

2024 Annual Report



Luke Farley
Commissioner of Labor

Contents

Foreword	iv
Overview	1
Administration Division	2
Communications	3
Financial Services	4
Governmental Affairs	5
Human Resources	6
Information Technology	7
Legal Affairs	7
Research and Policy	11
Occupational Safety and Health Division	14
Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau	15
Compliance Bureaus – East and West	17
Consultative Services Bureau	22
Education, Training and Technical Assistance Bureau	23
Planning, Statistics and Information Management Bureau	29
Standards and Inspections Division	32
Boiler Safety Bureau	34
Elevator and Amusement Device Bureau	35
Mine and Quarry Bureau	38
Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Bureau	39
Wage and Hour Bureau	42
Notes	45
Index of Acronyms	45

Foreword

I wish to acknowledge the cooperation of all the fine employees of the various divisions of the Department of Labor who made possible the many accomplishments and services to the people of North Carolina that are recorded in this report. The dedication shown by these employees helps make North Carolina a safe and healthy place to work and live.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink that reads "Luke Farley". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Luke" and "Farley" being capitalized and prominent.

Luke Farley
Commissioner of Labor

N.C. Department of Labor

Overview

The labor commissioner is a constitutional officer elected statewide by the people of North Carolina to serve a four-year term running concurrently with the governor and all other members of the Council of State. On Jan. 2, 2025, Luke Farley was sworn in as North Carolina's 20th labor commissioner.

The General Statutes provide the labor commissioner with broad regulatory and enforcement powers to achieve the objective of promoting the health, safety and general well-being of working North Carolinians. Foremost among his duties are the administration and enforcement of the occupational safety and health standards. His duties also include enforcement of wage and hour laws, employment discrimination involving retaliation and the provision of free education, training and consultation to ensure safe and healthy working conditions for North Carolina's employers and employees. Mine safety and health training is also provided to owners, operators and contractors working in North Carolina's mining industry. The labor commissioner also ensures the public's safety through the administration of inspections of boilers, elevators, escalators, amusement rides and pressure vessels.



Labor Commissioner Luke Farley

The N.C. Department of Labor's mission is to foster a safe, healthy, fair and productive North Carolina by:

- Providing responsive, effective and efficient services.
- Providing and encouraging quality education and training.
- Administering consistently and fairly our regulatory mandates.
- Enhancing public confidence in the Department of Labor.

North Carolina's workforce contains more than 5 million workers in more than 370,000 private and public sector businesses. The laws and programs the department administers affect every worker—and virtually every person—in the state.

Department of Labor history dates back to 1887, when the NCGA created the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In a reorganization of labor functions in 1931, the NCGA laid the groundwork for the department's transformation into an agency with laws and programs affecting most state citizens. Departmental divisions and bureaus carry out its principal regulatory, enforcement and informational programs.

The Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission operates independently from the department. The Review Commission, whose members are appointed by the governor, hears appeals of citations and penalties imposed by the Occupational Safety and Health Division.

Administration Division

Administration provides support for the commissioner's office and the entire N.C. Department of Labor. Administration comprises five divisions: Communications; Financial Services; Governmental Affairs; Human Resources; Legal Affairs; and three bureaus: Information Technology, Publications; and Research and Policy.

Statistical Highlights for 2024

Communications

- Released eight news releases and media advisories.
- Managed the *Labor Ledger* database, which had 13,032 subscribers as of Dec. 31, 2024.
- Produced 913,174 printing impressions and processed 85,278 pieces of outgoing metered mail for the department's Raleigh area offices through its Publications Bureau.

Financial Services

- Managed the annual budget for state fiscal year 2024, which totaled \$46,421,971; revenue: \$20,812,602; appropriations: \$25,609,369.

Governmental Affairs

- SB 542, DOL Omnibus Changes, was signed into law by the Governor on June 2, 2024.
- HB 971, Human Trafficking Changes. This bill directs the Department of Labor to develop or identify training programs to be used by the lodging industry for their employees.
- SB 527, ABC Omnibus 2023-2024. This legislation made various substantive changes to the state's alcohol beverage laws.

Human Resources

- Managed HR functions for 338 employees as of Dec. 31, 2024.

Legal Affairs

- Responded to 553 AskLAD public inquiries seeking assistance from Legal Affairs.
- Responded to 46 direct public inquiries seeking intervention from Legal Affairs and 79 public records requests.
- Responded to 34 third-party litigation requests to include employee depositions and subpoenas duces tecum.
- Completed an audit of 315 employees' driving records.

Information Technology

- Monitored and responded to inquiries submitted on the NCDOL website, which had 3,049,065 visits in 2024.
- Responded to a total of 3,906 internal telephone and email requests for assistance via IT Desktop Services.

Research and Policy

- Conducted the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses and the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. The 2023 nonfatal incident rate for private sector industry was 2.0 per 100 full-time employees, a decrease from the total recordable rate of 2.2 per 100 full-time employees in 2022. The number of fatal occupational injuries declined in 2023 to 177 from 217 in 2022. The fatal incident rate decreased to 3.7 from 4.6 per 100,000 full-time employees.

Communications

The Communications Division provides publications and information to the general public and media outlets. Information is handled in several ways—through direct telephone contact with the members of the media and general public, news releases, newsletters, social media, brochures, manuals and other publications. Communications also compiles the department’s annual report and promotes the department’s programs and initiatives to the public. The Publications Bureau designs and prints workplace safety and health documents and other materials made available to the public.

The division edits all materials printed by the Publications Bureau and publishes pertinent information to the department’s website. Communications released eight news releases and media advisories in 2024. Topics included SHARP and Star Program ceremonies, safety award winners and other events and programs.

Communications manages the department’s social media platforms by posting content for all NCDOL divisions and bureaus. These social media platforms include Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, X (formerly known as Twitter) and LinkedIn. The Facebook page increased from 2,449 likes at the beginning of the year to 2,623 likes at the end of the year. Communications continues to use the department’s X account that began in May 2012. The department’s X account grew from 2,305 followers at the beginning of the year to 2,415 at the end of the year. Since starting the Instagram page in October 2016, the platform increased from 882 at the beginning of 2024 to 965 followers by the end of 2024. The department’s LinkedIn account had 284 at the beginning of 2024 and as of Dec. 31, 2024 had 516.

In addition, the Communications Division launched a podcast called Inside NC Labor at the end of 2018. The podcast is designed to educate North Carolina residents on the role that the department plays in state government. The division develops topics and coordinates with guests to release monthly episodes. In 2024, the division recorded and released 8 episodes. Since the podcast launched in November 2018 it has accumulated 8,582 views on YouTube.

Publications’ print shop produced 913,174 printing impressions and processed 85,278 pieces of outgoing metered mail for the department’s Raleigh area offices.

The Communications Division continues to work with its Information Technology Division and Digital Services, a division of the N.C. Department of Information Technology, to maintain and publish material as needed to the NCDOL website. A major redesign in 2017 made the website mobile friendly and easier to navigate for those accessing the website from smart phones or tablets. The Communications Division houses a site administrator and serves as the owner representative for the agency.

Financial Services

The Financial Services Division is staffed by 14 employees who are responsible for planning, directing and coordinating all fiscal-related areas of the agency. Financial Services ensures fiscal integrity and compliance with all applicable federal, state and agency laws, regulations and policies, while providing effective leadership for the safeguarding, tracking and utilization of all assets and resources for the agency.

The basic areas of expertise include, but are not limited to, budgeting, general accounting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, collections, federal grants administration and procurement. Financial Services is responsible for compiling and reporting to various groups such as employees, employers, state and federal officials, legislators and the general public. The financial operations of the agency are reported in a complete and concise manner. Because Financial Services staff work with so many different groups, it is essential that open and accurate channels of communication exist and that the information is timely, accurate and easily understood. Financial Services continues with initiatives to streamline operations with creative uses of technology and more effective practices of its skilled staff.

Financial reporting is completed on a state fiscal year basis. Table 1 provides data for each fiscal year beginning in SFY 2021 through SFY 2024.

Table 1
Financial Services Division Activities, FY 2021 Through FY 2024

	SFY 2021	SFY 2022	SFY 2023	SFY 2024
Annual budget	\$40,547,254	\$46,813,155	\$45,437,221	\$46,421,971
Revenue	\$21,223,117	\$25,398,690	\$20,783,922	\$20,812,602
Appropriation	\$19,324,137	\$21,414,465	\$24,653,299	\$25,609,369
Average number of payments issued each month	197	231	262	267
Average amount of expenditures each month	\$3,098,752	\$3,552,561	\$3,440,096	\$3,740,563
Average number of purchase orders issued each month	60	50	59	53
Average amount of purchase orders issued each month	\$369,761	\$169,290	\$349,328	\$363,261
Average amount of civil fines and penalties collected each month*	\$378,516	\$461,161	\$541,341	\$540,278
Average amount of inspection fees collected each month	\$643,508	\$637,930	\$699,967	\$656,986
Average number of A/R invoices processed for inspection fees, fines and penalties each month	3,445	3,541	3,700	3,562

**These funds are deposited into the Civil Penalty & Forfeiture Fund*

Governmental Affairs

The General Assembly returned for its short session on Wednesday, April 24, 2024. The short session is the second year of the biennium.

Despite the intense last minutes negotiations between the House and Senate, they were unable to come to an agreement on the budget. The budget that was passed last year remains in place with very few adjustments. One change extends the deadline for the expenditure of Be Pro Be Proud funds to June 30, 2026. State employees and teachers received their scheduled pay increase of 3% on July 1, 2024.

The department was successful in pushing its primary legislative priority across the finish line. Session Law 2024-3, DOL Omnibus Changes, was signed into law by the Governor on June 2, 2024. This legislation made several changes requested by various departments. Primarily, this bill does the following:

- Modernizes the statutes to allow for electronic notification
- Increases penalties for Wage & Hour record keeping violations from \$250 to \$750
- Updates and modernizes the Uniform Boiler & Pressure Vessel Act
- Repeals obsolete reporting requirements required from OSH Consultative Services

There were two unrelated provisions which were not requested by DOL.

- Allows no bid contracts for elevators on certain construction projects
- Abolishes a trust fund established for the Lumbee Indians

Another bill that impacted NCDOL was Session Law 2024-26, Human Trafficking Changes. This bill directs the department to develop or identify training programs to be used by the lodging industry for their employees. The goal is to train these employees on how to spot human trafficking activity. Lodging establishments include employees of hotels, motels, Airbnb's and vacation rentals by owners. This bill covers any employee who performs housekeeping services, provide food or beverage services, or perform check-in and check-out services. The department may impose an administrative penalty on those establishments who fail to meet the training requirements. This bill becomes effective July 1, 2025.

Another bill of interest was Session Law 2024-41, ABC Omnibus 2023-2024. This legislation made various substantive changes to the state's alcohol beverage laws. The change that will affect the department is the provision to permanently allow 15-year-olds to work in ABC establishments. Youths are still prohibited from serving alcohol or being in the areas where alcohol is served, but they can work in other areas of an establishment. The teen must obtain the written consent of a parent or guardian to work.

The General Assembly completed most of its business on Thursday, June 27, 2024, but did not adjourn Sine Die until Dec. 13, 2024. They met in December to override the Governor's veto of a bill which provided additional assistance for the victims of Hurricane Helene. The Governor vetoed the bill because of unrelated provisions which stripped him of many of his appointments and moved the State Board of Elections to the State Auditor's Office.

Human Resources

The Human Resources (HR) Division supports the department through the administration and management of workplace services and the personnel policies and procedures established by the State Personnel Act (N.C. Gen. Stat. § 126). Human Resources chronicled new hires, separations from service, promotions within the department, job postings, applications received and total personnel actions processed. The Human Resources Division manages the receptionist position for the Labor Building, who is the first point of contact for visitors, members of the general public and deliveries to the building.

Working with a third-party administrator, Human Resources administers the department's workers' compensation program. There were five reported injury/illness claims during 2024. Table 2 provides a comparison of HR activity in calendar years 2021 through 2024.

Table 2

Human Resources Activities, Calendar Years 2021 Through 2024

	2021	2022	2023	2024
New Hires	46	57	58	49
Separations	53	49	44	56
Promotions	15	27	14	8
Job Applications Received	7,269	5,165	5,108	5,120
Personnel Actions Processed	559*	823**	750***	821****
Total Positions on 12/31	378	371	371	371
Total Employees on 12/31	332	317	330	338
(includes part-time employees sharing one position)	2	0	0	0
Positions Posted for the Year				
(internal, external and repostings)	215	247	205	133
Average Employee's Aged	52	50	51	52
Average Employee Service Months	241	238	235	229
EODF Training/Refresher Course	9	2	1	1

* Includes 332 legislative increase salary adjustments and nine retirement actions.

**Includes 320 legislative increase salary adjustments, 64 labor market adjustments, 219 in-range salary adjustments.

***Includes 323 legislative increase salary adjustments, 108 LMAR salary adjustments, 76 in range salary adjustments, 48 Sign on Bonuses and 195 Retention Bonuses.

****Includes 338 legislative increase salary adjustments, 106 in-range salary adjustments, 52 sign-on bonuses and 46 retention bonuses

Information Technology

Information Technology (IT) provides the department with information technology services for the administration, design, engineering and acquisition of all software and hardware, while providing daily desktop services and support. It also supports a federal-level information system, OSHA Information System, which is used by the Occupational Safety and Health Division.

