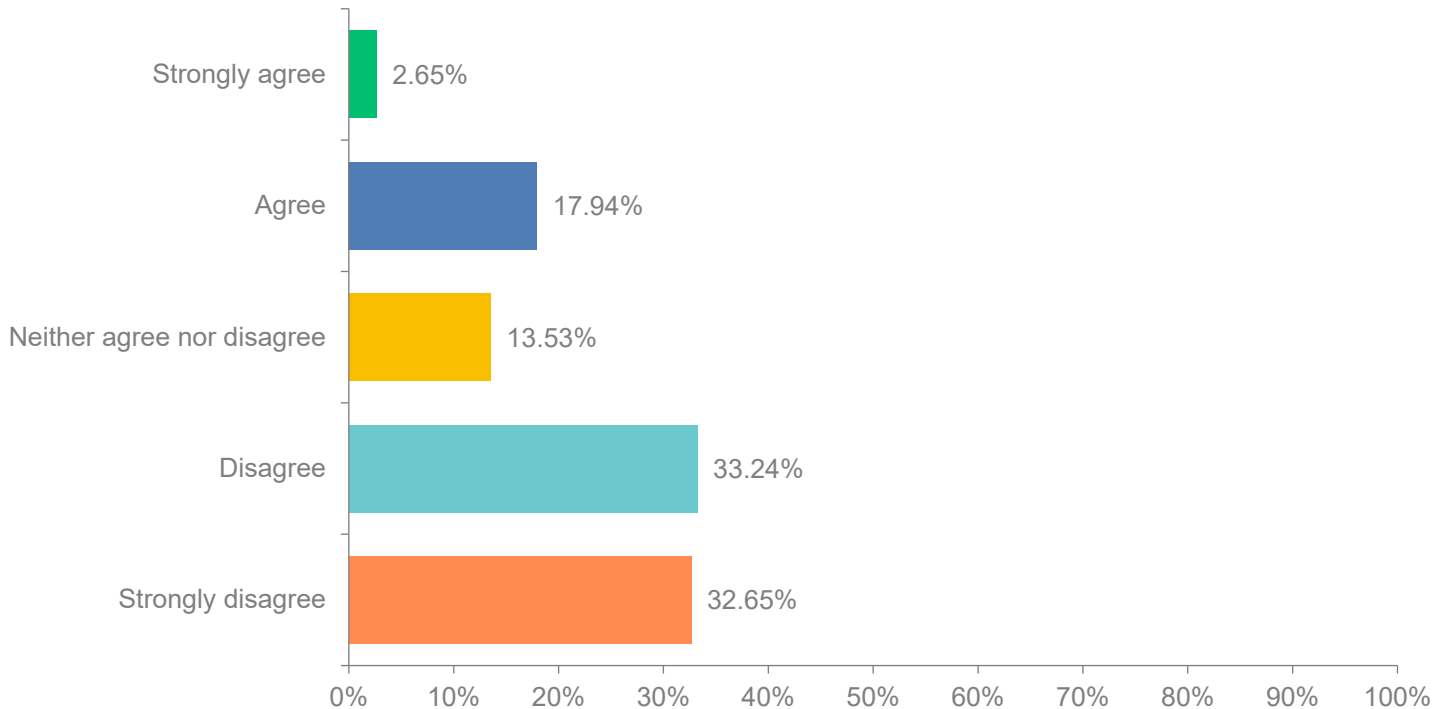
■ Answered: 340 Skipped: 33





**Q22: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement –
“My pay matches the level of work and physical risk associated with my position.”**

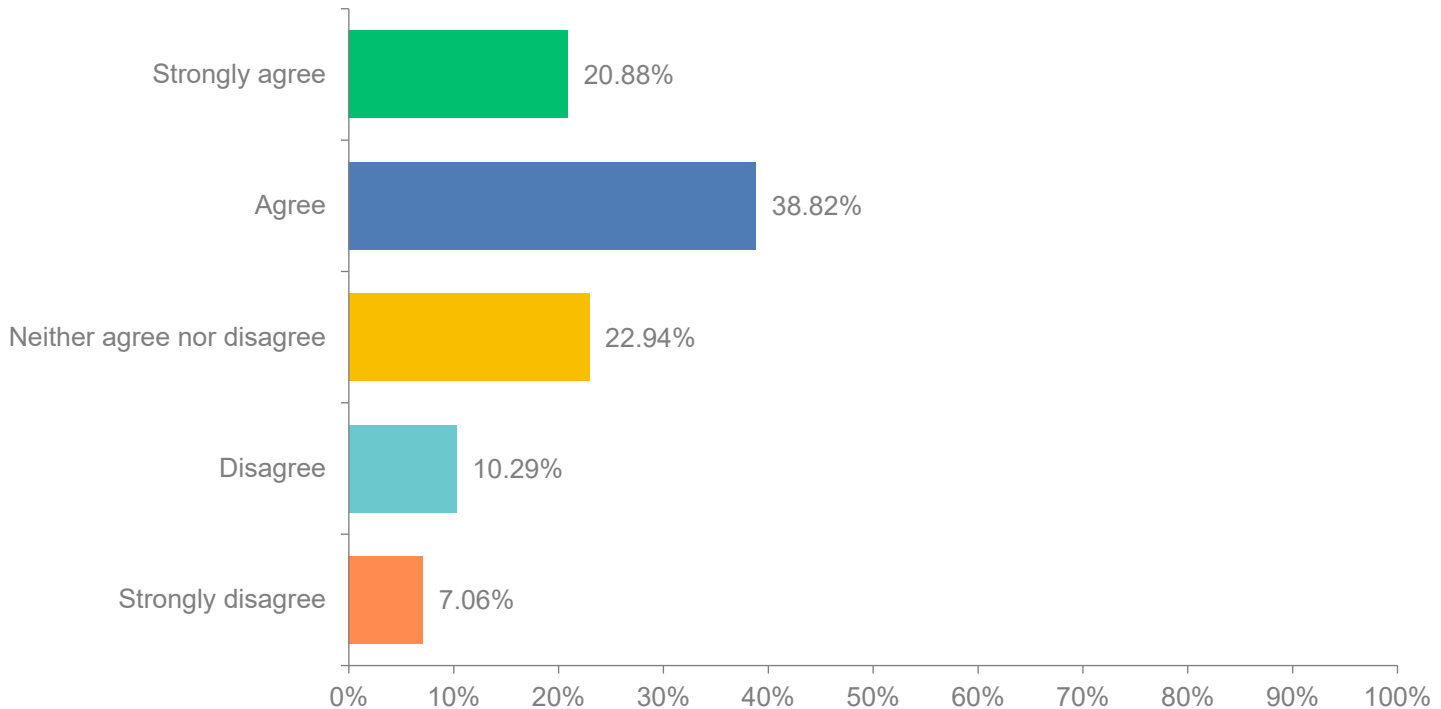
■ Answered: 340 Skipped: 33





Q23: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “Incentive pay types, such as extra pay for night shift or number of years with SWBNO – will help attract qualified candidates and/or keep existing employees.”

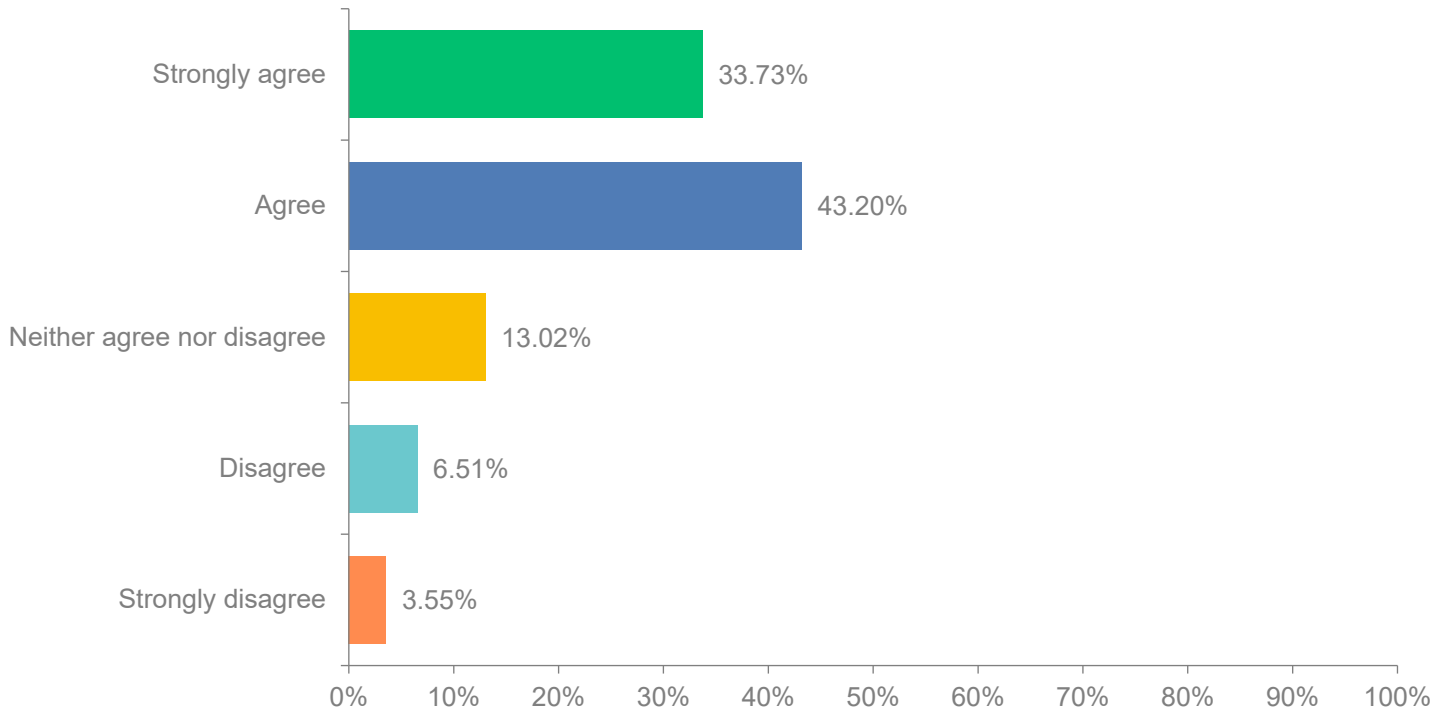
■ Answered: 340 Skipped: 33





**Q24: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement –
“SWBNO offers a strong health benefits package to employees.”**

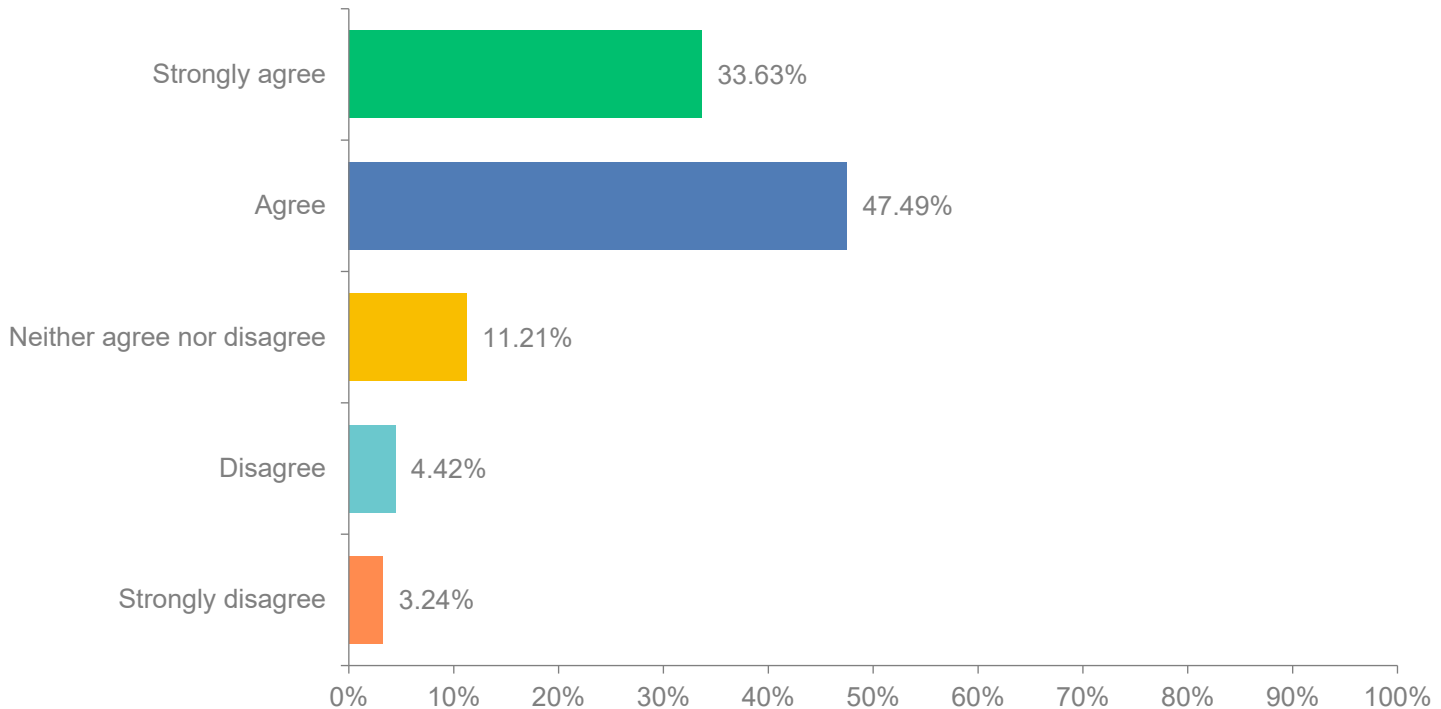
◆ Answered: 338 Skipped: 35





**Q25: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement –
“SWBNO offers a strong retirement benefits package to employees.”**