In 2024, Information Technology's accomplishments included:

- Monitored and responded to inquiries submitted on the NCDOL website, which had 3,049,065 visits in 2024.
- Responded to a total of 3,906 internal telephone and email requests for assistance via IT Desktop Services.

Legal Affairs

The Legal Affairs Division (LAD) advises the commissioner of labor and the entire agency on a wide variety of legal issues. The division monitors all legal issues related to the department. This includes reviewing and referring cases for litigation to the N.C. Attorney General's (AG) Office; advising the commissioner and the department on policy adoption and implementation; drafting and conducting legal reviews of policies and procedures; fielding a wide variety of constituent questions/issues on a daily basis; maintaining a comprehensive employee database and auditing employee compliance with the NCDOL State-Owned Vehicle Use Policy; tracking and initiating appropriate action on all bankruptcy matters affecting the department from filing proof of claims to recovery/distribution of outstanding wages, invoices and civil money penalties; handling distribution of outstanding wage payments on behalf of employees before and after the indebtedness has resulted in a civil judgment; serving as the liaison between NCDOL and the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Review Commission for the purpose of distributing contested case documents; serving as the liaison between NCDOL and attorneys representing third party litigants; serving as the liaison with the AG's Office for contested case petitions filed at the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) under N.C. Gen. Stat. § 150B; conducting a variety of jurisdictional case file reviews and comprehensive reviews of potential litigation files for wage and hour/retaliatory employment discrimination complaints; serving as the service of process agent for service of all legal documents; serving as the chief records retention officer for the department; serving as the agency rulemaking coordinator, who is responsible for coordinating/conducting all administrative rulemaking activities for NCDOL and for preparing/filing all rulemaking reports required by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 150B; serving as the agency ethics liaison to field ethics questions, track ethics training and ensure conformance with the reporting requirements of the state ethics laws; and serving as the agency business license coordinator to ensure conformance with reporting requirements of licenses/permits obtained from the department by the public.

Wage and Hour Judgments/Settlement Disbursements

The Legal Affairs Division works with the Wage and Hour Bureau to review investigations that result in findings of outstanding wage payments, which are then referred to the AG's Office for litigation. Legal Affairs also coordinates with the AG's Office and the NCDOL Financial Services Division on collection efforts related to wage and hour cases in which a judgment has been obtained.

The division works actively with employers to collect monthly payments after any employer defaults on a settlement agreement the employer entered with the Wage and Hour Bureau for payment of back wages. The Legal Affairs Division directly assisted with collecting wages for employees. Collection efforts are often difficult and may be impossible due to corporate business closures and bankruptcy filings.

Division/Departmental Policies and Procedures

Legal Affairs is the service of process agent for the agency and responds to all litigation filings. This includes third-party litigation in which the agency is not a party, but in which those parties involved in litigation are seeking records or are seeking to contact inspectors and compliance officers, including issuance of subpoenas. In 2024, Legal Affairs responded to 48 third-party litigation matters.

Legal Affairs also responds to general questions through direct contact from the public and through the AskLAD email address; however, it is prohibited from providing legal advice to members of the public. In 2024, Legal Affairs responded to 553 AskLAD inquiries and to 46 direct public inquiries.

The division files all proofs of claim in bankruptcy proceedings for monies owed to NCDOL, to include penalties and fees. Bankruptcy notices are initially received and reviewed by Legal Affairs, and confirmation is requested from other divisions regarding any outstanding debts owed to the agency or to individuals through agency investigations. If amounts are owed directly to the agency for inspection fees or penalties, or the agency has either a judgment, a confession of judgment or a default judgment, Legal Affairs files a proof of claim with the appropriate bankruptcy court; however, the agency cannot pursue collection of individual employee's wages from an employer when the employer has filed for bankruptcy. In 2024, Legal Affairs received notices of 67 new bankruptcy filings and filed 12 proofs of claim.

The Legal Affairs Division is responsible for maintaining and auditing employee driving records in accordance with the NCDOL State-Owned Vehicle Use Policy (current edition April 1, 2024). All NCDOL personnel must agree to a DMV 10-year history review prior to receiving authorization from Legal Affairs to drive a state-owned vehicle. In addition, all NCDOL employees must report all traffic violation citations or any change in license status to Legal Affairs to confirm they remain eligible to drive a state-owned vehicle. A periodic audit of each division of the agency is also performed to confirm that all employees continue to be eligible to drive a state-owned vehicle. The annual audit was completed in August 2024 and included a review of 315 employees.

Upon request and assignment by the Office of State Human Resources (OSHR), members of the Legal Affairs Division provide mediation services to other state agencies as a part of OSHR's grievance procedure and to NCDOL's Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Bureau.

The division provides continuous support to the entire agency through legal interpretations, guidance in relation to the functional schedule (maintaining state agency records), guidance on the release of public records, and enforcement/investigation of policy and procedure violations, including personnel investigations.

Public Records Requests

The Legal Affairs Division is responsible for responding to various public records requests to the agency in relation to the Public Records Act, found in Chapter 132 of the N.C. General Statutes. In 2024, the division responded to 79 public records requests. This does not include requests for OSH files, Wage and Hour files, Retaliatory Employment Discrimination files or requests from the media.

Occupational Safety and Health Variances

In accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. § 95-132, employers may apply to the commissioner of labor for a temporary, permanent or experimental variance from a promulgated occupational safety and health standard. The Legal Affairs Division works with the Education, Training and Technical Assistance Bureau to review variance applications and to ensure compliance with the N.C. General Statutes, N.C. Administrative Code and the Code of Federal Regulations. The division also prepares and files the paperwork necessary to process a variance request in accordance with Title 13, Chapter 07A, Section .0700 of the N.C. Administrative Code, Rules of Practice for Variances, Limitations, Variations, Tolerances and Exemptions. There was one variance request filed in 2023 by McGee Brothers. The Notice of Filing of an Application for Permanent Variance was published in the N.C. Register on Dec. 15, 2023 (Issue 38:12). Public comments were accepted until January 30, 2024, and a denial was issued in 2024.

Rulemaking

Verbatim Adoptions: Occupational Safety and Health

The amendments to the Occupational Safety and Health Standards include verbatim adoptions of federal OSHA standards as required by 29 CFR 1902.4(a) and N.C. Gen. Stat. 95-131(a) in order for North Carolina's Occupational Safety and Health program to be as effective as the federal program and to maintain North Carolina's state plan status under the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

All verbatim rules have previously been adopted in accordance with N.C. Gen. Stat. § 150B-21.5(c), which until October 2023, provided that the OSH Division was not required to publish a notice of text in the N.C. Register or hold a public hearing when it proposes to adopt a rule regarding an occupational safety and health standard which is identical to a federal regulation promulgated by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). Session Law 2023-134, Section 21.2(e) repealed that law effective Oct. 3, 2023, which now requires any amendment to the Occupational Safety and Health Standards go through the full rulemaking process for adopting a permanent rule under Chapter 150B of the N.C. General Statutes.

There was one amendment to the federal Occupational Safety and Health standards for General Industry found in 13 NCAC 07F .0101. The NC Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health standards for General Industry were amended in accordance with G.S. 150B-21.4 to adopt the federal OSHA amendment to the Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200) to align primarily with the United Nations' Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) Rev. 7 and maintain alignment with major trading partners.

There were no 2024 amendments to the Occupational Safety and Health Standards for Construction, Shipyard Employment or Agriculture.

Occupational Safety and Health Penalties

Pursuant to N.C. Gen Stat. 95-138(a1) and 29 CFR 1903, which is incorporated by reference in 13 NCAC 07A .0301, the commissioner shall adjust minimum and maximum civil monetary penalties for violations of Occupational Safety and Health Standards based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Notification of the change was published in the Feb. 15, 2024, N.C. Register (Issue 38:16).

Petitions for Rulemaking – Airborne Infectious Diseases

The agency did not receive any new petitions for rulemaking in 2024.

Research and Policy

Research

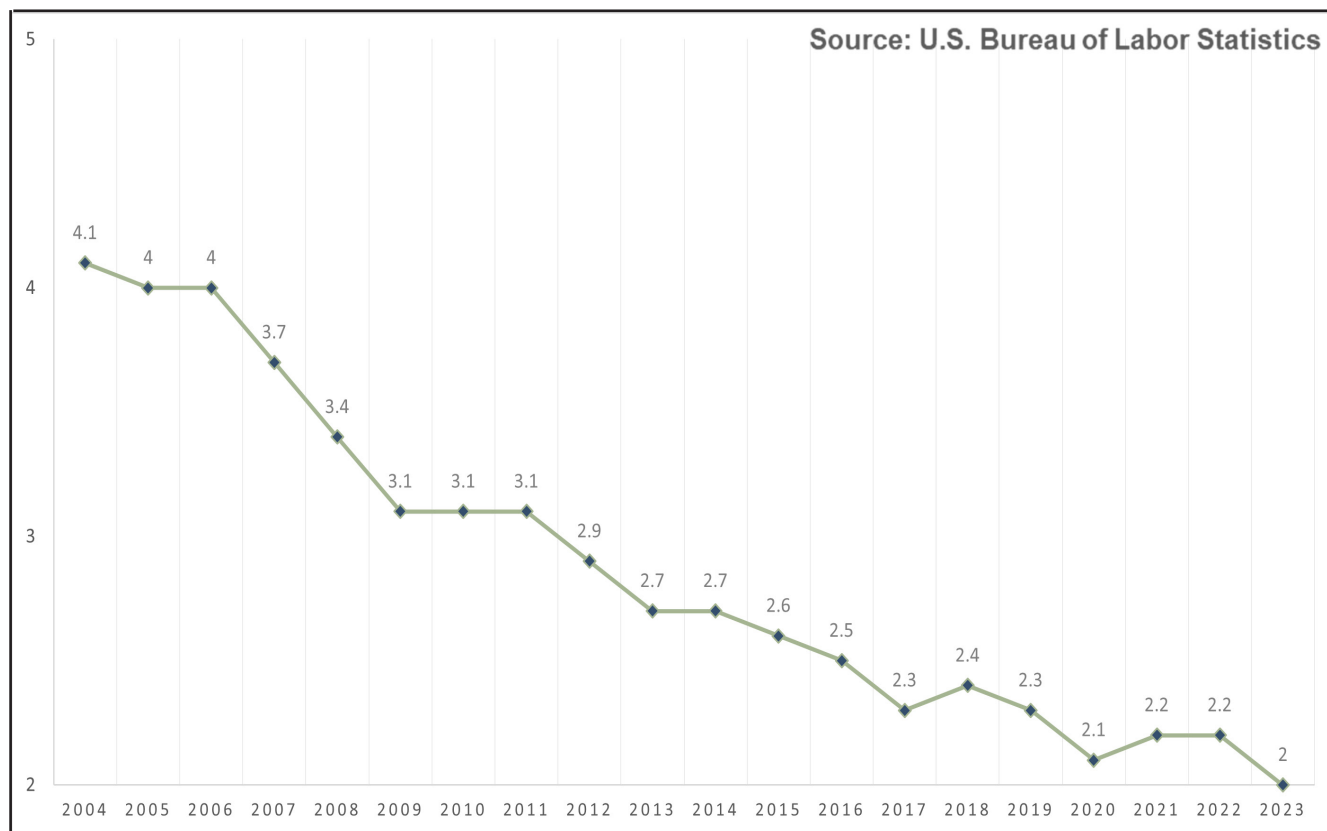
The research area of the bureau collects information and data for use by the commissioner of labor. The bureau develops and implements special programs and projects.

Safety and Health Survey Section

The Safety and Health Survey Section collects, reviews, refines and publishes the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses data for certification to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The data, used by both state and federal departments of labor, provides accurate estimates of North Carolina's work-related injury and illness rates and counts as well as details about demographic and case characteristics for injured workers. The state total recordable incidence rate for injuries and illnesses in the private sector was 2.0 for every 100 full-time employees in 2023, which was significantly below the national rate of 2.4. The 2023 nonfatal injury and illness rate for North Carolina is statistically below the 2022 rate and marks a new all-time low. See Figure 1.

Figure 1

Nonfatal Occupational Injury and Illness Rate for North Carolina, Private Sector, Calendar Years 2004 Through 2023



Annually, North Carolina samples roughly 8,600 establishments for the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses. For the 2023 survey, collected during 2024, the state sampled 8,600 establishments, of which 7,457 remained collectible after accounting for business closures, sampled unit changes and duplicate sampled units. This total collectible number ranks as the fifth-highest total among all states and represents 23% more collectible units than the next closest state.

The sample selection process begins with North Carolina providing a list of important industries to BLS. When BLS randomly selects establishments for participation in the survey, it does so within those targeted industries in order both to ensure that the survey produces estimates for industries important to North Carolina and to guarantee that North Carolina's sample reflects the business community generally. Within those targeted industries, BLS then draws a random sample of establishments using data obtained from unemployment insurance and the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

The survey includes private, local and state entities sampled at the establishment level, not the business or corporate level. As such, BLS may sample a single company more than once if it owns or operates multiple locations. BLS then mails survey participants a prenotification letter informing them about the survey and asking them to maintain injury and illness records for the following year. The mailing also provides all necessary documents, such as copies of the OSHA 300A logs, since federal regulations require all sampled establishments to participate regardless of whether they normally maintain annual OSHA logs.