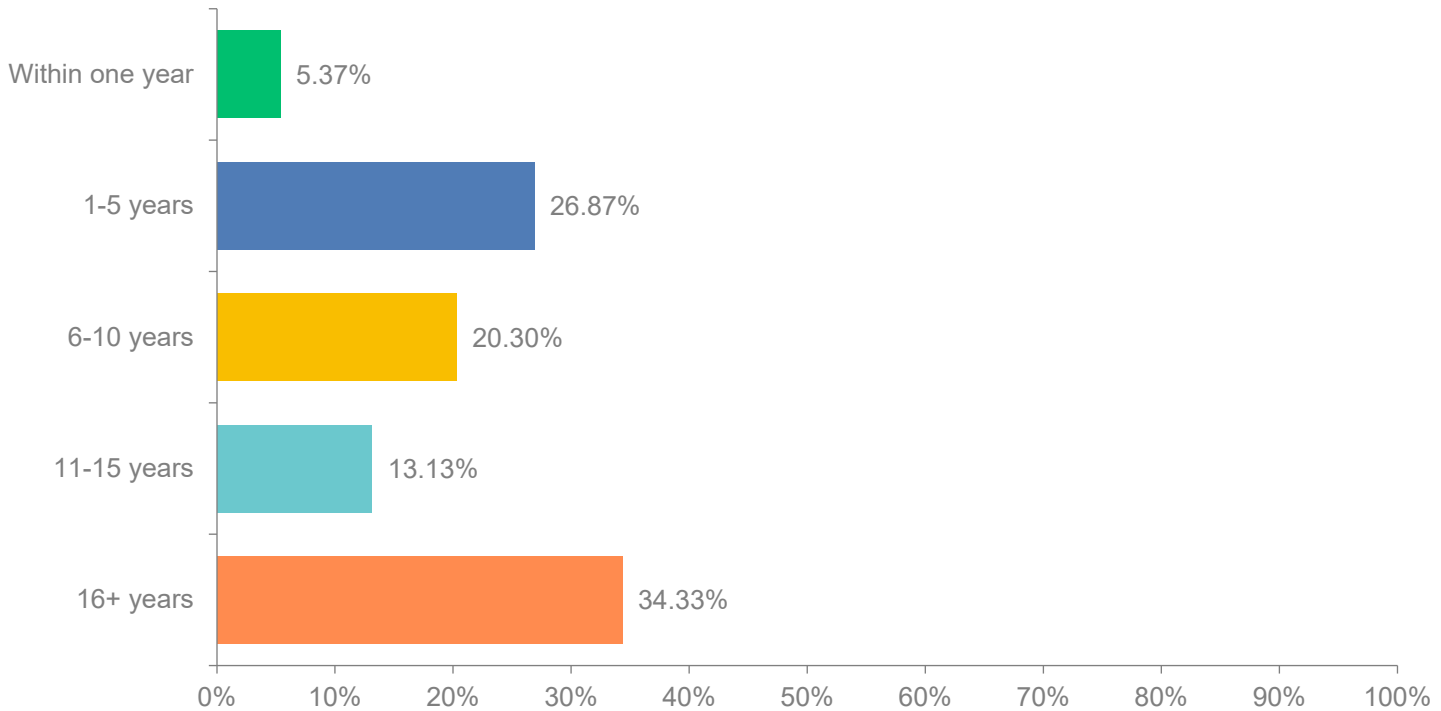
◆ Answered: 339 Skipped: 34





Q26: When do you plan on leaving SWBNO – either by retirement or resignation?

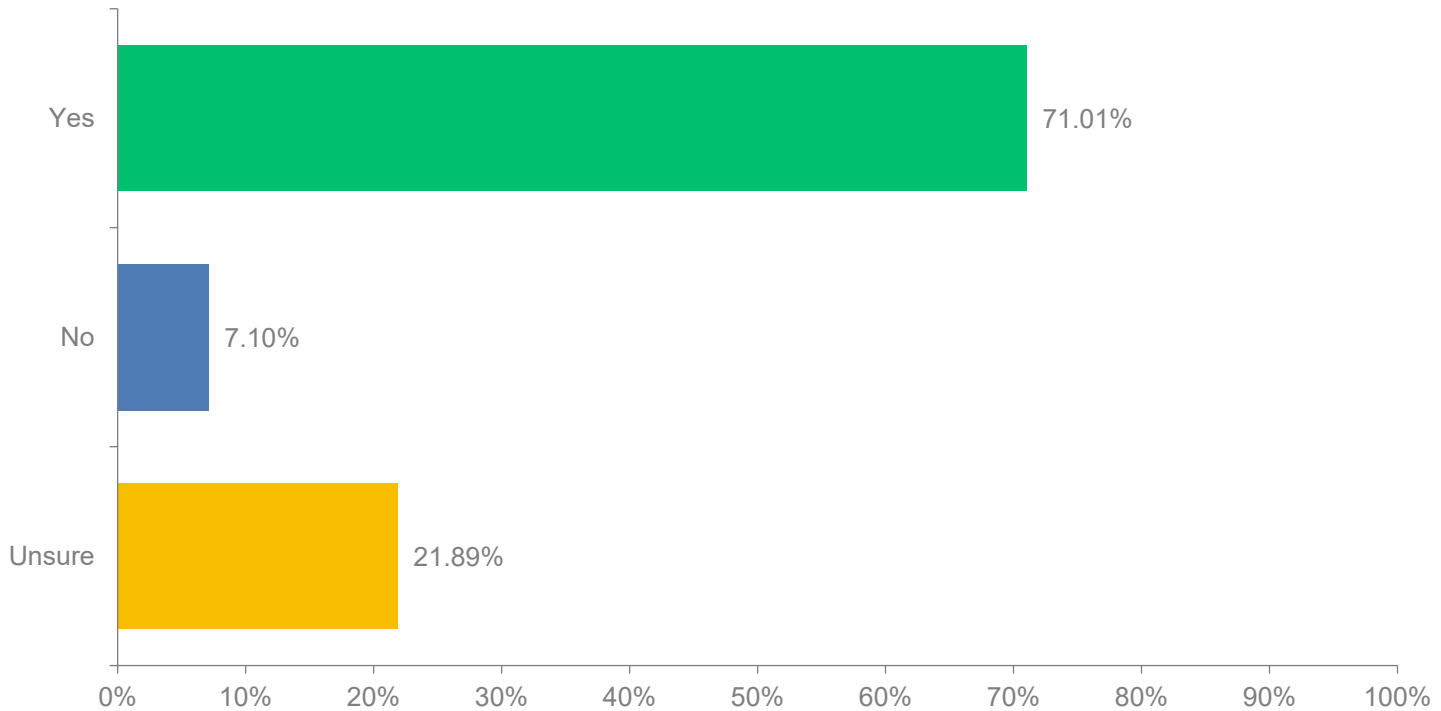
Answered: 335 Skipped: 38





Q27: Do you see yourself retiring from SWBNO with a pension?

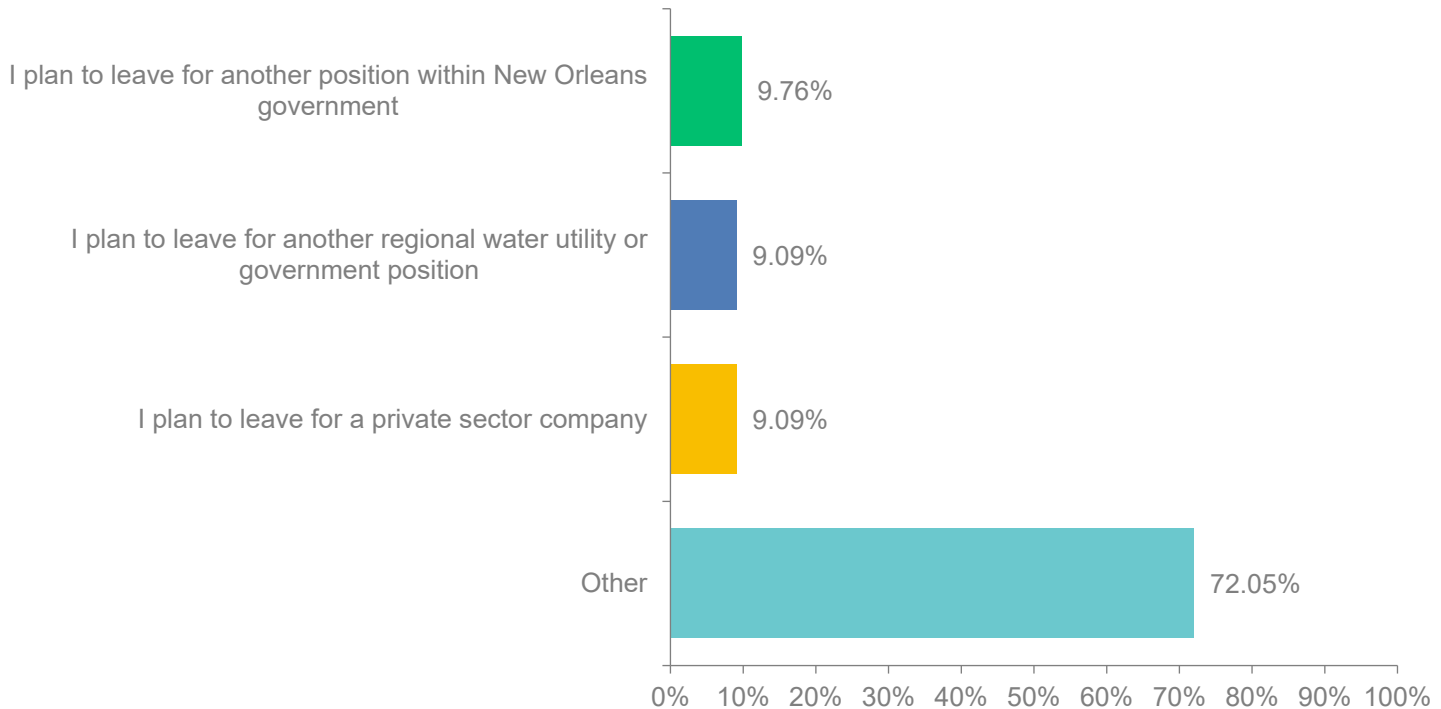
Answered: 338 Skipped: 35





Q28: Please select the option that most closely reflects your future plans.

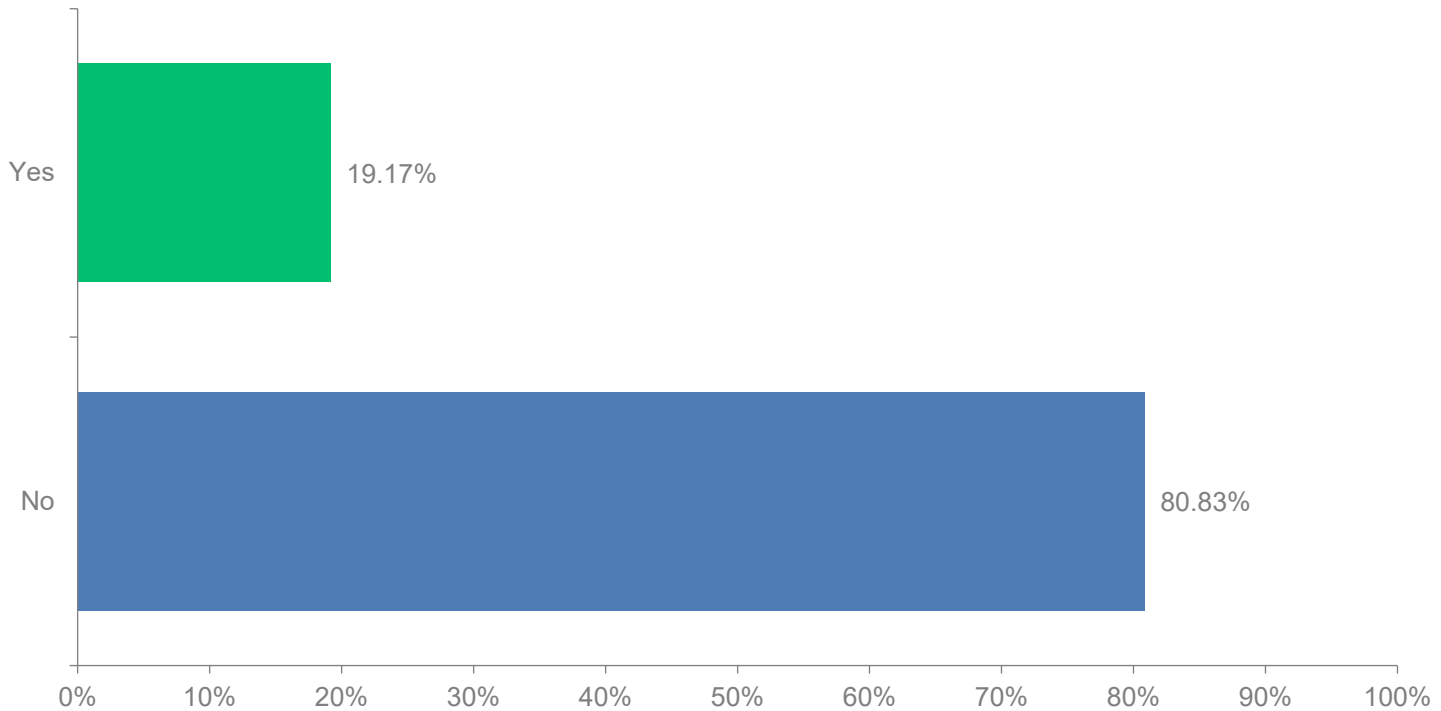
Answered: 297 Skipped: 76





Q29: Have you applied for any position with another employer within the past 12 months?