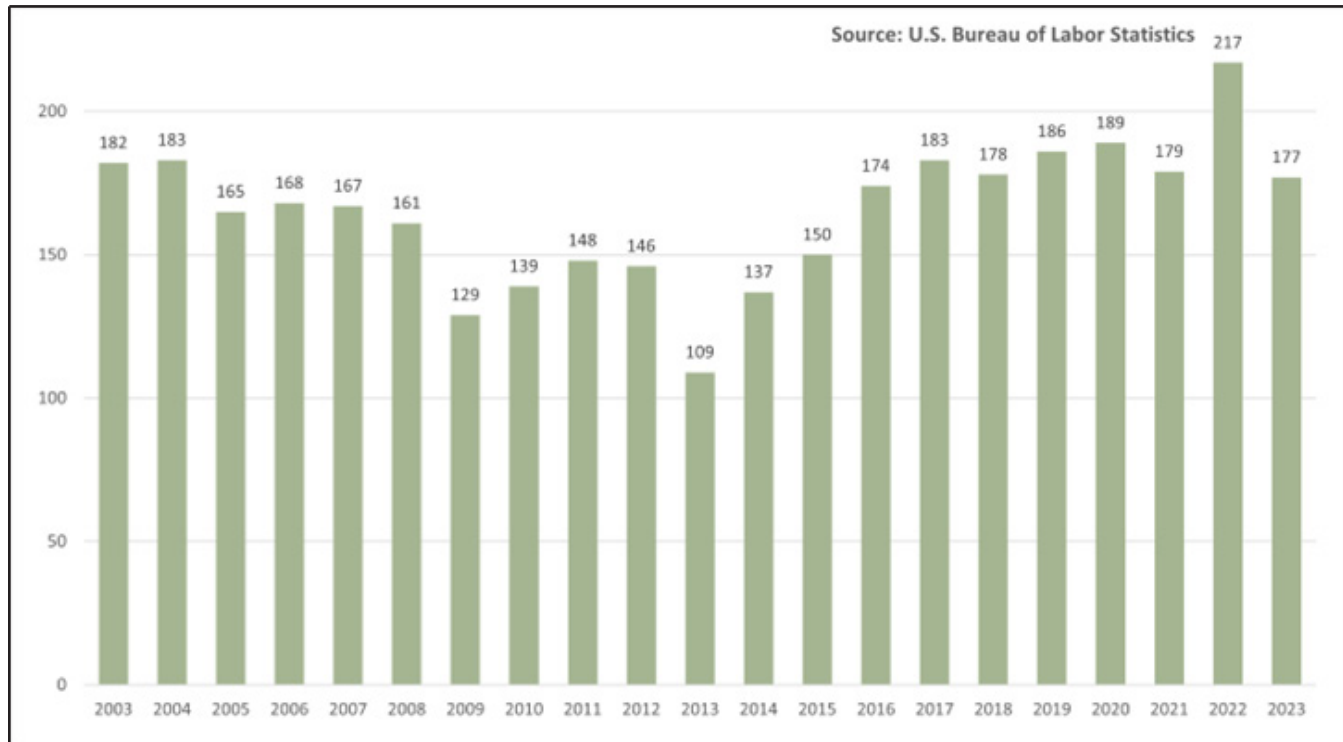
Sampled units receive the actual survey in January following the surveyed year. In 2024, 85% of sampled establishments responded to North Carolina's 2023 survey. NCDOL staff members refer any establishments that have failed to respond or have expressly refused to respond to the survey to the federal BLS for further action.

After the survey collection period ends, the BLS aggregates all the data. It then produces injury and illness rate and count estimates for private industry, state government and local government generally, as well as rate and count estimates for hundreds of specific industries.

Many stakeholders use these data. The NCDOL Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Division employs the data to target hazardous industries. Businesses in nearly every sector use the injury and illness data for benchmarking and to evaluate the relative safety of their workplaces. Academics also analyze the injury and illness data for safety trends and journalists have made use of the data to inform and support stories as well as pinpoint industries worth investigating.

The section also codes, analyzes and publishes statistical data on occupational fatalities in the state to build the BLS-sponsored Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. The information is obtained from employers, death certificates, medical examiner reports and other sources. Fatal injury information enables NCDOL to better understand how and where accidents occur. The figures are also used to assist those industries with high rates of injuries and fatalities to target safety and health education and training where needed. BLS figures, from the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, show that North Carolina suffered 177 workplace injury deaths in 2023. This represents a decrease from the 217 workplace injury deaths recorded in 2022. See Figure 2.

Using census data, BLS also calculates the fatality rate for North Carolina as the number of fatal workplace injuries per 100,000 equivalent full-time workers. In 2023, the fatality rate was 3.7 fatalities per 100,000 full-time workers. The 3.7 rate represents a decrease from the 4.6 rate recorded for 2022 in North Carolina.

Figure 2**Fatal Occupational Injury Count for North Carolina, Calendar Years 2003 through 2023**

Occupational Safety and Health Division

The Occupational Safety and Health Division comprises six bureaus of the N.C. Department of Labor: Agricultural Safety and Health; East Compliance; West Compliance; Consultative Services; Education, Training and Technical Assistance; and Planning, Statistics and Information Management.

Statistical Highlights for 2024

Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau

- ASH completed 2,241 preoccupancy housing inspections of migrant farmworker housing and issued certificates to 2,108 sites.
- The bureau conducted 37 compliance inspections and issued 36 violations, with total current penalties amounting to \$77,174.20.
- Gold Star status was achieved by 174 growers.

Compliance Bureaus – East and West

- Compliance conducted 1,063 safety inspections and 612 health inspections, for a total of 1,675 compliance inspections.
- Compliance issued citations for 3,660 violations, with total current penalties amounting to \$7,696,970.

Consultative Services Bureau

- The bureau conducted 1,274 initial visits, 107 training and assistance visits and 92 follow-up visits for a total of 1,474 visits during FFY 2024.
- A total of 5,796 hazards were identified and eliminated as a result of consultative visits. Of these, 5,464 were serious hazards, 249 were other-than-serious hazards and 83 were regulatory.
- The bureau has 92 private sector Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) worksites. There were 33 public sector SHARP sites in the program, two construction sites and seven pre-SHARP sites at the end of FFY 2024.

Education, Training and Technical Assistance Bureau

- The ETTA Bureau participated in 216 courses, forums and workshops, providing training for 5,448 employers and employees.
- The bureau distributed 48,272 hard copy publications and responded to 2,608 OSH standard inquiries
- The Safety Awards Program celebrated its 78th year, awarding 2,058 annual and 58 million-hour safety awards.
- The bureau recognized five new Carolina Star sites and recertified 30 Star sites. There were 147 companies in the Carolina Star Program at the end of FFY 2024.

Planning, Statistics and Information Management Bureau

- PSIM Bureau completed the Public Sector Injury and Illness Survey for CY 2023 data with a 96.34% response rate at the conclusion of the survey.
- The bureau received 871 disclosure requests and processed 781 requests (432 from FFY 2024 and 349 from previous years).

Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau

Inspection Effort

In 2024, the Agricultural Safety and Health (ASH) Bureau completed 2,241 preoccupancy housing inspections of migrant farmworker housing and 37 compliance inspections. Housing certificates were issued to 2,108 sites with a total occupancy (i.e. beds) of 26,820. Sites in 100% compliance at the time of the inspection numbered 1,097. Double Gold Star status was achieved by 98 growers and Single Gold Star status was achieved by 76 growers for a total of 174 in 2024.

Gold Star Growers Meeting

The 30th Annual Gold Star Growers' meeting was held at the N.C. State University McKimmon Conference and Training Center in Raleigh on Feb. 1, 2024. Growers were recognized for the 2023 calendar year. In 2023, Double Gold Star status was achieved by 65 growers and Single Gold Star status was achieved by 115 growers for a total of 180 in 2023. During the event, NCDOL's Health and Safety Education Specialist Celeste Hardy trained growers on Chainsaw Safety. The following awards were given for the 2023 season: Johnnie Tyndall, Best Maintained Housing – Lenoir County; DMG Farms Inc, Best Maintained Housing Site Since 2006 - Harnett County; Pamlico Shores Produce, Best New Housing – Hyde County; and Hoffman Nursery, Best New Housing – Durham County.



Labor Commissioner Josh Dobson, ASH Bureau Chief Beth Rodman, and ASH CSHO Johana Ramirez congratulate Craig Reynolds, Senior Director of Operations of Hoffman Nursery, Inc. for winning the award for Best New Housing – Durham County at the 30th annual Gold Star Growers' meeting held on Thursday, Feb. 1, 2024 at N.C. State's McKimmon Center.

Compliance

ASH inspectors conducted 37 compliance inspections in the calendar year 2024. These inspections included one accident, six complaints, ten referrals, one follow up, four unprogrammed related and 15 programmed inspections. The bureau issued 36 violations. During this period, 30% of the inspections resulted in no citations. Total current penalties for citations issued amounted to \$77,174.20 . In addition, one unregistered, uncertified camp was discovered in 2024.

Workplace Safety Training and Outreach

During annual preoccupancy inspections, the ASH Bureau distributed 3,044 safety and health publications to farmers and farmworkers. Topics included human trafficking, heat stress prevention, injury/illness recording and reporting, venomous snakes, ticks, and spiders in North Carolina and migrant housing regulations. In February 2024, the ASH Bureau Chief presented at the annual Christmas tree meeting and discussed migrant housing registration, inspection, and certification requirements as well as ASH's new online registration system. Approximately 20 farmers attended the event.

In August 2024, ASH's CSHO II attended the 2024 Latino Farmworkers Safety and Health Symposium and participated in a panel presentation about best practices for engaging with migrant farmworkers in North Carolina. There were over 100 attendees including safety and health professionals, migrant farmworker advocacy groups, migrant health outreach workers, and representatives from various local and state government agencies who interact with the migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

In 2024, ASH staff met with USDOL Wage and Hour staff to learn about their Government Agency Training Academy which offers online courses to help improve investigation outcomes and maximize compliance. Several ASH CSHOs took the following courses: Interview Strategies and Best Practices and Investigation Best Practices.

Throughout the year, ASH staff educated farmers, farmworkers, farm labor contractors, and other stakeholders about heat stress prevention through in-person training events and by distributing bilingual publications about heat stress during preoccupancy inspections throughout the state.

Throughout the 2024 season, ASH staff assisted growers and farm labor contractors in registering migrant housing online and uploading supporting documents into the new preoccupancy inspection program. The new inspection program has improved the bureau's efficiency and reduced the amount of time it takes to certify migrant housing in the state.

Inspector/Staff Training

ASH staff attended numerous classes including Arborist Safety Guidelines, ASP-CSP Prep Course, Hazard Communication, HAZWOPER Awareness and Site Safety Training, Initial Compliance Course, Lock Out/ Tag Out, Machine Guarding, Recordkeeping and Technical Writing. In 2024, the ASH Bureau hired one new inspector.

Partnerships, Associations and Collaborations with Groups

The ASH bureau chief participates in a monthly Project Management Team Advisory Group which includes representatives from NCSU Cooperative Extension, NC Agromedicine Institute, and the NC Farmworker Health Program, a group that was originally established during the COVID-19 pandemic to coordinate outreach and response efforts to the agricultural community.

The group continues to work together to discuss challenges faced by the agricultural community, potential solutions, available resources, and information dissemination. Recent topics included hurricane response, emergency preparedness, migrant farmworker access to health care, internet connectivity at migrant housing, and Heat Stress prevention.

The ASH Bureau continues to strengthen partnerships and associations with other groups, such as: USDOL Wage and Hour, NC Department of Commerce, NCSU Cooperative Extension, N.C. Agromedicine Institute, NC DHHS, NC Farmworker Health Program, NC Community Health Center Association, N.C. Farm Bureau, N.C. Agribusiness Council, the North Carolina Growers Association, Legal Aid of N.C., and the N.C. Justice Center.

Compliance Bureaus – East and West

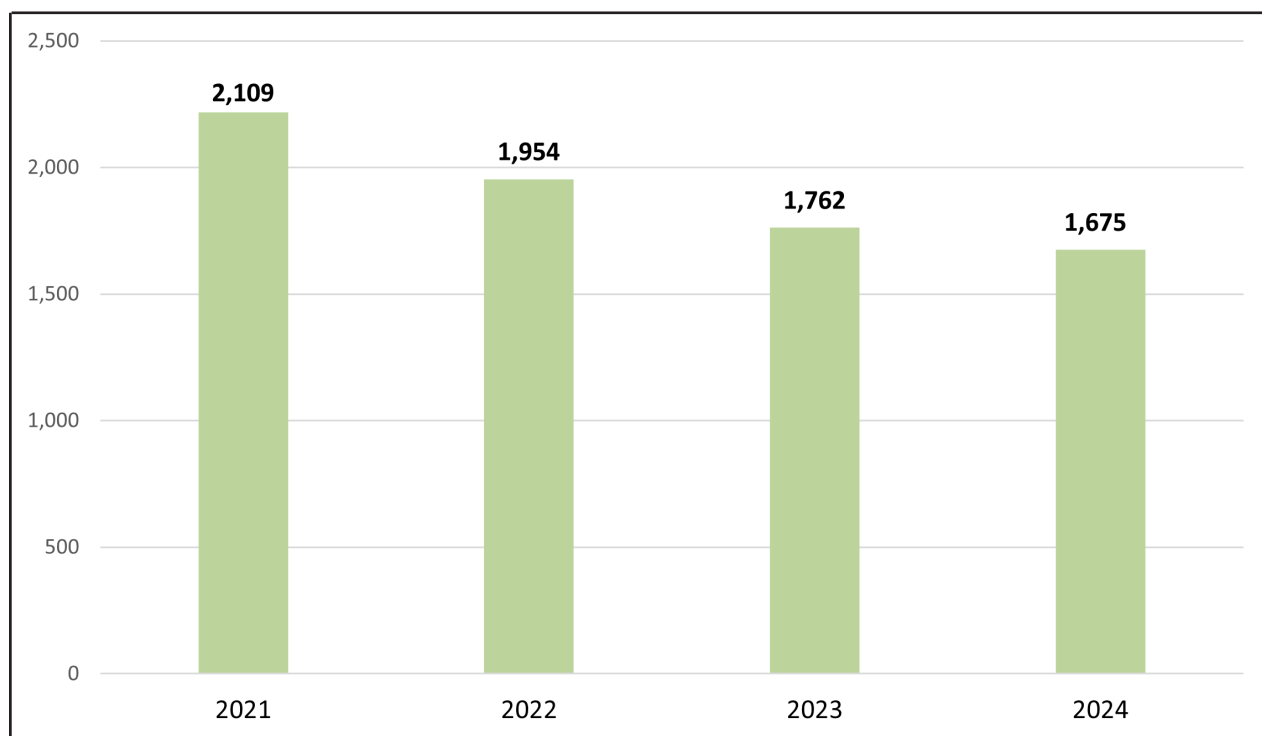
The Compliance Bureaus enforce occupational safety and health laws, rules and regulations and employee protection in workplaces throughout North Carolina through the use of professional industrial hygiene, safety engineering, administrative controls, training and technical services provided to all employers within the state of North Carolina. OSH Compliance identifies and analyzes workplace accidents, injuries and occupational illnesses; evaluates workplace safety methods, policies, procedures and programs; communicates workplace safety information to employees and employers; measures, analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of safety programs, as well as effecting changes to programs to achieve optimum results in the various workplaces throughout North Carolina. The compliance activities are directly associated with the OSH Division’s strategic plan. The data are reported on a federal fiscal year basis.

FFY 2024 compliance activities included:

- 1,675 compliance inspections. See Figure 3.
- 1,063 safety inspections.
- 612 health inspections.
- 859 construction inspections.
- 3,660 total violations.
- 3.6 average number of violations per inspection.
- \$7,696,970 in current penalties assessed.
- 58 average days from inspection date to when citations were issued.
- 507 informal conferences conducted.
- 13 inspections associated with the Tree Felling Special Emphasis Program (SEP).
- 23 inspections associated with the Tree Felling SEP.
- 802 inspections in the Construction SEP counties.
- 26 inspections in long-term care facilities.
- 98 inspections associated with the Health Hazards Exposure SEP.
- 114 inspections associated with the public sector.
- 54 fatality inspections (data is based on open date of inspection)
- 310 complaint inspections.
- 708 employer-reported referrals were received following an accident involving a hospitalization or amputation:
 - 98 resulted in an on-site inspection.
 - 509 were investigated by letter and closed.
- 3,479 valid complaints were received by the OSH complaint desk.
- 395 retaliatory employment discrimination investigations which were received by the Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Bureau and were associated with occupational safety and health.

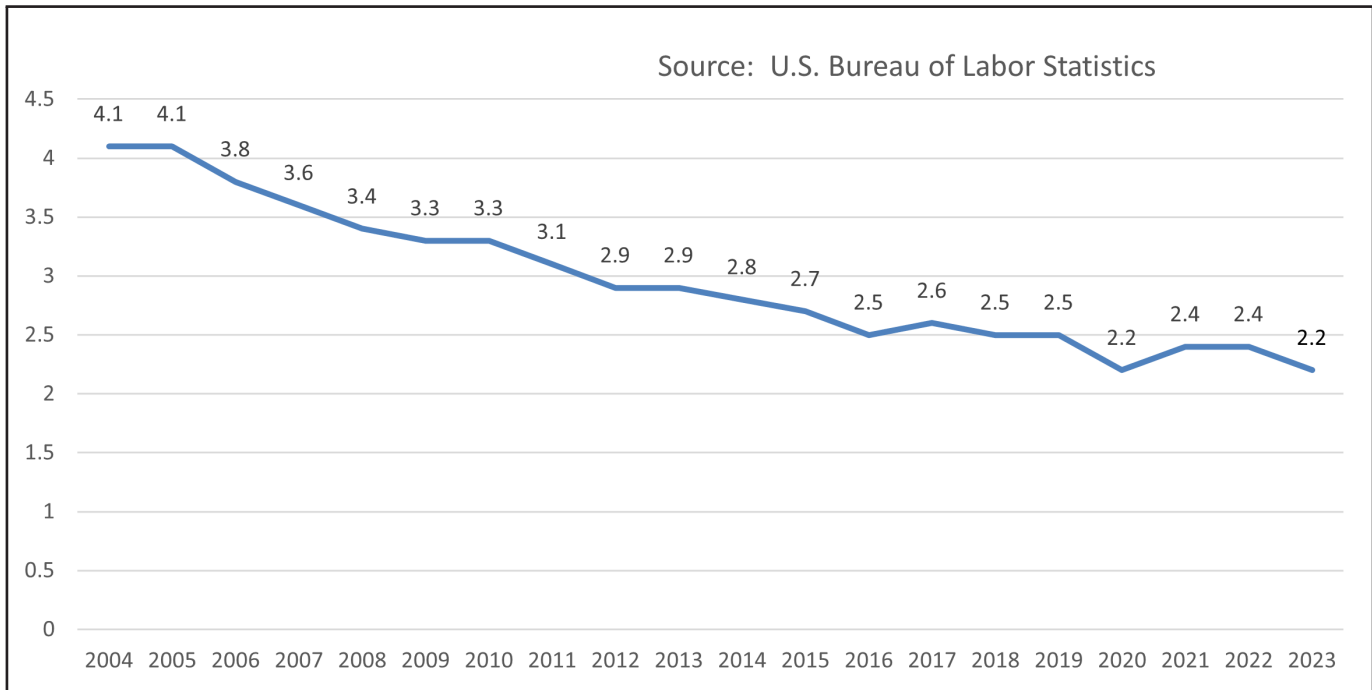
Figure 3 depicts the total number of compliance inspections conducted in North Carolina for federal fiscal years 2020 through 2024. The number of compliance inspections in recent years continues to fluctuate due to a combination of factors including inconsistent federal and state funding, salaries that have not kept pace with the private sector and increased turnover and vacancy rates. The department has taken a proactive approach to reduce vacancies and turnover rates and will continue to address concerns through ongoing discussions with the Office of State Human Resources, the Office of State Budget and Management and the Legislature.

Figure 3
Number of Compliance Inspections, FFY 2021 Through FFY 2024



Several tools, in addition to the statewide injury and illness rates, are used to monitor inspection quality and operational efficiency. Figure 4 represents the total recordable case rate per 100 full-time public and private sector workers. Internal case file audits, field audits, employer/employee feedback and informal conferences are some of the tools used to measure quality and consistency of the statewide work product.

Figure 4
Occupational Injury and Illness Rate for North Carolina,
Public and Private Sectors, Calendar Years 2004 Through 2023



In addition to inspection/investigation activity, OSH Compliance provides technical assistance and outreach training to as many employers and employees as resources will permit. Additional significant activities that occurred in OSH Compliance or involved OSH Compliance participation during FFY 2024 include the following:

- The state's total recordable case rate (TRC) released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics matched the lowest in program history at 2.2 for calendar year 2023, which is the most current year available. The private sector TRC fell to the lowest in program history at 2.0.
- The state's DART rate, which includes days away from work, restricted activity or job transfer, released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics continued to be one of the lowest in program history at 1.2 for calendar year 2024, which is the most current year available. The private sector DART rate continued to be one of the lowest in program history at 1.2.
- Stakeholder input was realized through two meetings of the OSH Advisory Council held in 2024, hosted in Raleigh and Asheboro. Former Commissioner Dobson and OSH Division staff met with the members of the council, who represent a cross section of employers, advocacy groups and the public sector. Members heard updates from OSH staff and offered their thoughts and opinions on how the department is operating.

- Two change requests were submitted for the OSHA Express (OE) data management system in 2024. North Carolina is one of several states to use the OE system, rather than federal OSHA's Occupational Safety and Health Information System (OIS). In FFY 2024, OSH continued to transmit data daily from OE to OIS via the interface. OSH and the OE vendor continue to work together to ensure that the systems, State Activity Mandated Measures and State Information Report are providing accurate data.
- During 2024, ongoing revisions were made to the Field Operations Manual and Operational Procedure Notices as a result of program improvement opportunities identified by customers, division employees and other stakeholders.
- OSH continues to provide administrative support for the OSHA Legacy Data (OLD) system to clean up all open inspections that were transferred to this database. This system was rolled out in late FFY 2016 and early FFY 2017, and additional features were added to allow OSHA and State Plans to access and modify pre-OIS inspection files, as necessary. At the end of 2024, OSH had two cases remaining in the OLD system.
- OSH Compliance received a variety of training during FFY 2024. This training was provided by both the Division's internal training staff as well as external training personnel and organizations.
- The OSH director and assistant director continued to participate in meetings with the Occupational Safety and Health State Plan Association (OSHSPA). The OSHSPA group meets with OSHA leadership three times a year in an effort to better ensure consistency among OSHA programs nationwide. The FFY 2024 OSHSPA meetings were held in Nashville, TN, Atlantic City, NJ, and Boston, MA.
- The OSH Division maintained four partnerships with one new signing during the year with Barnhill/Balfour Beatty/Metcon, a Joint Venture partnership, constructing the North Carolina Education Campus located in Raleigh. The three existing partnerships are with Holder-Edison Foard-Leeper, a joint venture project for the Charlotte Douglas International Airport/Terminal Lobby Expansion, the Jacobs Engineering Group covering the construction of FUJIFILM Diosynth Biotechnologies' manufacturing facility and campus located in Holly Springs, and the Wolfspeed facility project in Siler City being constructed by the Whiting-Turner Contracting Company. These employers voluntarily entered a partnership to improve their safety and health performance. The OSH Division provided incentives to these participants such as deferment from programmed inspections, technical assistance, partnership team quarterly walkthroughs and safety and health training assistance. The Compliance, Consultative and ETTA bureaus all work collectively to conduct the quarterly consultative walk throughs to identify hazards, promote best practices and educate employees and OSH Division personnel.
- The Amputations SEP completed its fifth year of formal activity. The program was added to the OSH Division's five-year Strategic Management Plan (SMP) for federal fiscal years 2019-2023, and continued into the current five-year SMP for FFY 2024-2028. Throughout the year, the division focused resources from the different bureaus to address amputation hazards with the goal of reducing workplace amputations. Compliance conducted 185 inspections under this SEP in FY 2024, including 101 programmed (proactive) inspections in industries targeted based on the number and rate of amputations in NC.

- In order to address a finding regarding OSH penalties in the 2021 Federal Annual Monitoring Evaluation report, the department submitted a statutory change request to the NCGA in 2022 that would allow the division to increase penalties in line with federal OSHA. The 2022 Appropriations Act included the requested change, and North Carolina OSH penalties increased on Oct. 1, 2022, July 1, 2023 and July 1, 2024. Going forward, OSH penalties will increase annually on July 1, in accordance with the federal cost-of-living adjustment. North Carolina was required to pursue this change in order to remain “at least as effective as” federal OSHA and to not endanger its state-plan status.
- The OSH Complaint Desk processed 3,946 complaints, including 3,479 that were determined to be valid and 467 that were non-valid per the OSH Field Operations Manual. This is in addition to the 187 fatality reports (including medical events and traffic accidents) and 708 employer-reported referrals. The complaint desk staff also received and evaluated an additional 3,770 “unprocessed” complaints that were either incomplete or not related to workplace safety and health. The average number of complaints received by the Complaint Desk has averaged 1,000 more each year than in the years prior to COVID-19 and the number of unprocessed complaints continued to steadily climb as well. To alleviate the complaints not under OSH jurisdiction, an online web form was developed in question-and-answer format and directs online complainants toward the appropriate agency. Additionally, a compliance officer position was moved from the field to the Complaint Desk to help process the high number of complaints and accidents.
- The OSH Lab completed 311 in-house equipment calibrations. An additional 65 pieces of equipment was sent to the manufacturer for calibration or repair.

Consultative Services Bureau

The Consultative Services Bureau continued to provide services to the employers and employees in both the private and public sectors during FFY 2024. The bureau conducted 1,474 total consultative visits. See Table 3.

- 870 (59%) safety visits; 604 (41%) health visits.
- 1,275 (87%) initial visits; 107 (7%) training/assistance visits; 92 (6%) follow-up visits.
- 1,221 (83%) private sector visits; 253 (17%) public sector visits.
- 280 (22%) manufacturing visits; 622 (42%) construction visits; 319 (22%) other industry type visits; 253 (17%) public sector visits.
- Hazards identified and eliminated as a result of consultative visits totaled 5,796. Of these, 5,464 (94.3%) were serious hazards, 249 (4.3%) were other-than-serious hazards, 83 (1.4%) were regulatory.