Answered: 339 Skipped: 34





Q31: How likely are each of the following factors to influence whether you remain at SWBNO?

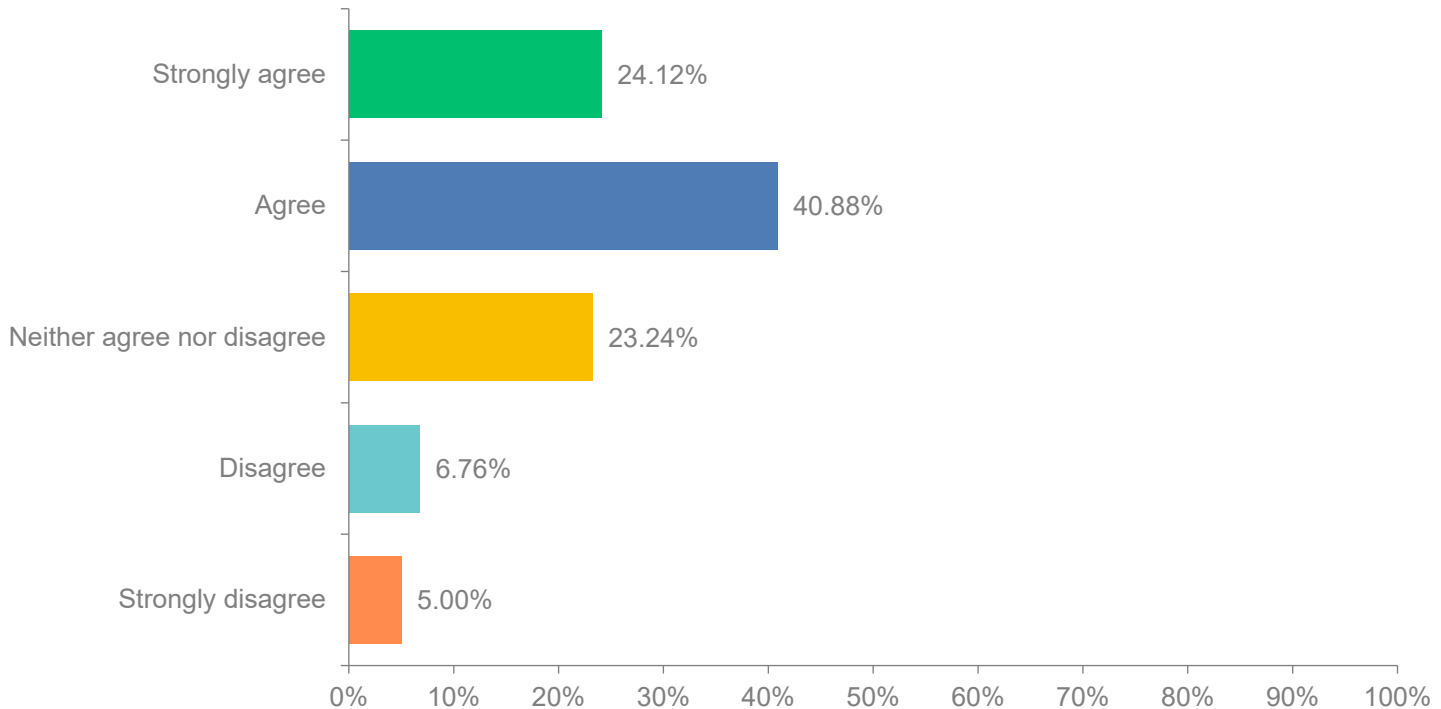
Answered: 340 Skipped: 33

	Promotional opportunities	Opportunities for professional development	Pay levels	Years to retirement eligibility	Safe and supportive workplace	Meaningful work
Very likely	49.6%	43.6%	52.7%	45.5%	49.4%	41.8%
Likely	26.6%	29.4%	23.4%	29.5%	33.0%	38.2%
Neither likely nor unlikely	15.0%	17.8%	13.0%	17.6%	10.4%	13.4%
Unlikely	5.3%	6.2%	5.6%	4.5%	3.9%	3.3%
Very unlikely	3.5%	3.0%	5.3%	3.0%	3.3%	3.3%



Q32: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “I would encourage people to consider SWBNO as an employer.”

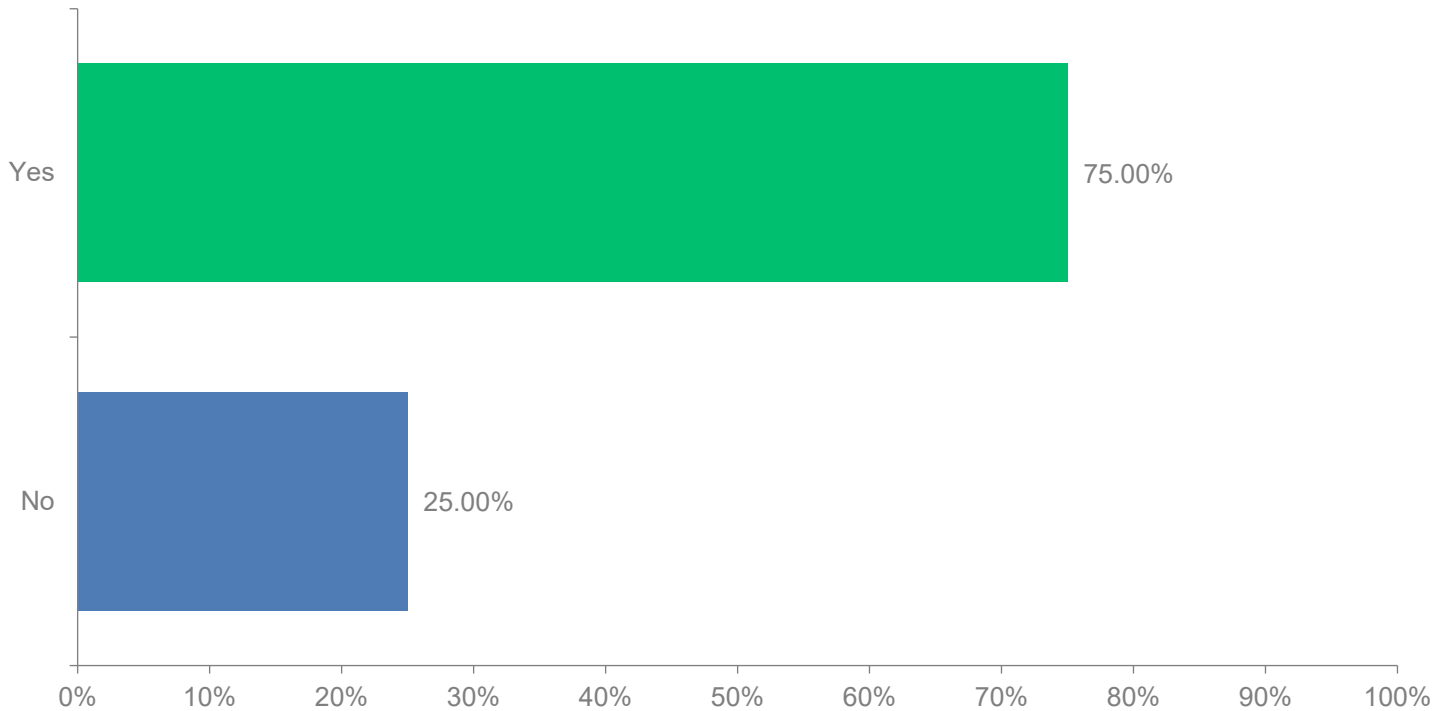
■ Answered: 340 Skipped: 33





Q33: Do you plan on applying for a promotion the next time a suitable position is available?

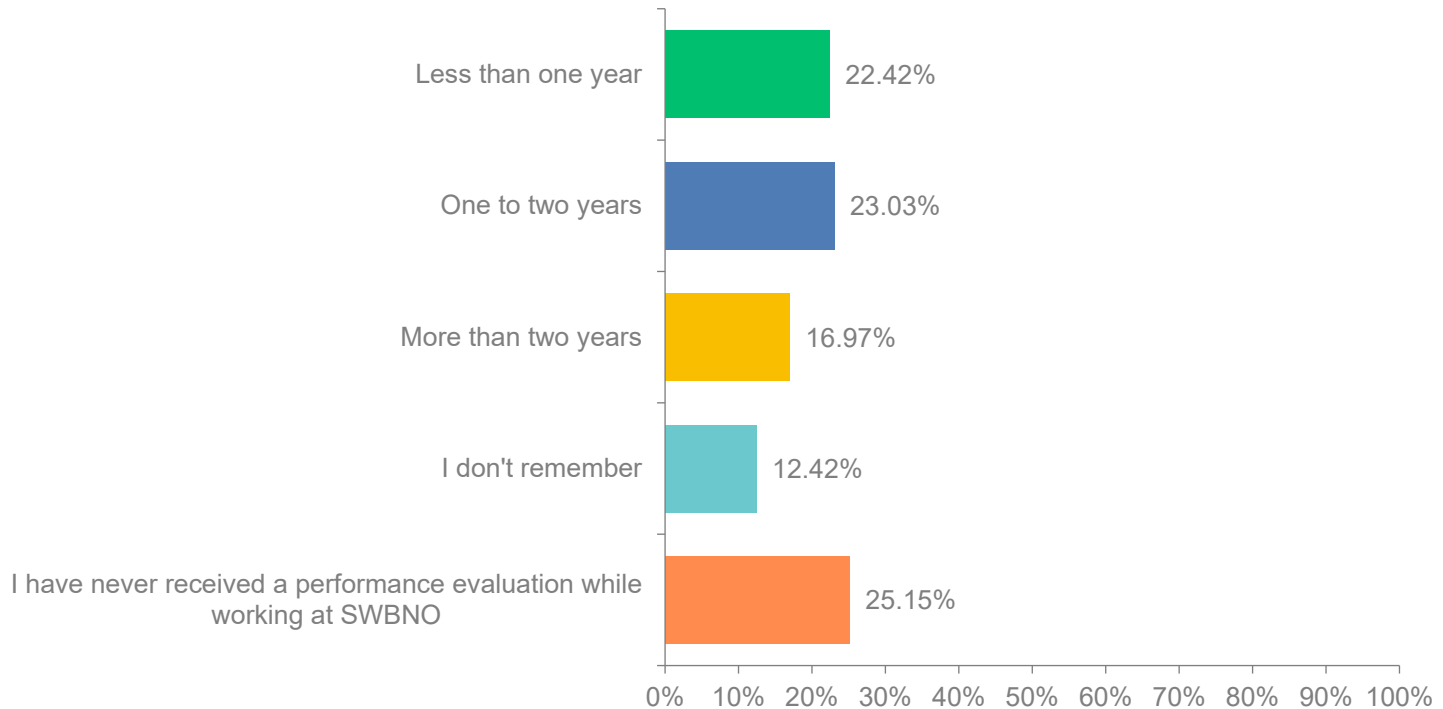
Answered: 332 Skipped: 41





Q34: How long has it been since your manager or supervisor provided you with a performance evaluation?

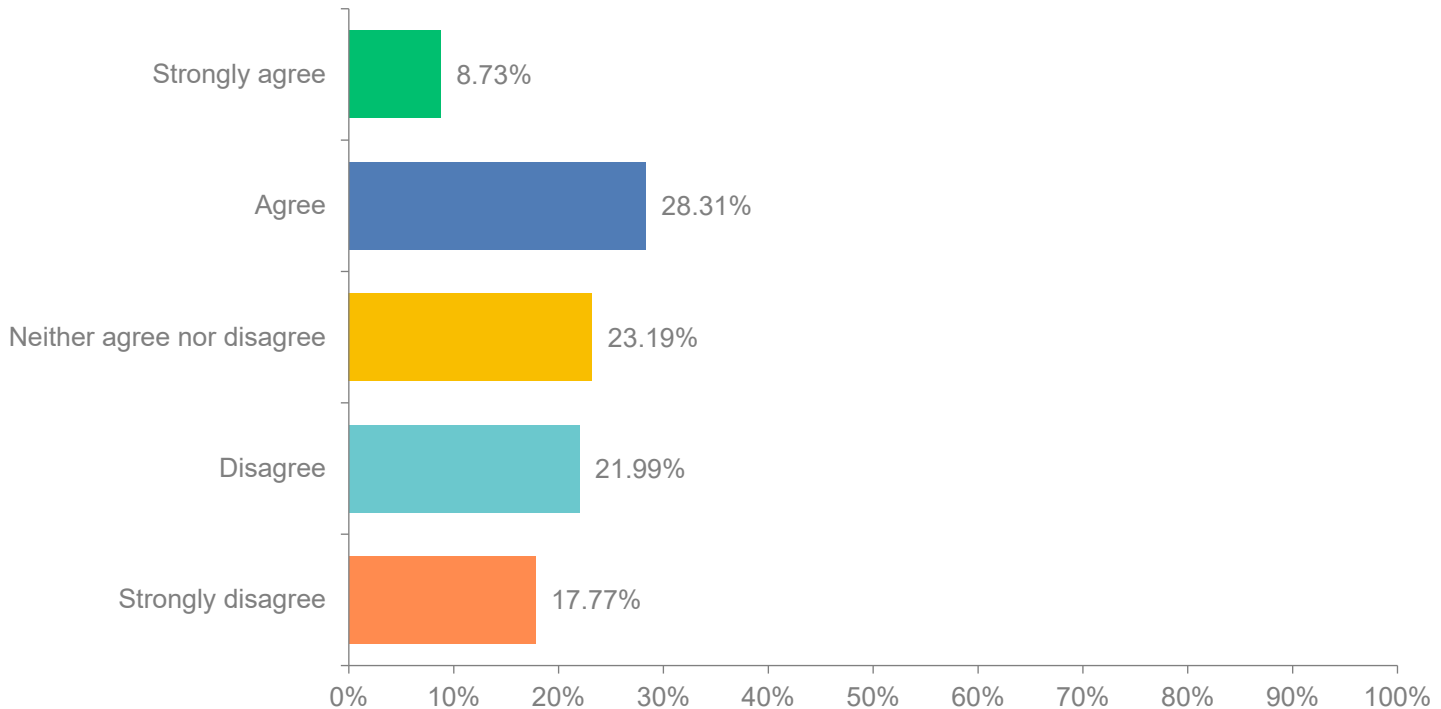
Answered: 330 Skipped: 43





**Q35: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement –
“The rules for receiving a promotion are clear and well-communicated.”**