Consultants conducted 408 safety and health interventions with employers, which included speeches, training programs, safety and health program assistance, interpretations, conference presentations and hazard abatement assistance.

The bureau continues to focus on small and high-hazard employers and encourages participation in the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP). During 2024, total participation in SHARP was 127 employers (92 general industry, 33 public sector, two construction and seven pre-SHARP).

The bureau met all of its target goals for the OSH Division strategic plan by visiting employers in the Special Emphasis Programs.

Table 3

Consultative Services Bureau Program, FFY 2021 Through FFY 2024

Comparisons	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Total Visits by Category				
Safety	862	919	902	870
Health	563	582	596	604
Total Visits by Type				
Initial	1,204	1,257	1,287	1,275
Training and Assistance	135	128	99	107
Follow-up	86	116	112	92
Total Visits by Industry Type				
Manufacturing	322	356	327	280
Construction	536	576	633	622
Other	341	322	283	319
Public Sector	226	247	255	253
Total Visits	1,425	1,501	1,498	1,474

Education, Training and Technical Assistance Bureau

2024 Accomplishments

The Education, Training and Technical Assistance (ETTA) Bureau continued to focus on increasing efficiency and effectiveness in providing outreach and technical services to the public. The work of the bureau included library services, publications, rulemaking, alliances, training and outreach, recognition programs for Safety Awards and Carolina Star, and promoting OSH certifications within the OSH Division.

Library

The NCDOL's Charles H. Livengood Jr. Memorial Library loaned out 174 items including consensus standards, safety and health-related books and videos and certification exam preparation workbooks to NCDOL employees and registered public patrons. Additionally, the library responded to 543 information requests and 248 reference questions, provided streaming safety and health video access (via the library's subscription to Training Network NOW's Streamery) to 78 patrons, served 253 visitors, acquired 110 items for the collection and cataloged 49 items. The librarian alerted staff to webinars and online publications, referred patrons to online resources and assisted NCDOL employees in their investigations and preparation for professional certification examinations via books and software access.

Recognition Program

The Safety Awards Program celebrated its 78th year with another successful season. The gold award was presented to employer sites with days away, restricted or transferred case rate of at least 50% below the state average for its industry. The silver award went to employer sites with a lost workday case rate at least 50% below the state average. There were 25 Safety Awards banquets held with a total banquet attendance of 1,819 attendees. The program distributed 2,058 annual awards including 1,737 gold, 321 silver and 58 million-hour safety awards.

In terms of the number of participating worksites, the Carolina Star Program is ranked first among all State-Plan states and second among all states (i.e. State-Plan and Federal) that participate in the Voluntary Protection Program. The Carolina Star Program enjoyed another successful year with five new Star sites recognized, 30 Star sites recertified and 156 Star interventions conducted. There were 147 companies participating in the Carolina Star Program at the end of FFY 2024.

Star Site Name and Location	Site Approval Date	Recertification Date
Syngenta Crop Protection LLC, Greensboro		10/9/2023
Apex Tool Group LLC, Apex		10/13/2023
CFE Inc., An Evans Roofing Company, Apex		10/13/2023
Balfour Beatty Infrastructure Inc., Wilmington		10/18/2023
Biogen Inc., Durham		10/18/2023
Water and Sewer Authority of Cabarrus County, Concord		10/20/2023
Daniels and Daniels Construction, Fremont	11/20/2023	
Thermo Fisher Scientific, Asheville		11/27/2023
Metal Tech of Murfreesboro Inc., Cofield		3/1/2024
Stanley Engineered Fastening, Stanfield		3/11/2024
Nucor Steel, Cofield		3/26/2024
West Fraser Inc., Riegelwood		3/26/2024
Eaton Corporation, Asheville		5/10/2024
Weekley Homes LLC, Cary		5/10/2024
Sonoco Recycling LLC, Greensboro	5/20/2024	
Field Controls LLC, Kinston	5/31/2024	
The Timken Company, Rutherfordton		6/18/2024
Glen Raven Inc., Norlina		6/24/2024
Cintas Corporation, Location 205, Durham		7/25/2024
NCDA&CS Agronomic Services Department, Raleigh		8/22/2024
Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, Charlotte		8/22/2024
Wakefield Thermal, Raleigh	8/26/2024	
Fortron Industries, Wilmington	8/26/2024	
City of Greensboro Water Resources Division, Greensboro		9/9/2024

The annual Carolina Star Safety Conference was held Sept. 18-20, 2024, which represented the 27th year of conference existence. During the conference, one Star site was recognized for achieving 25 years in the Carolina Star Program bringing the total to 11 Star designated worksites that have achieved the status of 25 years as a Carolina Star Program participant. The conference had 761 people in attendance.

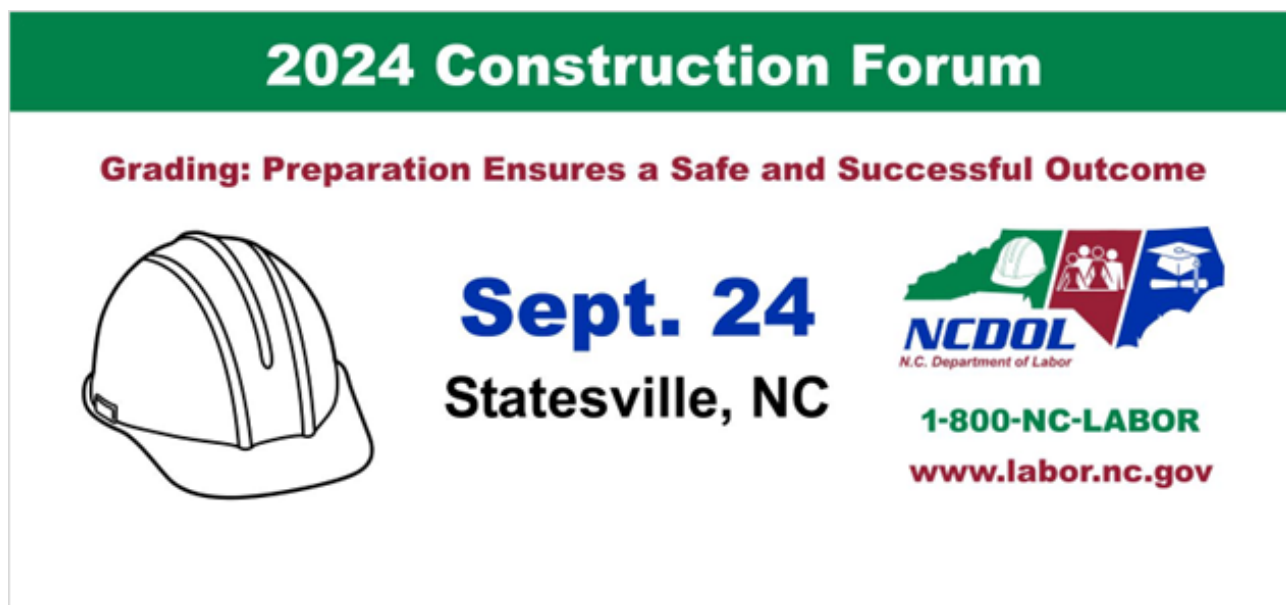
Through a Special Star Team Member (SSTM) Program, OSH leverages its limited resources by using specially trained Star site employees and independent private sector safety and health professionals for on-site Star evaluations. During FFY 2024, 23 SSTMs received initial training during two training events. Additionally, four SSTMs were recertified for a total of 153 SSTMs eligible to assist with Star evaluations.

The SSTM program also includes the use of specially trained OSH Star Team Members (OSTM) from the bureau (bureau chief, supervisors, standards officers and trainers). Currently, there are 20 OSTMs eligible to assist with Star evaluations including one OSTM that received initial training during FFY 2024.

Publications

The bureau distributed 48,272 publications in support of the division's outreach and regulatory goals to promote a safe and healthy work environment across the state.

- All safety and health topics on the NCDOL website were updated with new or revised content and 28 new topics were added.
- ETTA's Standards Section made several revisions to existing publications. This included brochures on the following: Manager of Environmental Safety and Health Program (MESH), Spanish Toolbox Reviews, ETTA and the Top 10 Serious Standards Cited in FFY 2023, as well as updates to a Quick Card on Tree Trimming and an Industry Guide on Migrant Housing Inspections in NC.
- A letter and outreach materials regarding OSH outreach services and publications were mailed to 36 construction employers with five or more serious violations. This letter is an outreach strategy used by the Construction SEP committee to lower injury and illness rates in construction.
- Through an alliance with Lamar Advertising, six different billboards were posted across the state. The billboards addressed the following topics: Construction Forum, Fall Prevention Stand Down (2), Trench Safety, Grain Safety Stand Down, Heat Stress Prevention, and the Safe + Sound Initiative.



Through an alliance with Lamar Advertising, a billboard announcing the NCDOL annual Construction Forum was posted around the state.

Rulemaking

The Standards Section answered 2,608 inquiries on OSHA standards by phone or written correspondence for employers and employees across the state. They added 18 documents to the Field Information System (FIS) including updates to the Field Operations Manual, revised OSH Division policies and adoption of multiple federal OSHA Instructions and Final Rules. PSIM, Compliance and/or Legal Affairs work jointly to update and revise FIS documents. Final Rules adopted in North Carolina included the 29 CFR 1903 Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Annual Adjustments for 2024 and the revised 29 CFR 1903 rule on Employee Walkaround Representatives.

Alliances

In North Carolina, alliances typically focus on specialized industry outreach and training. Through an alliance agreement, organizations that are committed to safety and health work closely with the OSH Division to prevent injuries, illnesses and fatalities in the workplace. Current alliances include Carolinas Associated General Contractors, Lamar Advertising Co., Mexican Consulate, National Utility Contractors Association of the Carolinas, N.C. Masonry Contractors Association, N.C. State University Industry Expansion Solutions, Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors Association and the Safety and Health Council of North Carolina. A new alliance with Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) Carolinas is scheduled for March 2025.

Training and Outreach

The bureau offers a wide variety of safety and health training and outreach services to employers and employees across North Carolina. The services include a speaker's bureau, free training and technical assistance, along with outreach support for safety and health schools, conferences and workshops. Training is offered on demand, as well as through a regularly scheduled training series, which can be accessed through the online training calendar. Training is offered at employers' worksites, the OSH Division field offices and select community colleges and other sites throughout the state. In addition to traditional leader-led instruction, ETTA provides a webinar series as well. To keep the public informed of upcoming courses, ETTA sends periodic newsletters to more than 7,600 employers and employees every year, as well as promoting its services through the department's social media platforms.

Highlights include:

- The bureau hosted and/or participated in 216 courses and events providing training to 5,448 employers and employees. Additionally, the Consultative Services Bureau trained an additional 4,678 employers and employees which brought an overall total of 10,126 workers trained by the OSH Division. Training included seven 10-hour and two 30-hour general industry awareness courses, five 10-hour and two 30-hour construction industry awareness courses, 86 speaker's bureau events, 90 webinars and 25 booth events/safety and health fairs.
- The OSH Division participated with Federal OSHA in the National Safety Stand Down to Prevent Falls in Construction. ETTA hosted five webinars: two on fall protection, and one on scaffolds, steel erection and stairways and ladders. They also participated in three Labor One events. The Stand Down was promoted on all NCDOL social media platforms, on the NCDOL Special Events webpage and through an alliance with Lamar Advertising Company on a billboard poster. A total of 779 employees were trained during these webinars and events.

- The OSH Division participated in Trench Safety Stand Down Week. This included advertising the Stand Down on NCDOL social media platforms and on a billboard poster. During the Stand Down week, NCDOL hosted two webinars on excavation and trenching, one webinar on heat stress, and one webinar on recordkeeping and reporting with training provided to 46 employees. The Governor’s Proclamation also recognized the Stand Down Week.
- The OSH Division participated in Safe + Sound Week. ETTA hosted three webinars on Safety and Health Management Systems that provided training for 46 employees. It was promoted on all NCDOL social media platforms, a billboard poster and on the NCDOL Special Events webpage. The Governor’s Proclamation also recognized the Safe + Sound week.
- Awareness of heat stress prevention was promoted throughout the summer months on social media platforms, a billboard and on the NCDOL Special Events webpage. Fifteen public webinars were also conducted during the summer months with 362 employees trained. Training included information on preventing heat stress and resources available.
- The OSH Division Construction Forum was held in Statesville on Sept. 24 with the theme “Grading and Utility Safety.” It was widely attended by employers and employees across the state with 56 attendees. Topics included excavation and trenching, heat stress, struck by/caught between and Safe Digging via the 811 System.
- ETTA participated in Labor Rights Week through an alliance with the Mexican Consulate. During the week, ETTA hosted a booth and distributed Spanish-language publications to attendees.
- State-authorized trainers provided 10- and 30-hour training courses for an additional 201 employers and employees through the OSH Train-the-Trainer Program. This program supports the Training Section’s outreach efforts, thereby increasing the total number of employees and employers trained across the state.
- The bureau hosted internal safety and health training for staff, including 170 hours of formal training, 180 hours of continuing education and eight hours of other job-related training.
- Courses included: OSH 100 - Initial Compliance Course; OSH 125 - Introduction to Health Standards for Industrial Hygienists; Industrial Hygiene Basics; OSH 105 - Introduction to Safety Standards for Safety Officers; Technical Writing and OSHA Express; OSH 141 Legal Aspects; OTI #2225 Respiratory Protection; OSH Construction Safety Specialist (OCSS) course - Confined Space Entry; OCSS - Trenching and Excavation; NFPA 70E; Scaffolds; Occupational Noise; Heat Stress; Human Trafficking; Recordkeeping; Combustible Dust; CPR, AED and First Aid; Significant Cases; Long Term Care Special Emphasis Program (SEP); Food Manufacturing SEP; Logging and Arboriculture SEP; Grocery and Related Merchant Products SEP; Health Hazards SEP; Chainsaw Safety; and a variety of individual safety and health topic webinars.

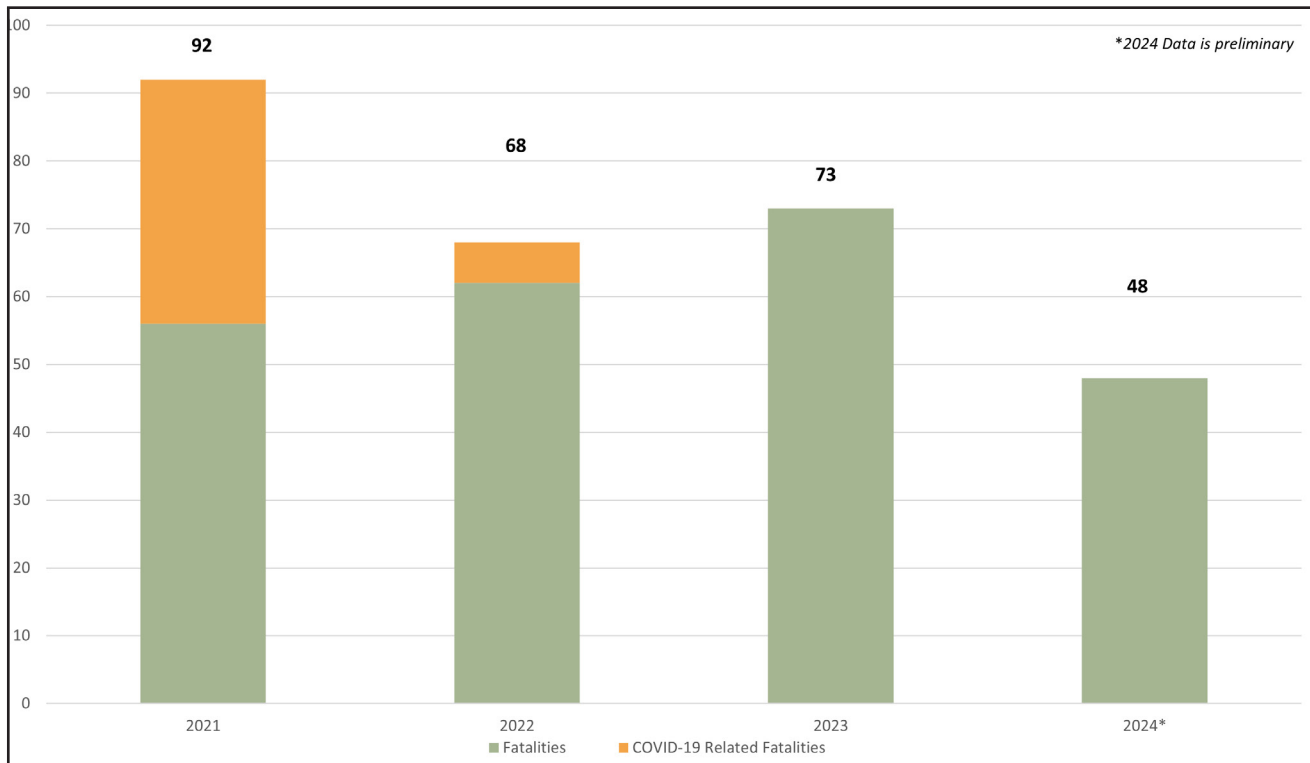
OSH Division Certifications

- Two OSH Division employees attained the Certified Safety Professional (CSP) certification. A CSP is a safety and/or health professional who has met education and experience requirements, has demonstrated by examination the knowledge that applies to professional safety practice, continues to meet recertification requirements established by the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP) and is authorized by BCSP to use the CSP designation.
- Three OSH Division employees attained the Associate Safety Professional (ASP) certification. The ASP is an independent certification awarded by BCSP. This certification denotes that an individual has met academic requirements and has passed the Safety Fundamentals Examination (the first of two examinations leading to the CSP).
- Three OSH Division personnel attained the Manager of Environmental Safety and Health (MESH) certificate; one received the Construction MESH certificate, one received the Industrial Hygiene MESH certificate, and one received the Emergency Preparedness MESH certificate as a result of receiving 100 hours of safety and health training. These certificates are offered in collaboration with N.C. State University Industry Expansion Solutions and the Safety and Health Council of North Carolina.
- One OSH Division personnel attained the Certified Hazardous Materials Manager (CHMM) certification. The CHMM, established by the Institute of Hazardous Materials Management, is held by those that have demonstrated professional competency in hazardous materials pertaining to standards, regulations, management and occupational safety and health.
- Two OSH Division personnel obtained the Construction Health and Safety Technician (CHST) certification. The CHST is a certification awarded to safety practitioners who meet all requirements established by the BCSP. The CHST certification is awarded to individuals who demonstrate competency and work part-time or full-time in health and safety activities devoted to the prevention of construction illness and injuries.
- Five OSH Division employees attended the Federal OSHA Training Institute courses 500/501, 502/503, and/or 510/511 for Authorized Trainers. To be eligible for this program, the employee must be recommended by their supervisor and/or bureau chief. This authorization allows an employee to teach Federal 10- and 30- hour courses.
- Nine OSH Division personnel renewed or attained the Remote Pilots license in support of the OSH Division's Drone Program.

Planning, Statistics and Information Management Bureau

The Planning, Statistics and Information Management (PSIM) Bureau responds to requests for statistical data and requests for the redaction and release of OSH Division inspection file documents and Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Bureau (REDB) safety and health related investigative file documents. PSIM also gathers and analyzes injury and illness data by conducting the annual Public Sector Survey. Data are also gathered and analyzed for the NCDOL Annual Report and several other annual department, division and legislative reports. The bureau archives all OSH Compliance inspection files (those still in paper copy format). The PSIM Bureau maintains the OSH Division's private and public sector employer databases, the inspection targeting system and statistical data related to workplace fatalities, all in support of the OSH Division's Strategic Management Plan.

- A total of 3,310 surveys were mailed to public sector employers (collection of 2023 injury and illness data). As of the end of FFY 2024, 3,189 survey responses were received for a 96.34% response rate and a 100% clean rate. Due to the lingering effects of Hurricane Helene on western North Carolina, PSIM was unable to collect all surveys.
- Completed an analysis of data collected from the 2020, 2021 and 2022 Public Sector Surveys, resulting in updated, established target rates for employer-specific categories.
- Coordinated discussions with all bureaus in the OSH Division to prepare the FFY 2025 Annual Performance Plan in relation to the five-year Strategic Management Plan for FFY 2024-FFY 2028.
- Worked in conjunction with ETTA, Compliance East and West Bureaus and Legal Affairs Division staff to update and revise several Field Operation Manual chapters and Operational Procedure Notices. PSIM staff updated Operational Procedure Notice 128 and Administrative Procedures Notice 19 for FFY 2024.
- PSIM bureau chief continued to perform duties associated with the responsibility of being the medical records coordinator for the OSH Division.
- Analyzed construction inspection activities for FFY 2023.

Figure 5**Fatalities Included in the Occupational Fatality Inspection Review, Calendar Years 2021 Through 2024***

- Continued refinement of the OSH private and public sector establishment databases to supplement the bureau's exclusive use of the Division of Employment Security database.
- Received, researched and processed 484 requests for revisions/changes to the private and public sector databases, which helps to enhance the accuracy of these site databases and the OSH Division Targeting System.
- Received and processed 2,143 requests from the public sector for revisions or changes to the Public Sector Injury and Illness Survey database.
- Various targeting schedules were updated and assignments were released:
 - Public Sector Schedule.
 - General Industry Schedules (Safety and Health).
 - ASH Schedule.
 - Health Hazards Schedules (Beryllium, Lead and Isocyanates).
 - Amputations Schedule.

- Continued as active Strategic Management Plan (SMP) Committee members and participated in all SMP meetings, discussions and activities, which were essential functions directly related to the success of OSH Division SMP goals.
- Compilation of OSH data was initiated for the NCDOL Annual Report, and various other annual department, division and legislative reporting requirements.
- Received a total of 754 closed inspection files (those still in paper copy format) from the field offices for archiving.
- Received 871 disclosure requests during FFY 2024 and processed 781 requests (432 from FFY 2024 and 349 from previous years) during this fiscal year. PSIM has continued to receive an unprecedented number of disclosure file requests. We continue to see a substantial increase in the number of requests for contestments and fatalities, and we are receiving an increasing number of court orders, subpoenas, etc.
- Provided notifications of workplace accidents and fatalities to the N.C. Department of Commerce, N.C. Industrial Commission, Criminal Investigations and Employee Classification Division.
- Assisted the ETTA Bureau by reviewing photos and graphics within various PowerPoint presentations to verify adherence to copyright, privacy, ownership and brand name restrictions.

Standards and Inspections Division

The Standards and Inspections Division comprises five bureaus of the N.C. Department of Labor: Boiler Safety; Elevator and Amusement Device; Retaliatory Employment Discrimination; Mine and Quarry; and Wage and Hour.

Statistical Highlights for State Fiscal Year 2024

Boiler Safety Bureau

- Investigated six incidents during the fiscal year.
- Conducted 52,924 inspections of pressure equipment.
- Identified 3,539 violations.
- The average backlog for state inspectors was 0.96%. The average combined backlog for both state and insurance company inspectors was 5%.

Elevator and Amusement Device Bureau

- Completed 22,758 routine elevator inspections, 1,609 new elevator inspections and 1,719 alteration or repair inspections.
- Inspected 4,330 amusement devices.

Mine and Quarry Bureau

- Conducted 398 on-site programs and trained 4,758 miners and contractors.
- Conducted four Part 48 Instructor classes, certifying 25 people as MSHA Instructors.
- Conducted 68 First Aid and 46 CPR classes certifying 881 miners and contractors.
- Conducted nine MSHA Law classes with a total of 215 miners and contractors attending.
- The injury and illness rate of the North Carolina minerals industry was 1.08 per 100 full-time employees during the 2024 calendar year.

Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Bureau

- Responded to 4,688 telephone inquiries from the public.
- 730 Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Act (REDA) complaints were filed.
- 735 REDA complaints were investigated and closed.
- Of closed complaint files, 14.56% alleged violations under the N.C. Workers' Compensation Act, 22.86% alleged violations of the N.C. Wage and Hour Act, 53.46% alleged safety and health violations under the N.C. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act or Section 11(c) of the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act, 0.51% alleged retaliation under other protected activity statutes and 8.3% failed to prove a specific protected activity under REDA.
- 36 of 50 cases referred to mediation or conciliation were settled, or 72%. Total gross settlement proceeds were \$763,052.05.
- Of closed complaint files, the bureau closed 92% within 120 days of assignment to an investigator and 97% within 180 days of assignment.

Wage and Hour Bureau

- Substantiated more than \$1 million due to employees.
- Recovered more than \$1.7 million in wages for over 1,400 workers.
- Opened 2,689 complaints from employees.
- Closed 3,049 cases.
- Issued 80,714 youth employment certificates online using YEC Auto.
- Youth employment certificates issued through YEC Auto reached 100% of all certificates issued.
- Answered 100% of 31,782 calls received.

Boiler Safety Bureau

During the state fiscal year 2024, the Boiler Safety Bureau employed 11 field inspectors, two field supervisors, four administrative staff and two senior staff to support an average of over 50,000 inspections per year. State inspectors, along with 13 insurance company partners, conducted in-service inspections on boilers, historical exhibition boilers, model/hobby boilers, various types of pressure vessels, repair inspections and pressure equipment accident investigations. The Boiler Safety Bureau is a receipt-supported bureau; the fees collected pay for the operation of the bureau and the salaries of the bureau staff.

Programs

Periodic inspection continues to be the primary focus of the Boiler Safety Bureau. The bureau also provides education and promotes voluntary safety. The bureau’s inspection program for boilers and pressure vessels covers a wide array of businesses and industries. Table 4 below shows the number of inspections and violations for FY 2021 through FY 2024. The bureau investigated six incidents due to boiler or pressure vessel failures. These incidents involved property damage only, no injuries or fatalities were reported.

Table 4
Number of Inspections and Violations, FY 2021 Through FY 2024

Fiscal Year	Number of Inspections	Number of Violations
2021	56,234	3,462
2022	50,399	3,303
2023	53,298	3,646
2024	52,924	3,539

Backlogs

Any inspection program can have a backlog of items past due for inspection. At the end of FY 2024, the combined backlog of state and insurance objects was 5.0%, and the backlog for state inspectors was 0.96%. The bureau works diligently to maintain a low rate of overdue inspections.

Other Duties

In addition to the inspections of equipment in businesses and institutions throughout the state, inspectors with special training, commissions and endorsements carried out 431 half days of third-party inspections, reviews and audits at ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code manufacturing facilities that construct boilers and pressure vessels, as well as at pressure equipment repair firms known as National Board “R” Certificate holders.