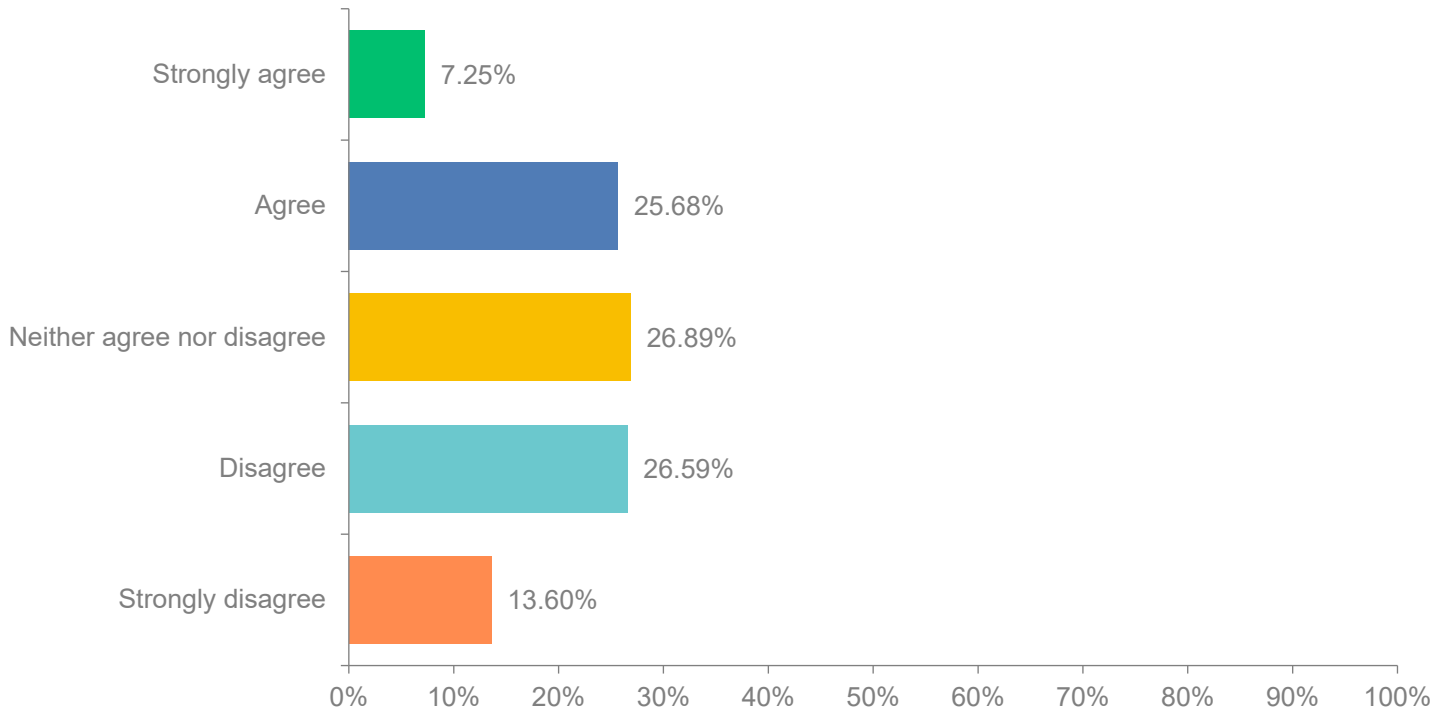
■ Answered: 332 Skipped: 41





Q36: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “SWBNO’s career progression system offers equitable opportunities for career growth among all employees.”

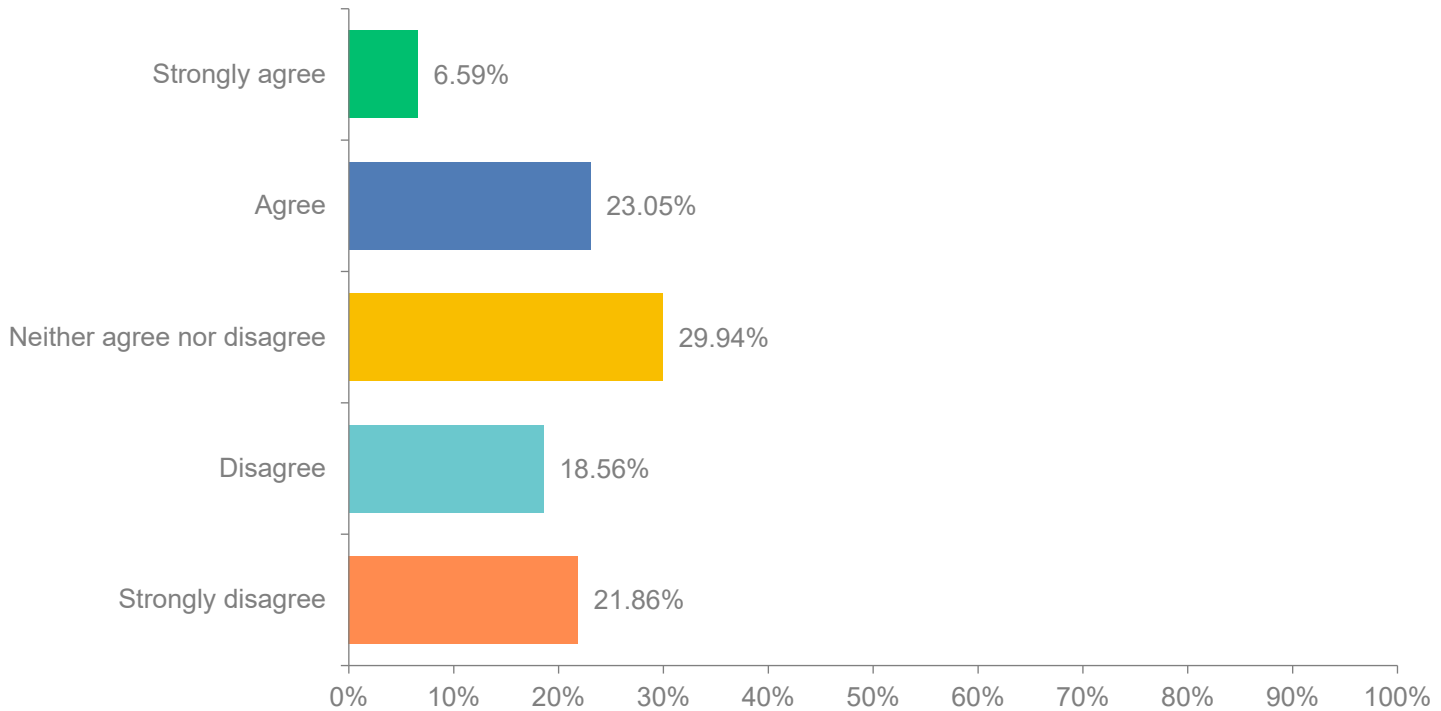
■ Answered: 331 Skipped: 42





Q37: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “SWBNO gives employee promotions based on performance, tenure, and ability to do the job.”

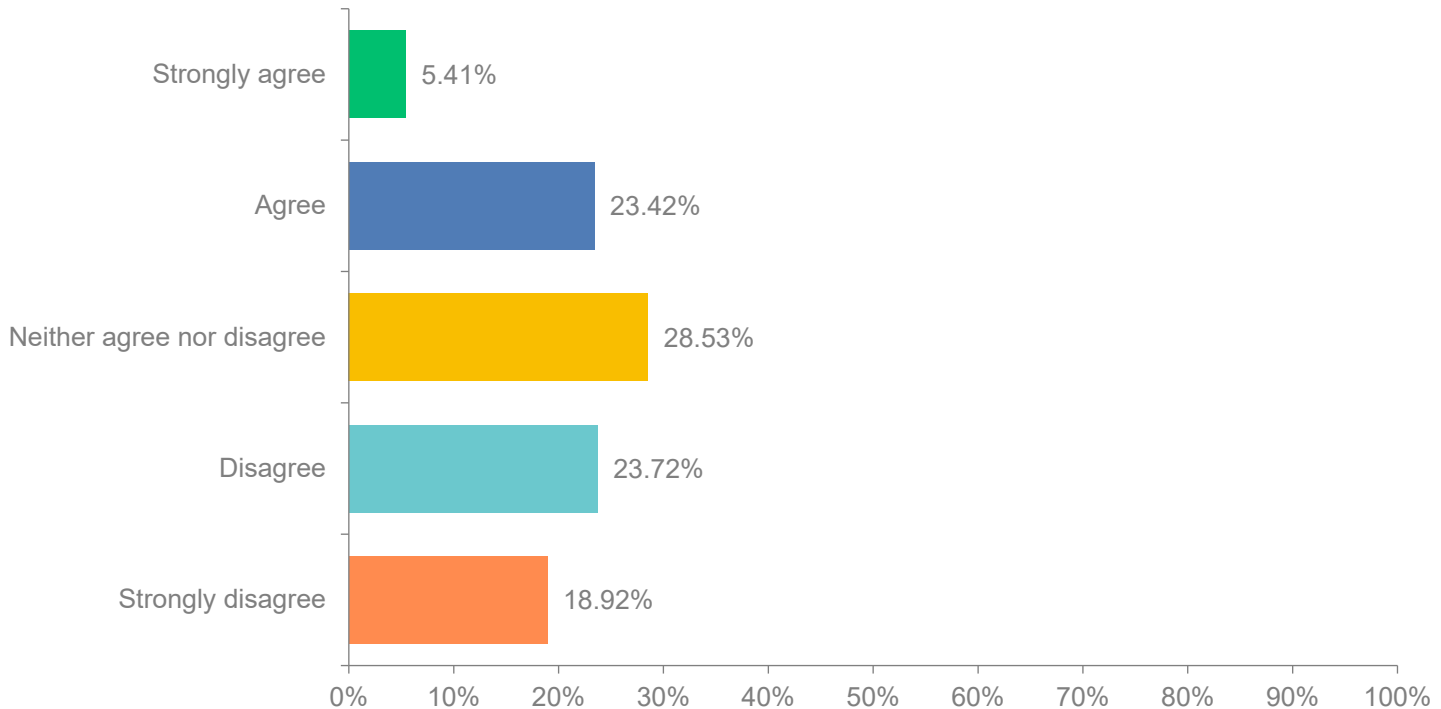
■ Answered: 334 Skipped: 39





Q38: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “SWBNO leadership and management provide transparent communication for everyone regarding pay, promotions, and opportunities.”

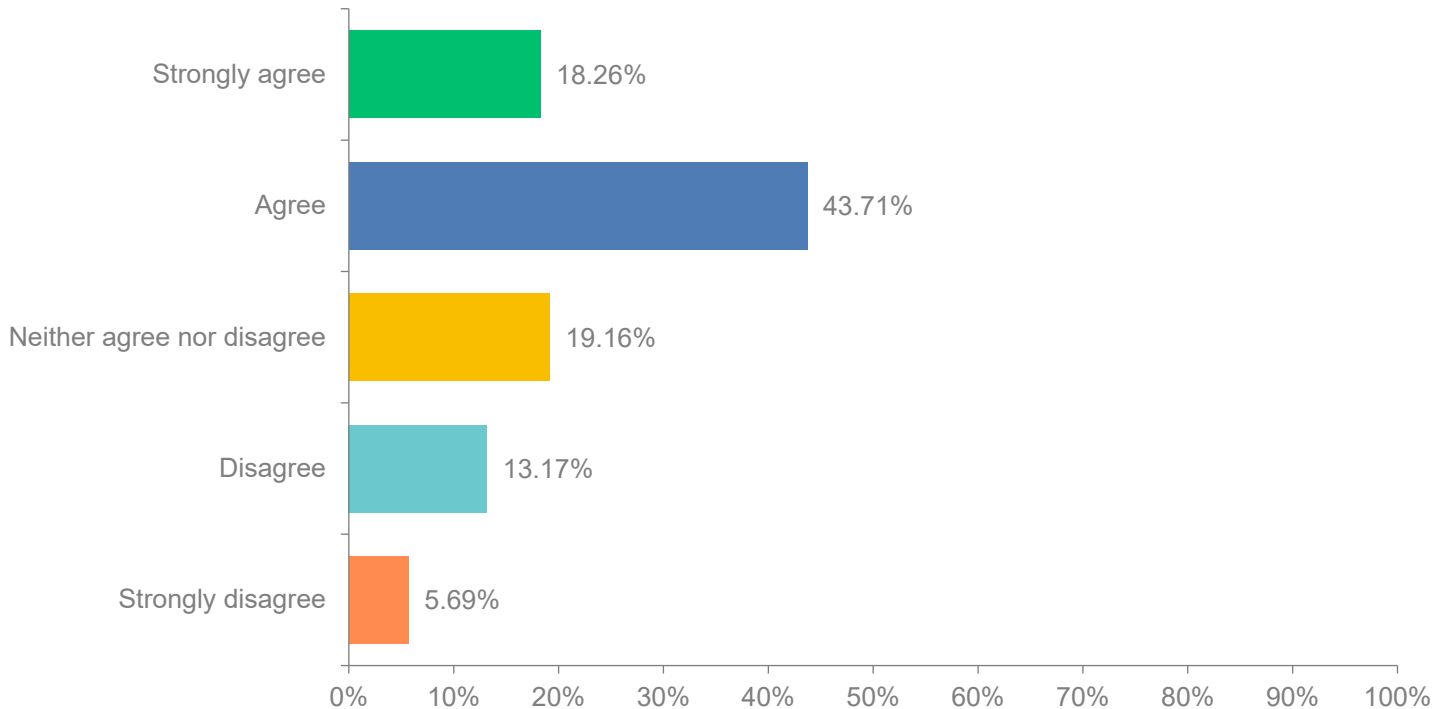
■ Answered: 333 Skipped: 40





Q39: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “I have a clear understanding of my role at SWBNO and how my performance in my role will be evaluated by SWBNO.”