The bureau has specially trained and qualified review team leaders who are charged with conducting quality program reviews of “R” Certificate holders. This service typically saves these North Carolina businesses considerable money.

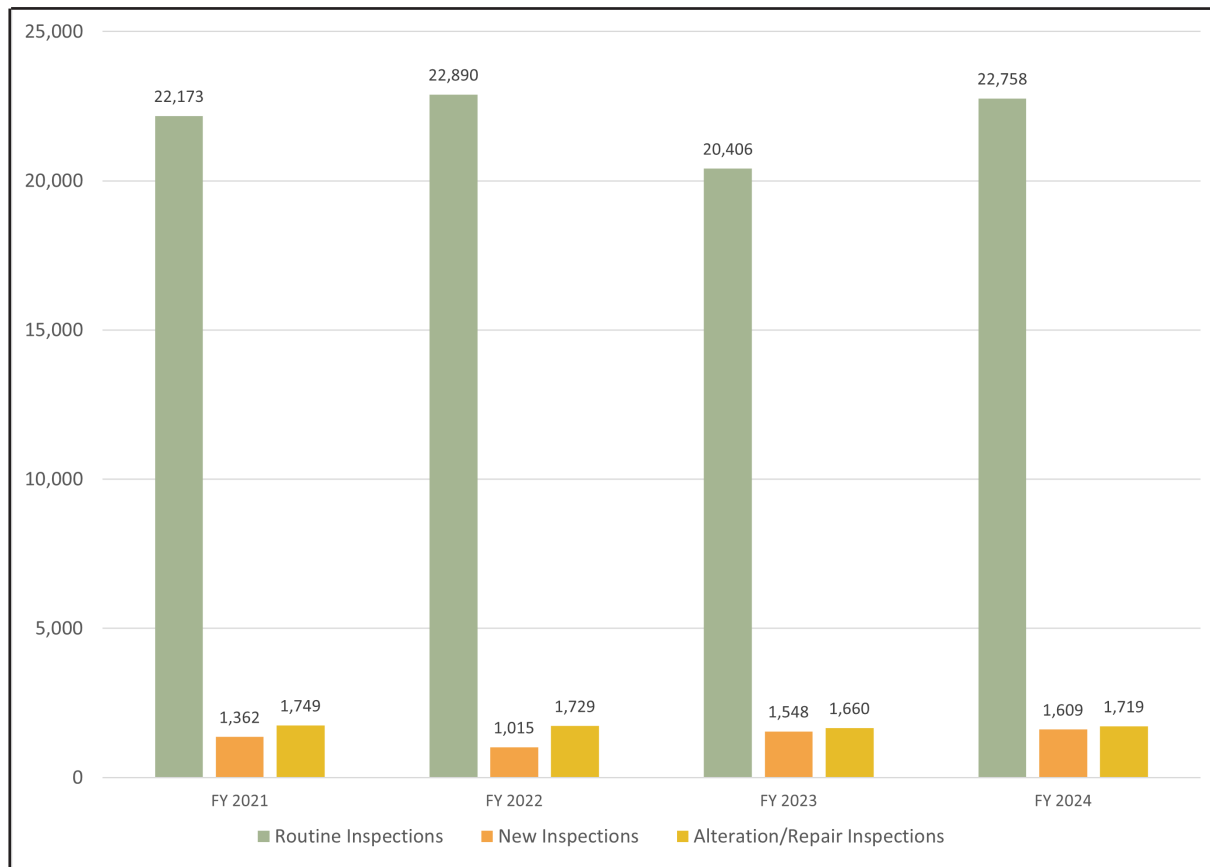
Elevator and Amusement Device Bureau

The Elevator and Amusement Device Bureau is responsible for the proper installation and safe operation of all elevators, escalators, workman's hoists, dumbwaiters, moving walks, lifting devices for people with disabilities, aerial passenger tramways, amusement rides and incline railways that operate in public establishments. Devices in federally owned properties and single-family dwellings are exempt. Elevators are inspected annually by the bureau. The bureau also inspects amusement devices each time they are assembled for operation in the state. The bureau conducted 22,758 routines, 1,609 new elevator inspections and 1,719 alteration or repair inspections, as well as 4,330 amusement device inspections.

Elevator Inspections

Inspections of elevators, dumbwaiters, escalators and handicap lifts consist of routine inspections of existing devices and new inspections. As shown in Figure 6, the number of routine inspections increased, and the number of new inspections increased from the previous fiscal year.

Figure 6
New, Routine and Alteration/Repair Inspections, FY 2021 Through FY 2024

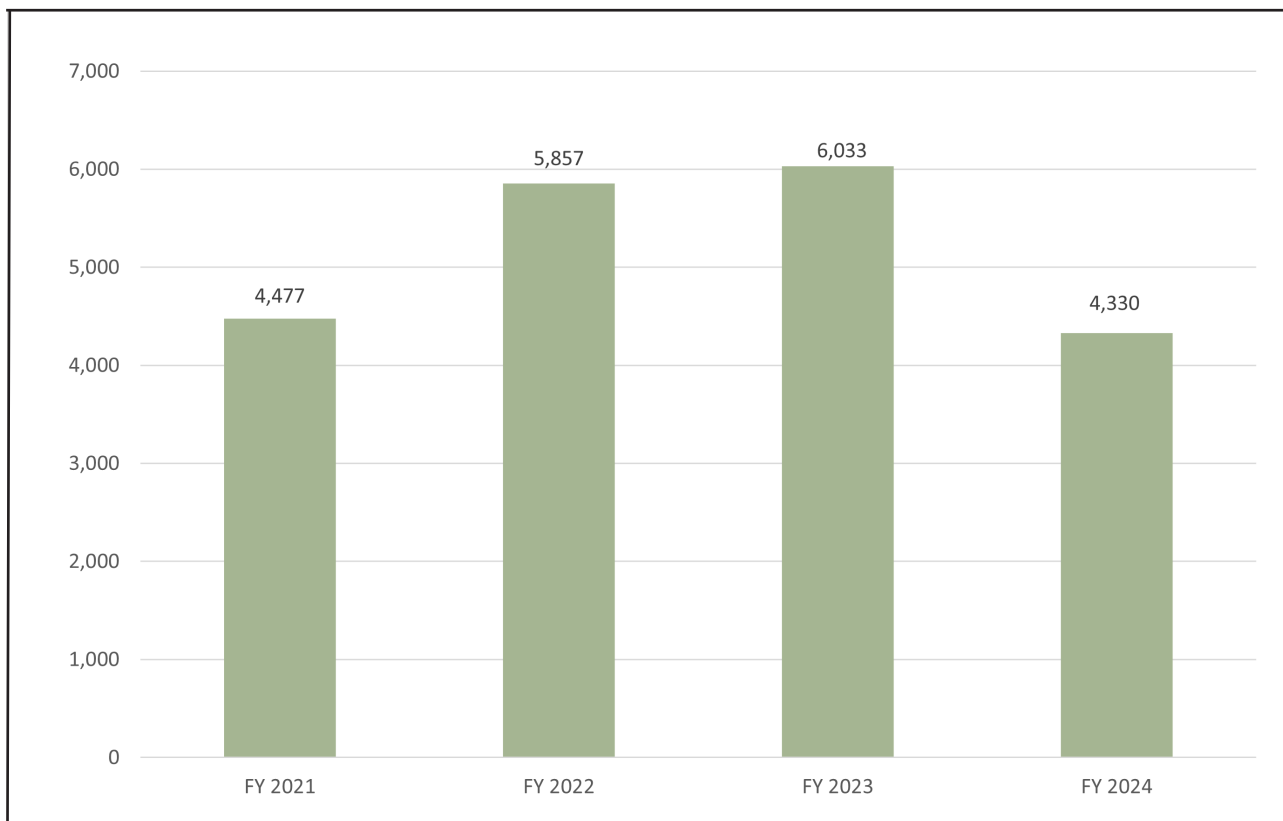


Amusement Device Inspections

Amusement device inspections consist of mechanical rides, go-karts and rock-climbing walls. Tramways and ski lifts are also included in this inspection category. While mechanical rides at permanent parks are inspected once annually, mechanical rides with traveling amusement companies are inspected each time they are assembled for operation at fairs, festivals, carnivals and other amusement events. The bureau also conducts operational inspections at least once during the operating season for permanent parks and at least once during the operation at a traveling show.

Figure 7 indicates the total number of amusement devices inspected in FY 2021 through FY 2024.

Figure 7
Number of Amusement Rides Inspected, FY 2021 Through FY 2024



Accident or Incident Investigations

Accident investigations are conducted according to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 95-110.9. *Reports required.*

- (a) The owner of any device or equipment regulated under the provisions of this Article, or his authorized agent, shall within 24 hours notify the commissioner of each and every occurrence involving such device or equipment when:
 - (1) The occurrence results in death or injury requiring medical treatment, other than first aid, by a physician. First aid means the one-time treatment or observation of scratches, cuts not requiring stitches, burns, splinters and contusions or a diagnostic procedure, including examination and x-rays, which does not ordinarily require medical treatment even though provided by physician or other licensed personnel; or
 - (2) The occurrence results in damage to the device indicating a substantial defect in design, mechanics, structure, or equipment, affecting the future safe operation of the device. No reporting is required in the case of normal wear and tear. The owner of the equipment is required to contact the bureau.

An inspector is sent to the location and completes a report that is kept on file. As Table 5 reflects, the number of accident investigations for elevators and related equipment decreased and amusement rides increased in FY 2024. Patron error accounted for 83% of elevator accidents and 78% of the amusement accidents.

Table 5
Number of Elevator and Amusement Device Accidents, FFY 2021 Through FFY 2024

Fiscal Year	Elevators and Related Equipment					Amusement Rides				
	Total	Patron Error	Mechanical Error	Reportable	Non- Reportable	Total	Patron Error	Mechanical Error	Reportable	Non- Reportable
2021	53	44	9	25	28	18	14	4	12	6
2022	58	48	10	31	27	20	17	3	17	3
2023	54	43	11	45	9	26	16	10	24	2
2024	59	49	10	53	6	14	11	1	13	1

Mine and Quarry Bureau

The Mine and Quarry Bureau is one of the earliest established units of the N.C. Department of Labor, having administered the state mining laws since 1897. The bureau administers laws concerning the operations and inspections of mines and quarries. The bureau staff consists of a bureau chief, one office assistant and three mine safety and health representatives. Funding for mandatory safety training is provided by a federal grant from the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).

The Mine and Quarry Bureau continues to provide a wide assortment of mine safety and health services, such as complete safety evaluations of the workplace, consultations, technical assistance, education and training health surveys, safety meetings, investigations and training plan assistance. Currently there are 243 surface mines with approximately 3,500 employees. Instructor fundamentals, health and safety laws and supervisory training are offered through the Mine and Quarry Bureau's seminars and institutes.

Table 6

Mine and Quarry Training and Inspection Activities, FY 2021 Through FY 2024

	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Number of Mine Safety and Health Instructors Trained	0	22	23	25
Number of Education and Training Programs Provided	474	294	457	398
Number of Miners and Contractors Trained in Parts 46 and 48	3,978	3,509	4,610	4,758

Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Bureau

The Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Bureau (REDB) enforces the Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Act (REDA), N.C. Gen. Stat. §§ 95-240 through 245. The NCGA enacted REDA in 1992 in response to a tragic fire at the Imperial Food Products chicken processing plant in Hamlet, N.C., in which 25 employees lost their lives and dozens more were injured. The purpose of REDA was to establish policies and procedures to encourage rather than discourage employees from reporting good faith concerns about potentially unsafe, unhealthy or illegal activities at their workplaces. To that end, REDA protects employees from adverse employment action by their employers in retaliation for exercising rights enumerated in the act, specifically incorporating 11 North Carolina statutes. REDA protects employees from retaliation for exercising their rights under the N.C. Workers' Compensation, Wage and Hour, Occupational Safety and Health and Mine Safety and Health acts. It also protects hemoglobin C and sickle cell carriers, employees subject to genetic testing, employees called to National Guard service and employees (parents) court-ordered to participate in the juvenile justice system. Also protected are employees who exercise certain rights under North Carolina's domestic violence statutes. The majority of filed complaints alleged violations of the N.C. Workers' Compensation, Wage and Hour and Occupational Safety and Health acts.

The bureau maintains a helpline to respond to inquiries from the public, provide information to potential complainants and make referrals to other agencies when appropriate. Complaints alleging a violation of REDA must be made in writing and filed within 180 days of the last adverse employment action by the employer. The bureau's role is to apply the provisions of REDA in a fair, consistent and impartial manner, and, by so doing, effectuate the legislative intent to protect workers from unlawful retaliation in their workplaces and protect the integrity of the process. REDA's specific protections from retaliation are exceptions to North Carolina's "at will" doctrine of employment.

After a complete investigation, a determination is made as to whether "there is reasonable cause to believe" that the complainant's allegations are true and that the employer may have violated REDA. If yes, a "merit" determination is reached. If no, a "no merit" determination is issued. After determination, the complainant is issued a merit or no merit 90-Day Right-to-Sue letter, which permits the complainant to pursue remedies against the employer under REDA in superior court. Prior to the issuance of the letter in a merit case, a referral is made to the bureau's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program, as noted below.