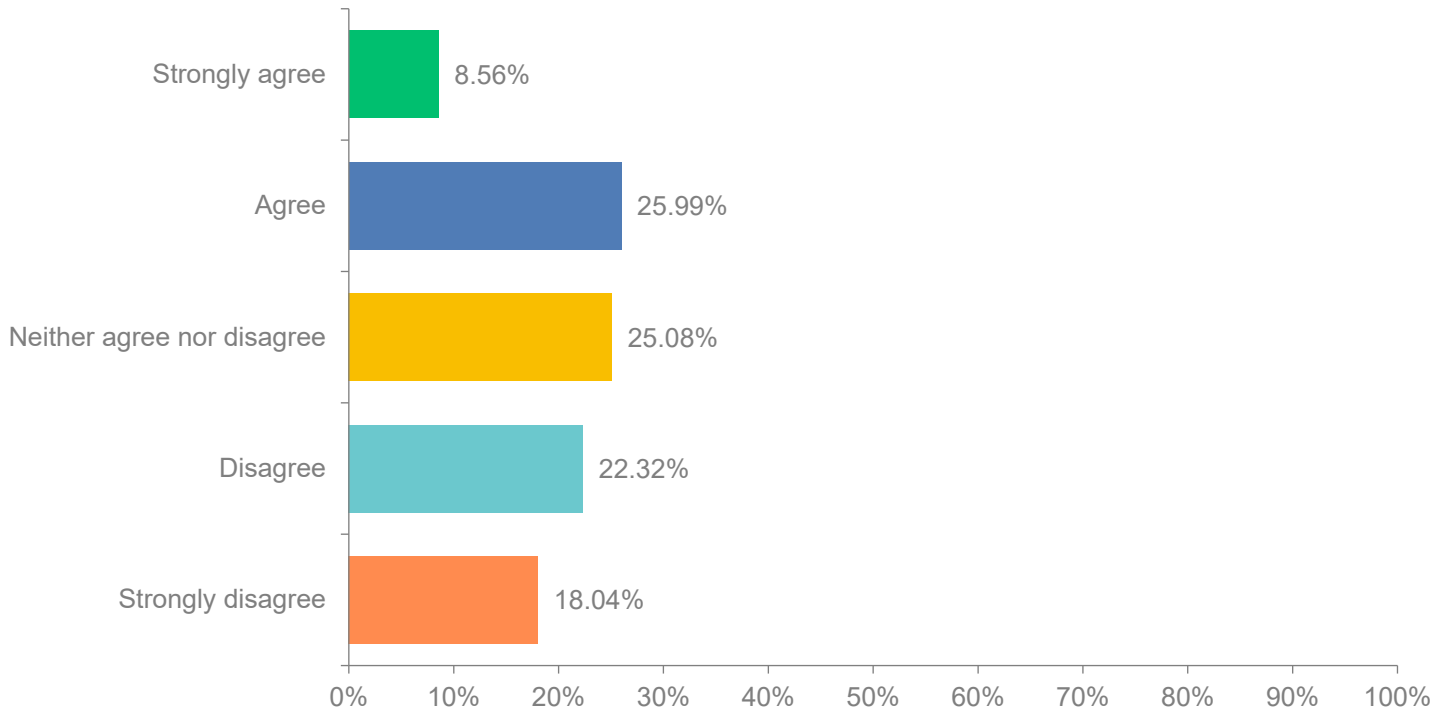
■ Answered: 334 Skipped: 39





**Q40: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement –
“The disciplinary process at SWBNO is clear, fair, and well-communicated.”**

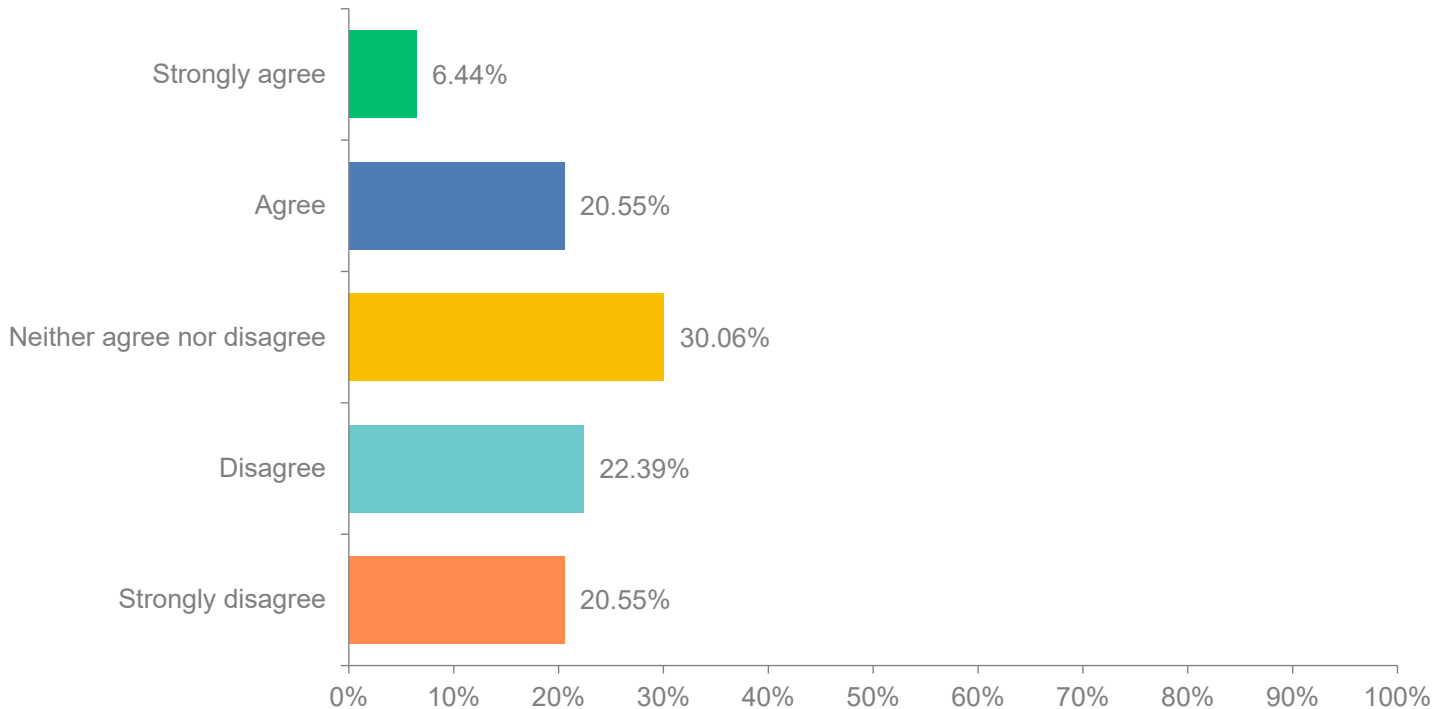
■ Answered: 327 Skipped: 46





Q41: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “Disciplinary actions taken by SWBNO managers and supervisors are consistent, fair and easy to understand.”

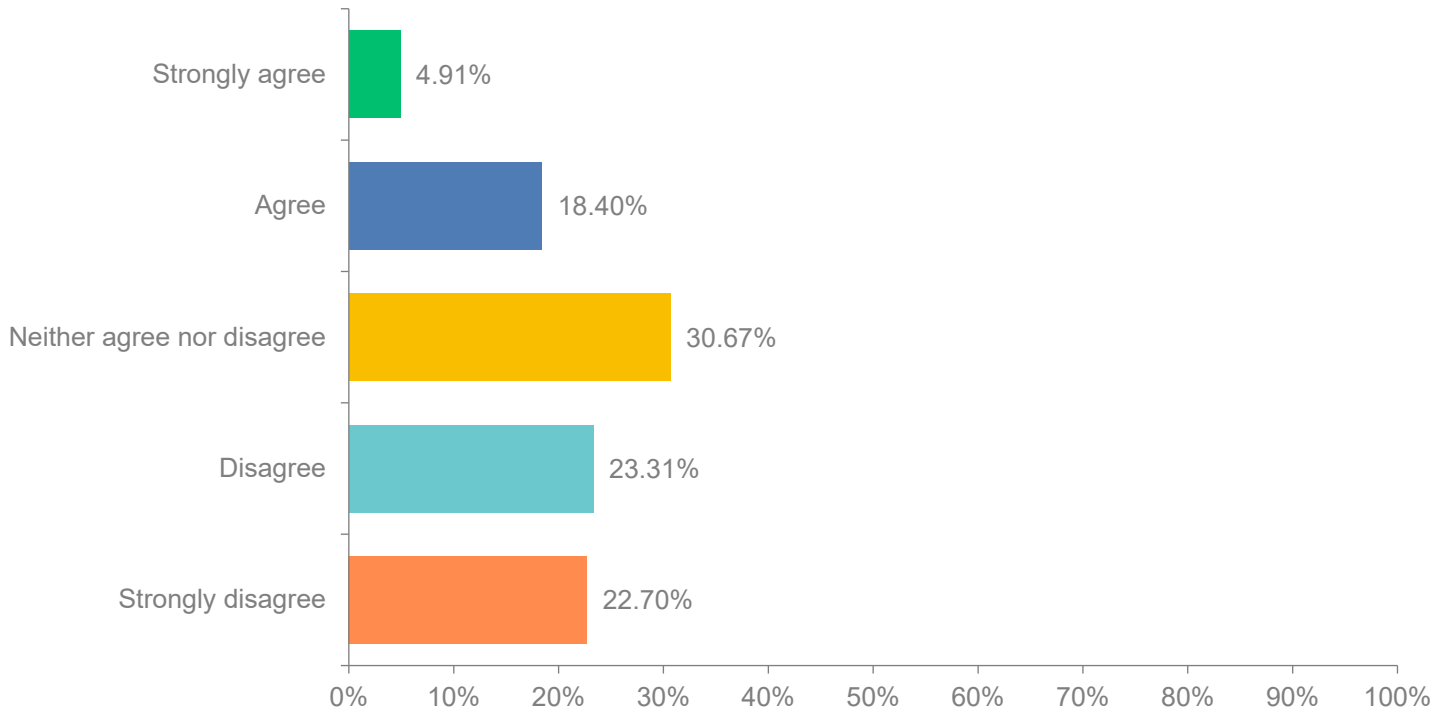
■ Answered: 326 Skipped: 47





Q42: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “The current disciplinary system is effective in holding all employees accountable for their actions.”

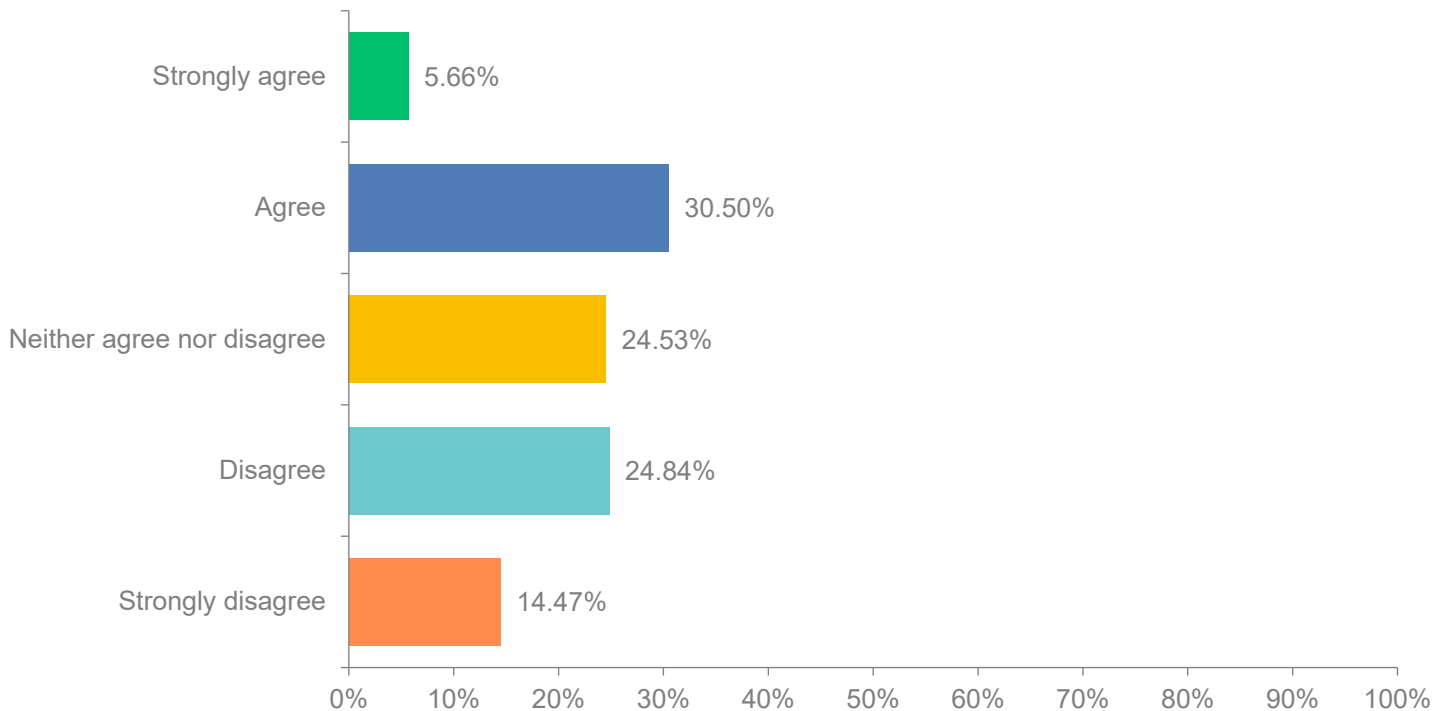
■ Answered: 326 Skipped: 47





**Q43: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement –
“Civil Service rules and processes are clear and easy to navigate.”**

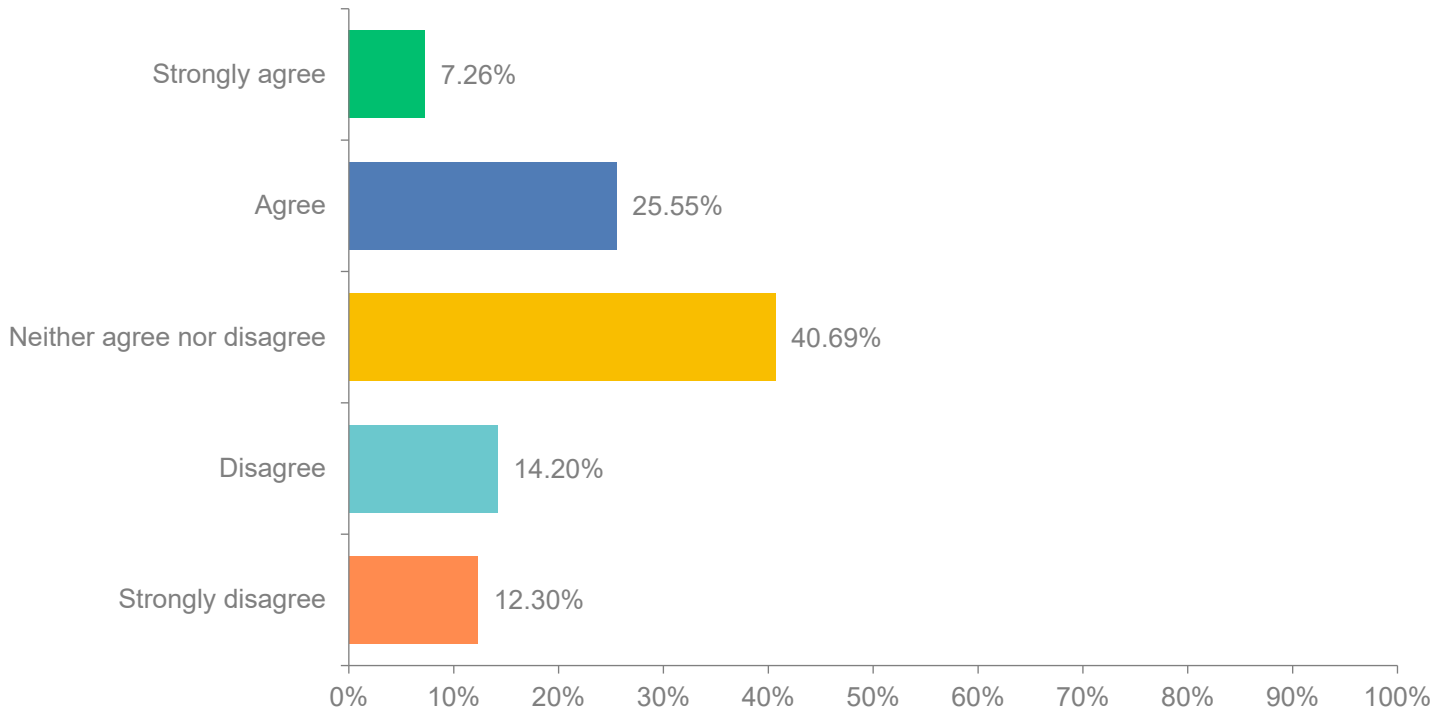
■ Answered: 318 Skipped: 55





Q44: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “SWBNO’s Human Resources staff understand the City’s Civil Service rules and are valuable advocates for SWBNO.”

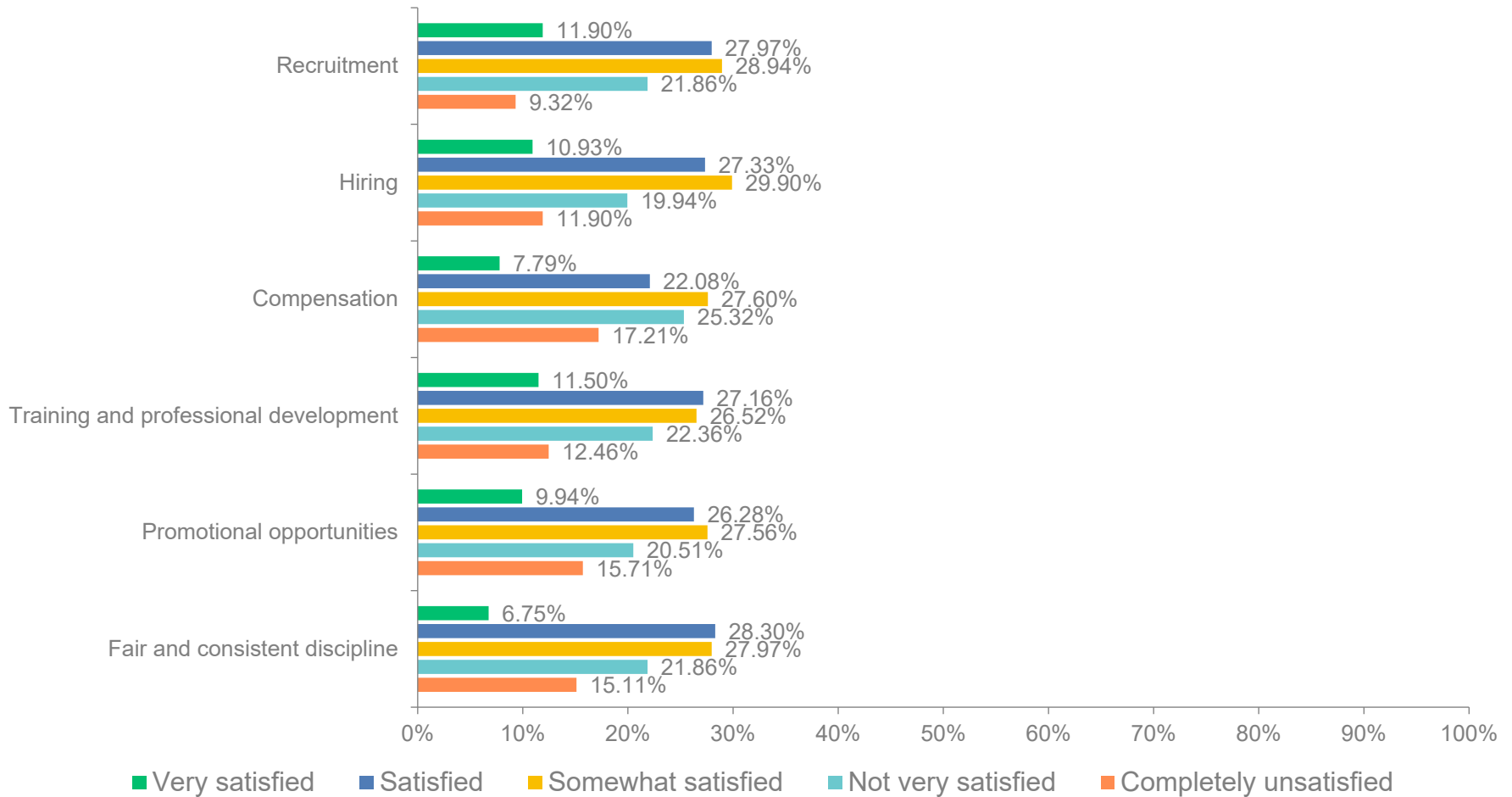
■ Answered: 317 Skipped: 56





Q45: Regarding the performance of Civil Service, please select the option that best reflects your opinion about each of the following:

Answered: 313 Skipped: 60





Q45: Regarding the performance of Civil Service, please select the option that best reflects your opinion about each of the following:

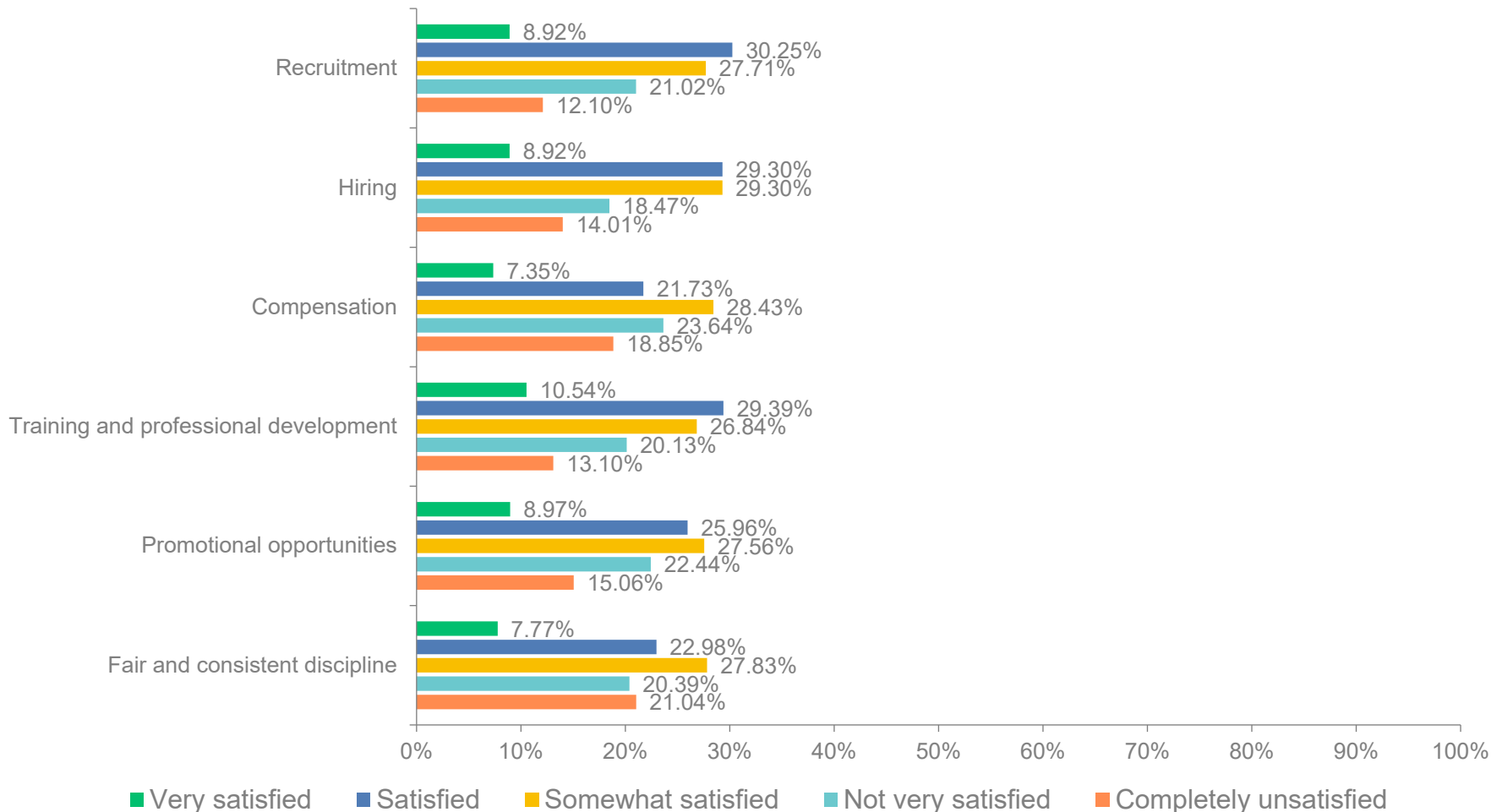
● Answered: 313 Skipped: 60

	Fair and consistent discipline	Promotional opportunities	Training and professional development	Compensation	Hiring	Recruitment
Very satisfied	6.8%	9.9%	11.5%	7.8%	10.9%	11.9%
Satisfied	28.3%	26.3%	27.2%	22.1%	27.3%	28.0%
Somewhat satisfied	28.0%	27.6%	26.5%	27.6%	29.9%	28.9%
Not very satisfied	21.9%	20.5%	22.4%	25.3%	19.9%	21.9%
Completely unsatisfied	15.1%	15.7%	12.5%	17.2%	11.9%	9.3%



Q46: Regarding the performance of SWBNO Human Resources, please select the option that best reflects your opinion about each of the following:

■ Answered: 315 Skipped: 58





Q46: Regarding the performance of SWBNO Human Resources, please select the option that best reflects your opinion about each of the following:

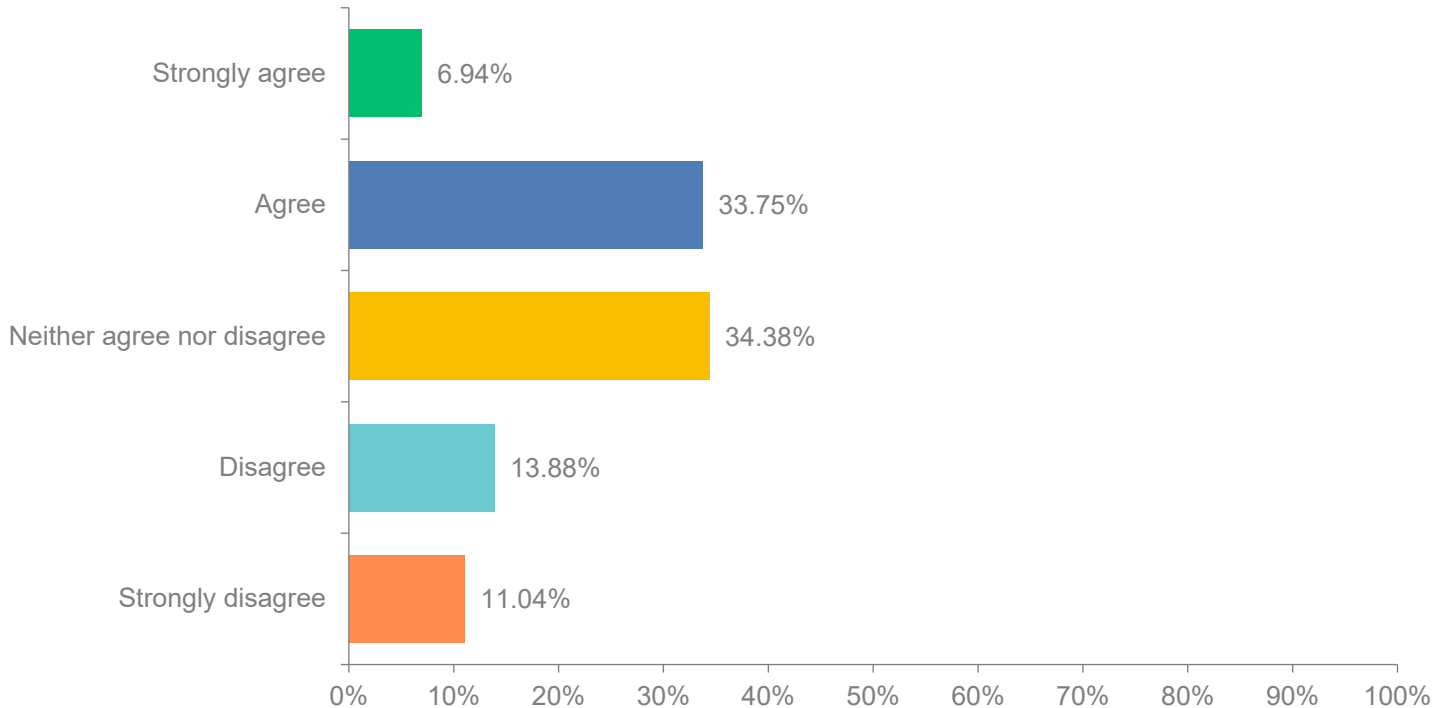
◆ Answered: 315 Skipped: 58

	Fair and consistent discipline	Promotional opportunities	Training and professional development	Compensation	Hiring	Recruitment
Very satisfied	7.8%	9.0%	10.5%	7.4%	8.9%	8.9%
Satisfied	23.0%	26.0%	29.4%	21.7%	29.3%	30.3%
Somewhat satisfied	27.8%	27.6%	26.8%	28.4%	29.3%	27.7%
Not very satisfied	20.4%	22.4%	20.1%	23.6%	18.5%	21.0%
Completely unsatisfied	21.0%	15.1%	13.1%	18.9%	14.0%	12.1%



Q47: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “SWBNO Human Resources is responsive to my needs.”

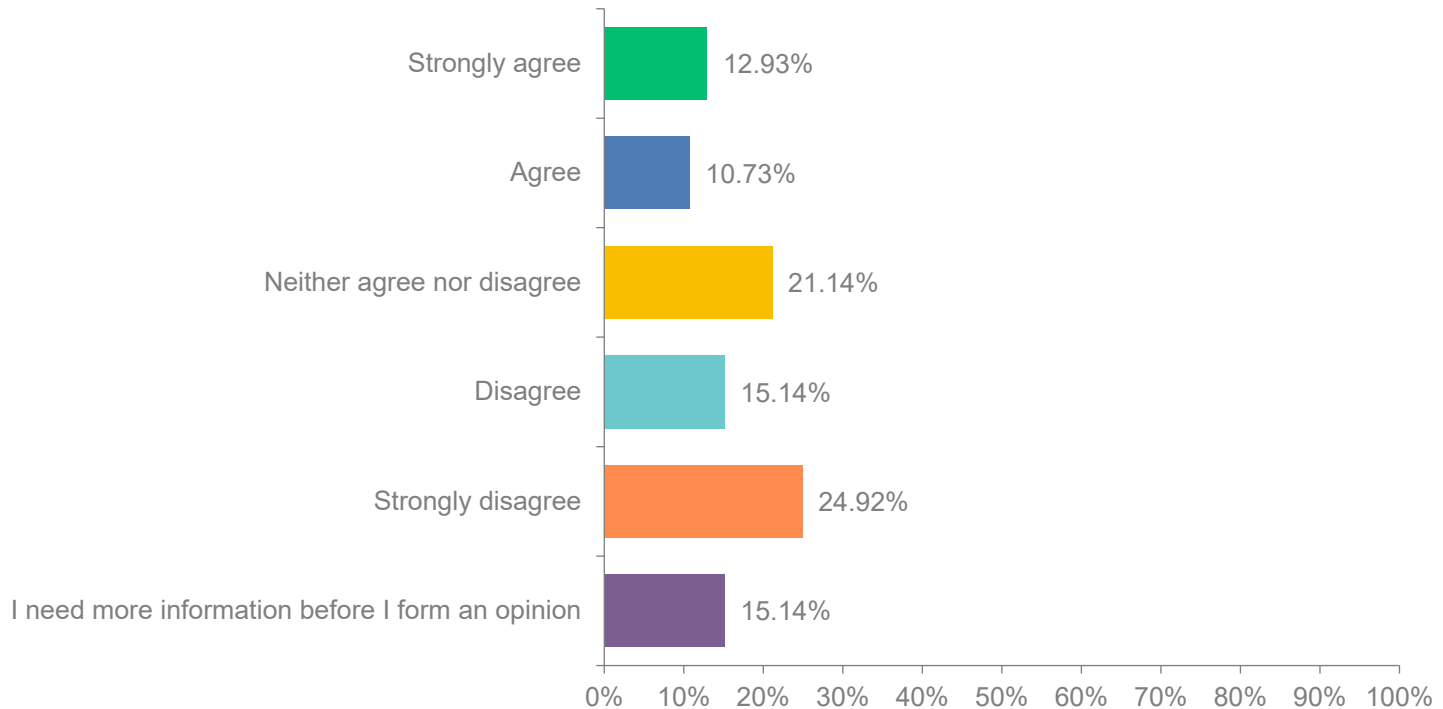
Answered: 317 Skipped: 56





Q48: Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement – “SWBNO should exit the New Orleans Civil Service system and operate under a different system.”

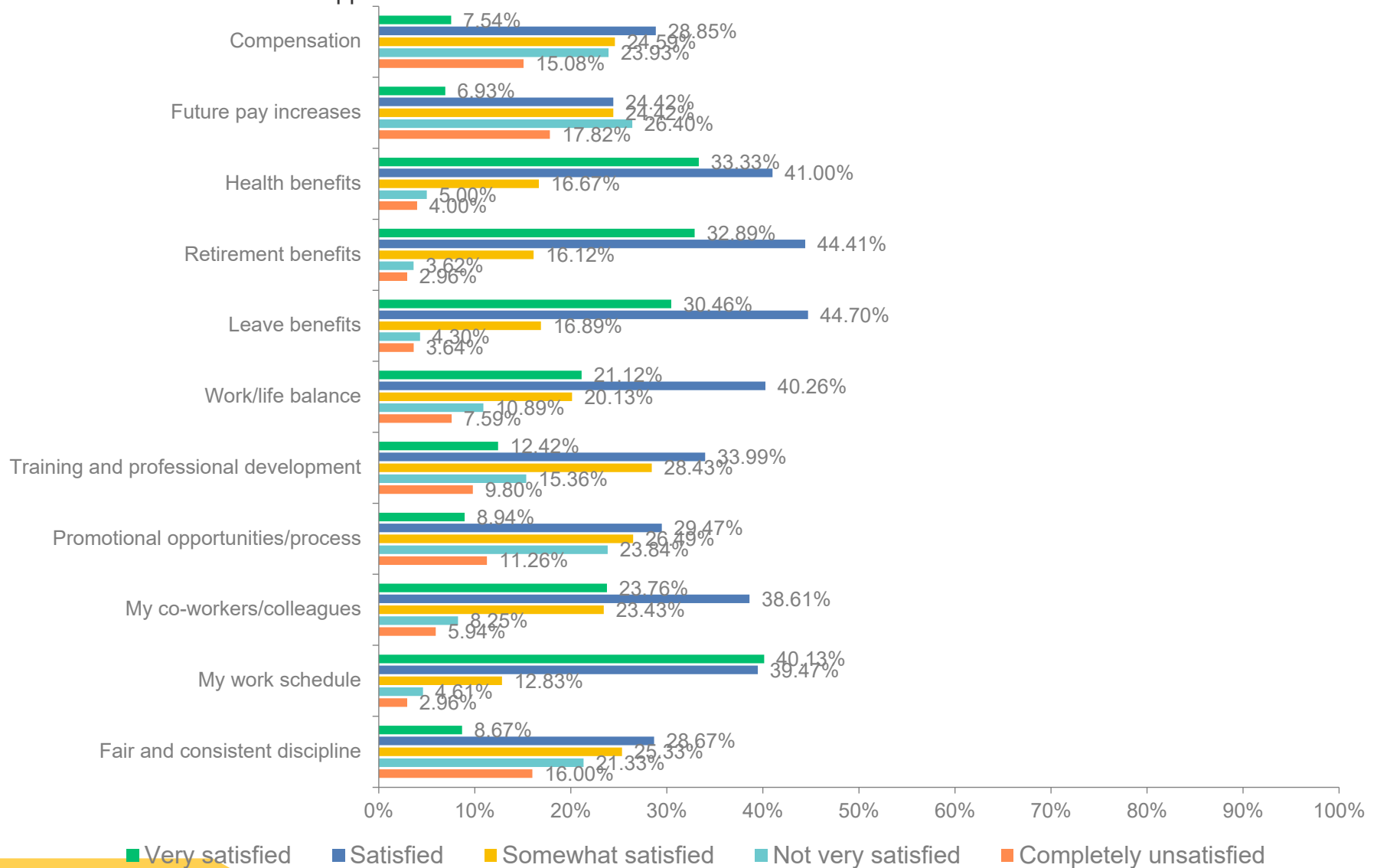
Answered: 317 Skipped: 56





Q49: Please select the option that most closely reflects your opinion about each of the following:

● Answered: 306 Skipped: 67





Q49: Please select the option that most closely reflects your opinion about each of the following:

• Answered: 306 Skipped: 67

	Fair and consiste nt disciplin e	My work schedul e	My co- workers/ colleagu es	Promoti onal opportu nities/pr ocess	Training and professi onal develop ment	Work/lif e balance	Leave benefits	Retirem ent benefits	Health benefits	Future pay increas es	Compen sation
Very satisfied	8.7%	40.1%	23.8%	8.9%	12.4%	21.1%	30.5%	32.9%	33.3%	6.9%	7.5%
Satisfied	28.7%	39.5%	38.6%	29.5%	34.0%	40.3%	44.7%	44.4%	41.0%	24.4%	28.9%
Somewhat satisfied	25.3%	12.8%	23.4%	26.5%	28.4%	20.1%	16.9%	16.1%	16.7%	24.4%	24.6%
Not very satisfied	21.3%	4.6%	8.3%	23.8%	15.4%	10.9%	4.3%	3.6%	5.0%	26.4%	23.9%
Completely unsatisfied	16.0%	3.0%	5.9%	11.3%	9.8%	7.6%	3.6%	3.0%	4.0%	17.8%	15.1%



Q50: Please select the option that most closely reflects your opinion about each of the following:

Answered: 308 Skipped: 65





Q50: Please select the option that most closely reflects your opinion about each of the following:

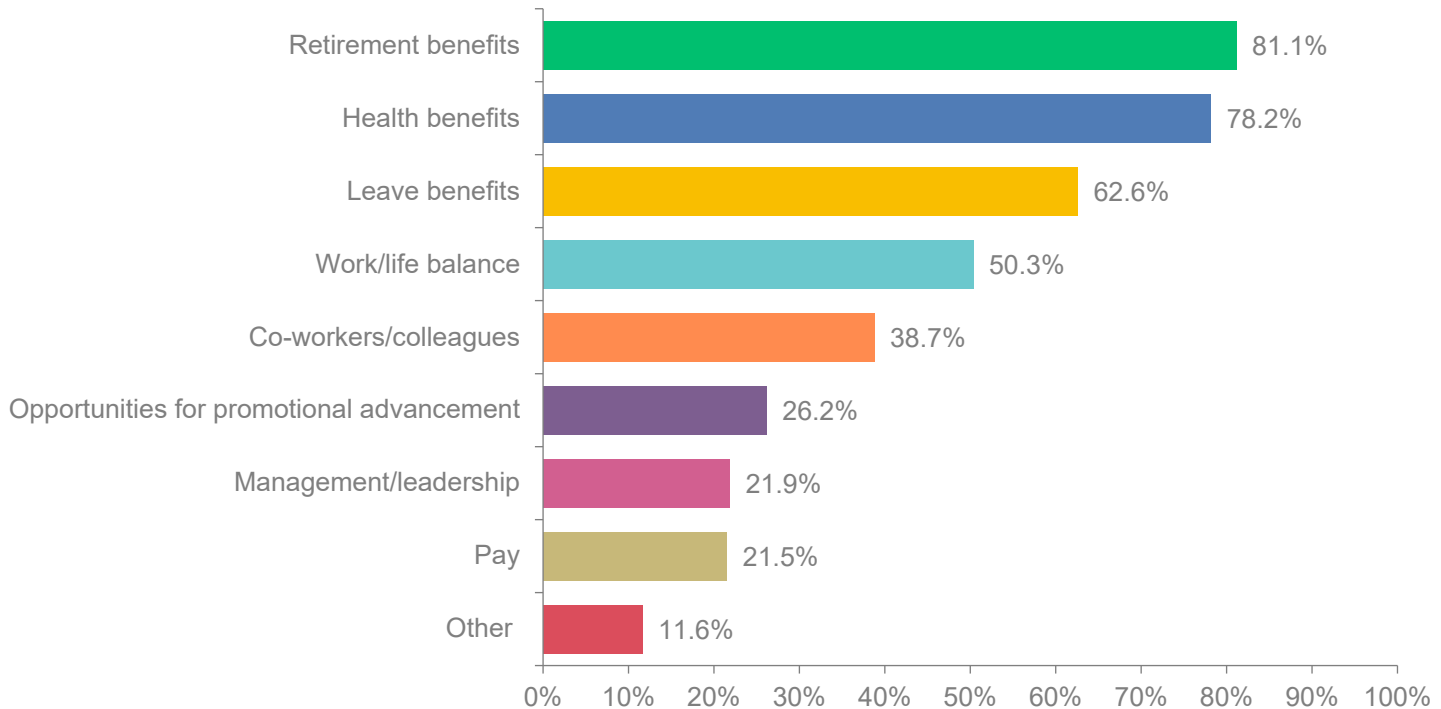
Answered: 308 Skipped: 65

	People of all backgrounds have equal opportunities to succeed working at SWBNO	I feel safe and supported in my workplace	I am proud to work at SWBNO	SWBNO rewards high-performing employees	My pay is appropriate for my level of responsibility and years of experience	I am respected by my co-workers	I am valued by my workgroup	I am comfortable sharing my opinion with managers even if it differs from their opinions	I am satisfied professionally
Very true	26.1%	21.8%	27.0%	6.6%	8.2%	36.4%	29.8%	31.1%	16.7%
True	33.0%	35.3%	37.3%	15.0%	18.7%	40.7%	40.7%	40.2%	33.4%
Somewhat true	24.1%	24.8%	24.0%	24.3%	22.6%	14.8%	16.1%	14.7%	33.8%
Not very true	8.3%	8.6%	6.0%	23.3%	26.9%	3.9%	7.5%	6.2%	11.2%
Completely untrue	8.6%	9.6%	5.7%	30.9%	23.6%	4.3%	5.9%	7.8%	4.9%



Q51: What do you consider strengths of SWBNO? (check all that apply)

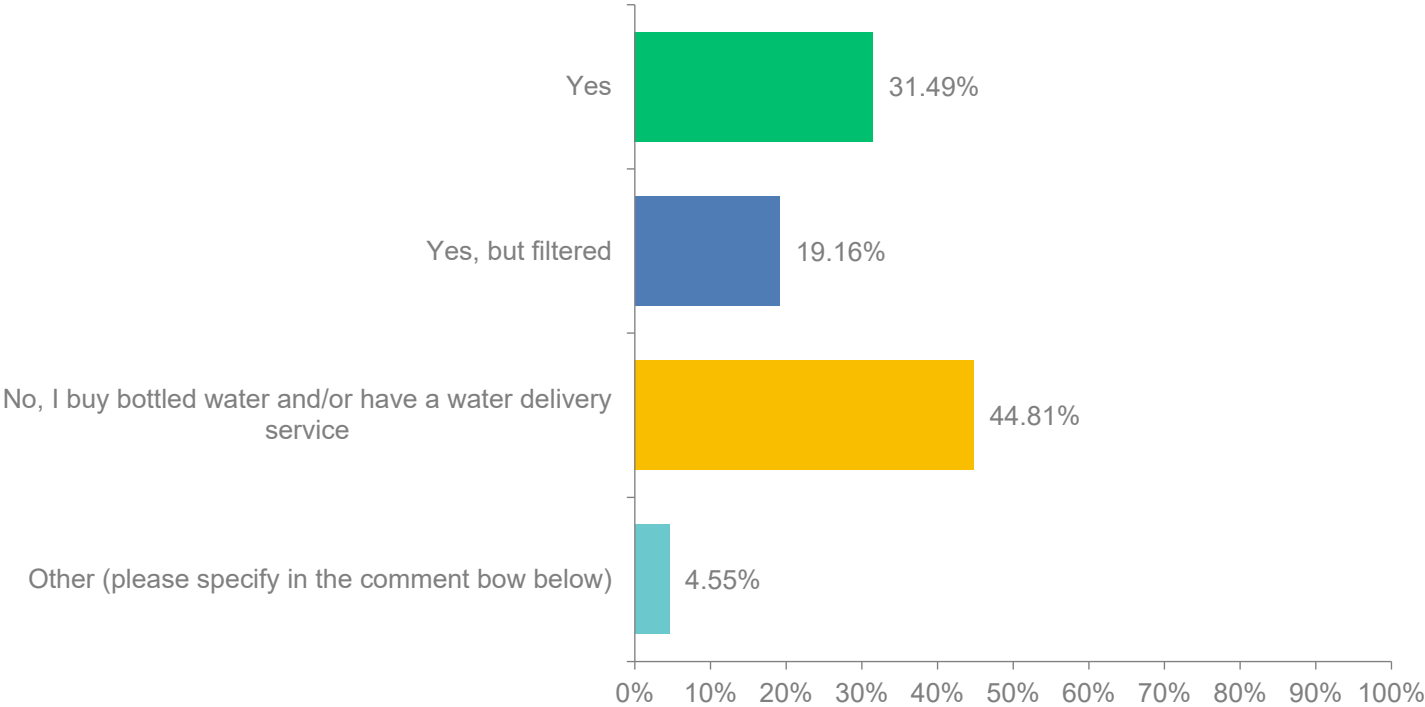
■ Answered: 302 Skipped: 71





Q52: Do you drink the tap water in Orleans Parish?

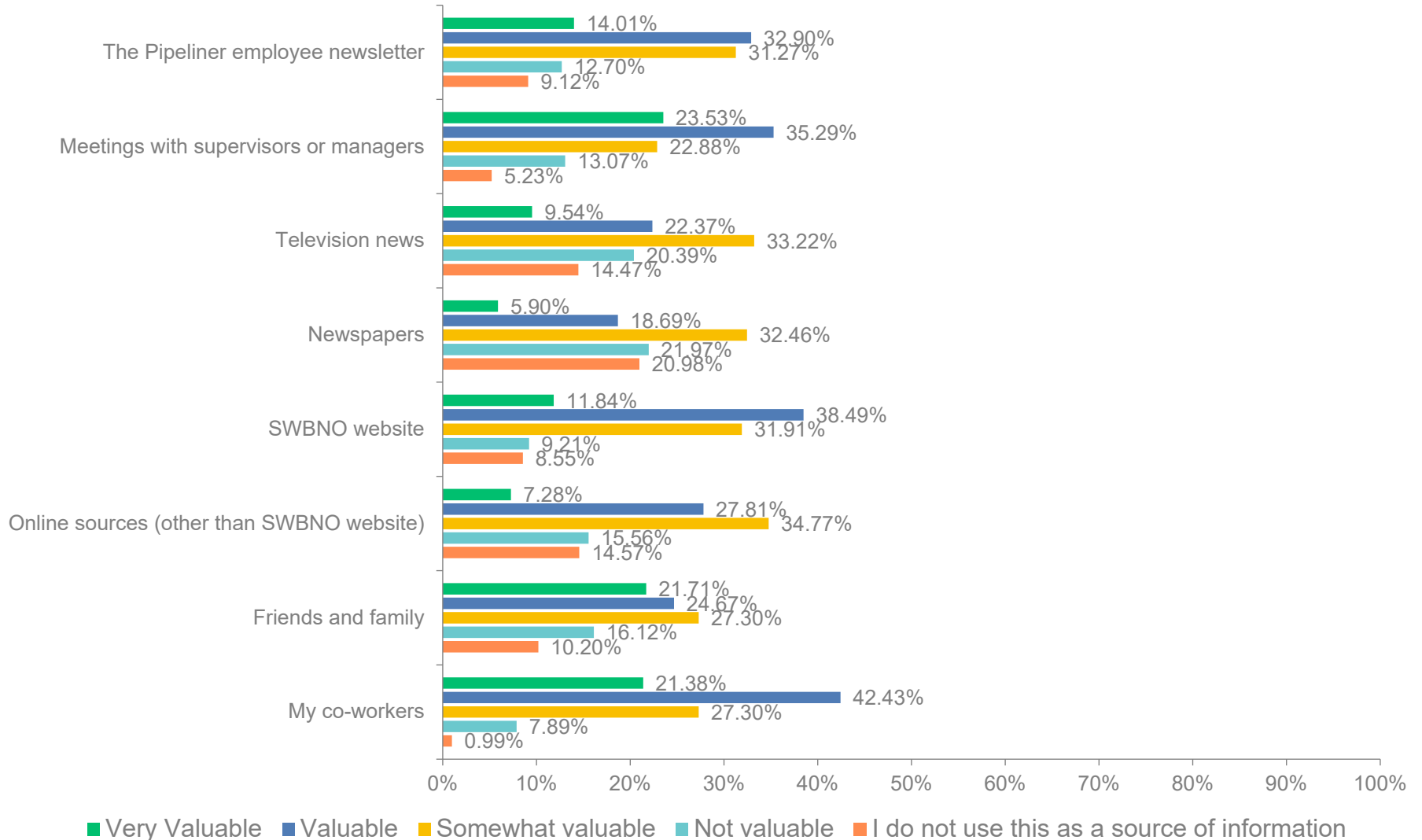
Answered: 308 Skipped: 65





Q53: How valuable to you are the following sources of information on SWBNO?

Answered: 307 Skipped: 66





Q53: How valuable to you are the following sources of information on SWBNO?

◆ Answered: 307 Skipped: 66

	My co-workers	Friends and family	Online sources (other than SWBNO website)	SWBNO website	Newspapers	Television news	Meetings with supervisors or managers	The Pipeliner employee newsletter
Very Valuable	21.4%	21.7%	7.3%	11.8%	5.9%	9.5%	23.5%	14.0%
Valuable	42.4%	24.7%	27.8%	38.5%	18.7%	22.4%	35.3%	32.9%
Somewhat valuable	27.3%	27.3%	34.8%	31.9%	32.5%	33.2%	22.9%	31.3%
Not valuable	7.9%	16.1%	15.6%	9.2%	22.0%	20.4%	13.1%	12.7%
I do not use this as a source of information	1.0%	10.2%	14.6%	8.6%	21.0%	14.5%	5.2%	9.1%

Performance Planning and Evaluation Process

2024/2025 Merit Pay Rule





Performance Management Process

Civil Service Rule XI

Step 1: Goal Setting

Period: September 1, 2023 – January 31, 2024

Step 2: Observation Period

Period: Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2024

Step 3: Evaluation Rating

- Period: January 1 – April 1, 2025
- Identify Who “Exceeds Expectations”

Step 4: Pay-out Period

Period: 3rd Quarter 2025



2023: Getting the Ball Rolling



Overcoming Challenges

- Low past utilization of this process
- Aligning the reporting structures in the NeoGov platform
- Technological limitations
- Budget limitations
- Managers and Supervisors feel that they are already “spread thin” due to staffing levels, work loads, etc.



Current Stats

2023 Plans Completed: 32 (0 completed at deadline)

2024 Plans Completed: 1,201 (1,123 completed at deadline)



2024 Priorities



Keeping the Momentum Going

- Tracking organizational changes
- Integrating NeoGov into employee orientation/onboarding





Training/Coaching/Mentoring

- Training Department:
 - Training supervisors on the NeoGov Performance platform during the Goal Setting Period
 - Trainings planned on Observation/Rating Period activities:
 - Use of the Journal Hub in NeoGov
 - Notes/Documentation tips
 - Measurement of SMART Goals
 - “Meets Expectations” v. “Exceeds Expectations”



Questions?



HOLIDAY CALENDAR - 2024

BE IT RESOLVED by the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans that the Sewerage and Water Board does hereby adopt the Holiday calendar for the year 2024, as set forth below:

New Year's Day 2024: Monday, January 1, 2024, Family Holiday
MLK Day: Monday January 15, 2024, Normal Holiday
Mardi Gras: Tuesday, February 13, 2024, Family Holiday
Good Friday: Friday March 29, 2024, Normal Holiday
Memorial Day: Monday, May 27, 2024, Normal Holiday
Juneteenth Day: Wednesday June 19, 2024, Normal Holiday
Independence Day: Thursday July 4, 2024, Family Holiday
Labor Day: Monday, September 2, 2024, Family Holiday
Indigenous Peoples Day, Monday October 14, 2024 Normal Holiday
General Election Day, Tuesday November 5, 2024, Normal Holiday
Thanksgiving Day: Thursday, November 28, 2024, Family Holiday
Veterans Day: (displaced) Friday November 29, 2024, Normal Holiday
Christmas Eve: Tuesday December 24, 2024, Normal Holiday
Christmas Day: Wednesday, December 25, 2024, Family Holiday
New Year's Eve: Tuesday December 31, 2024, Normal Holiday **Flexible Holiday

I, Ghassan Korban, Executive Director of the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at the Regular Monthly Meeting of said Board duly called and held, according to law, on February 27, 2024.

GHASSAN KORBAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SEWERAGE AND WATER BOARD