REDA provides that, if reasonable cause to believe is found, the bureau shall attempt to assist the parties in the possible resolution of their complaint. To address this statutory charge, the bureau created and administers a robust ADR program. It offers mediation or informal conciliation to the parties after a merit determination is reached. And, at the parties' request, the bureau also offers either program prior to an investigation as an early resolution tool. The Mediated Settlement Conference Program was created in July 2020. The program is voluntary and is served by approximately 40 mediators certified by the N.C. Dispute Resolution Commission who volunteer their time at no charge to the parties. Conciliation is facilitated by the Administrator or designee.

Fiscal year 2024 was a successful year for settlement of REDA complaints. Out of 41 mediations conducted, 65.85% resulted in settlement with gross settlement proceeds in the amount of \$709,992.85. Out of 8 conciliations, 100% resulted in settlement with gross settlement proceeds in the amount of \$53,059.20. Overall, the settlement rate at ADR was 72% and total proceeds were \$763,052.05.

Federal OSHA also refers whistleblower complaints filed under Section 11(c) of the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act to the NCDOL for review. North Carolina is one of 28 states with a “State Plan” in place to accept referrals of federal OSHA 11(c) referrals. Upon receipt of a federal referral, the bureau informs the complainant that he or she may also have a claim under REDA arising out of the N.C. OSH Act and provides them with a copy of the REDA complaint form and other related documents. As part of the State Plan agreement, the bureau’s procedures and protections must be “as effective” as federal OSHA’s 11(c) whistleblower procedures and protections. Federal OSHA conducts annual audits to ensure that the agency is meeting this condition. During 2024, the bureau experienced a sharp increase in complaints filed as compared to prior years. See Figure 8.

The REDB consists of an administrator, an information officer, an administrative assistant and seven discrimination investigators. The team works diligently and cooperatively in a congenial environment and strives to provide exemplary customer service to complainants, respondents and the public at large. During 2024, the bureau experienced a sharp increase in complaints filed as compared to prior years. See Figure 8.

Figure 8

Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Complaint Files Opened and Closed, FY 2021 through FY 2024

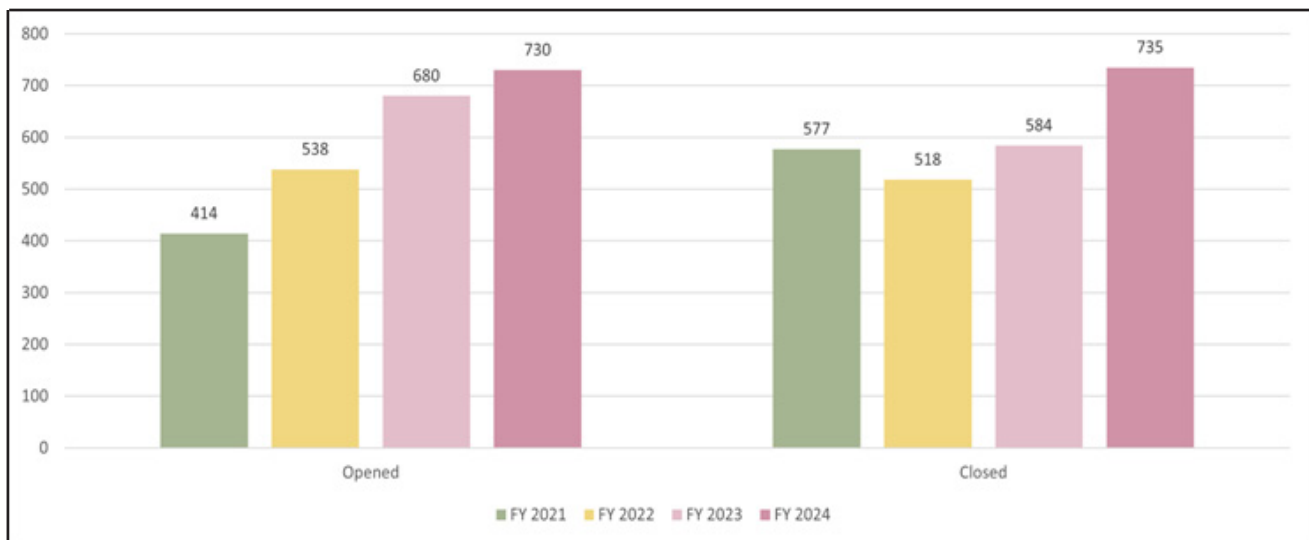
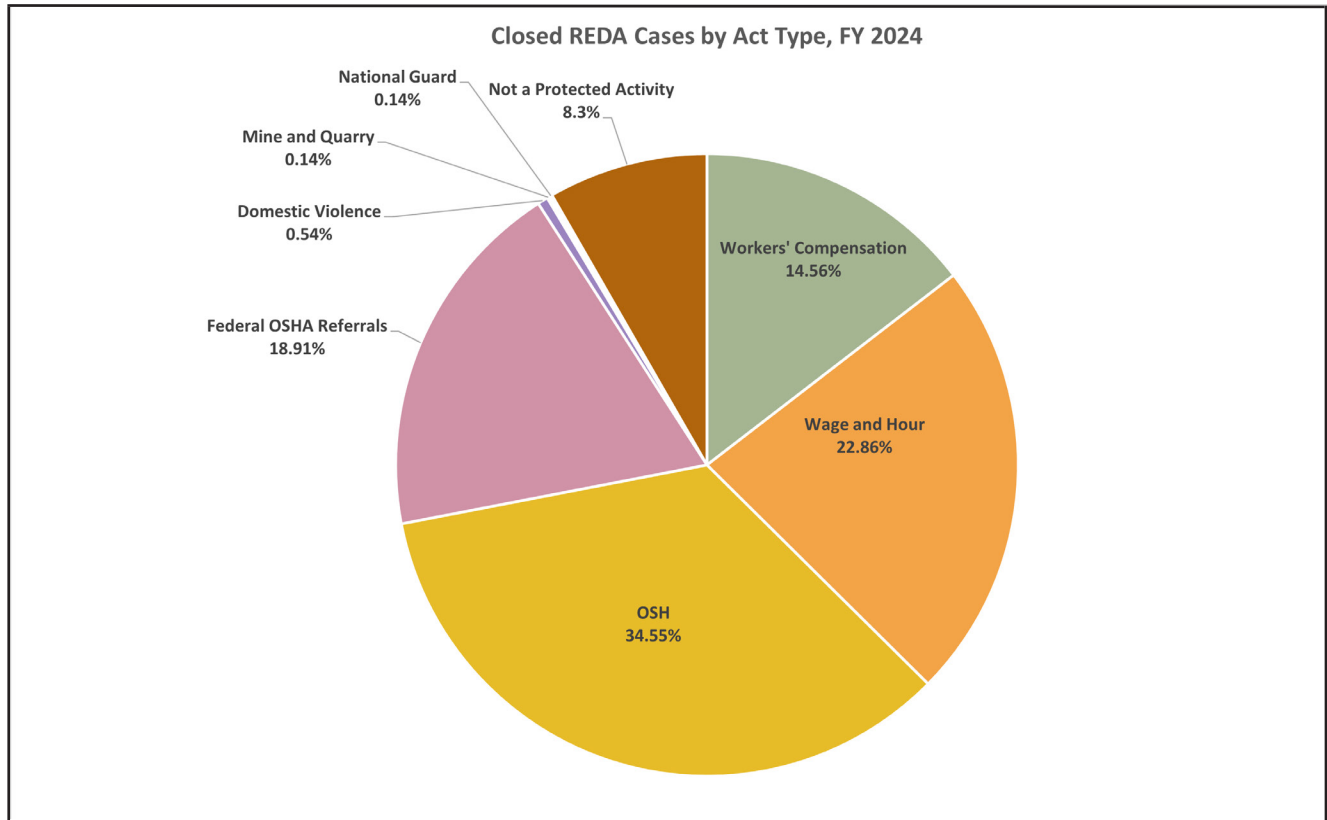


Figure 9

Closed REDA Cases by Act Type, FY 2024



Wage and Hour Bureau

The Wage and Hour Bureau administers the N.C. Wage and Hour Act, which includes the minimum wage, overtime pay and wage payment. This includes promised wages and wage benefits, such as vacation pay, sick leave, holiday pay, bonuses and commissions. The bureau ensures employers make, keep and preserve records of hours worked, wages paid and other conditions and practices of employment necessary for the enforcement of wage and hour laws.

The bureau issues youth employment certificates to protect the health and safety of minors and to preserve young workers’ rights. The bureau also enforces the statutes that regulate the licensure and reporting requirements of expungement, E-Verify, medical payments, private personnel services and the Controlled Substance Examination Regulation Act. The bureau is responsible for the department’s toll-free telephone system. Bureau staff consists of an administrator, a deputy administrator, two district supervisors, an administrative supervisor, an executive assistant, 15 investigators and eight case analysts.

Call Center

The bureau’s call center is staffed by eight case analysts who are the first point of contact to the department for most customers. Their primary job duties are to gather information relative to alleged violations of laws enforced by the bureau and to enter appropriate data into an electronic database that is used for assignment and tracking of complaints received. Additionally, they refer callers to other sections within the department, other state or federal agencies or civic/charitable organizations that may provide assistance.

Call centers are often characterized as “high volume” centers, as seen in Table 7. Three of the eight employees are bilingual and provide assistance to callers who speak Spanish. They also assist investigators and other departmental employees when communicating with Spanish speakers as the need arises.

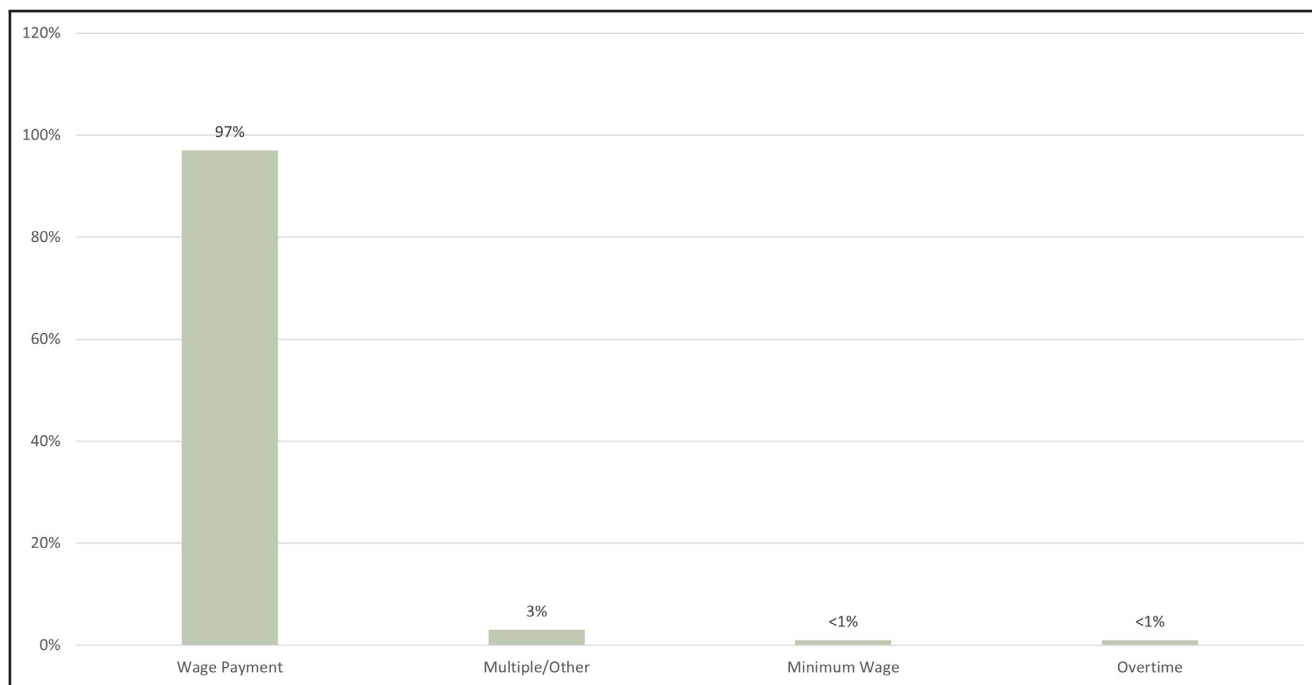
Table 7
Wage and Hour Call Center Activity, FY 2021 Through FY 2024

Fiscal Year	Calls Received	Calls Answered	Percent Answered
2021	34,180	34,076	99.7
2022	34,841	34,799	99.9
2023	28,487	28,473	99.9
2024	31,782	31,782	100

Wage and Hour Investigations

The majority of the bureau’s investigations stem from employee complaints. The bureau also conducts non-complaint investigations and industry-specific investigations to determine compliance with assigned laws.

The data in Figure 10 indicate that 97% of the investigations closed during FY 2024 were wage payment claims such as final paychecks, vacation/sick pay, bonuses, commissions and holiday pay. Minimum wage claims accounted for less than 1% of investigations closed; overtime accounted for less than 1%; and multiple claims, youth employment, recordkeeping, controlled substance, E-Verify and private personnel accounted for about 3%.

Figure 10**Types of Wage and Hour Investigations Closed, FY 2024**

More than 1,400 employees were paid an estimated \$1.7 million without the time and expense involved with litigation. Table 8 compares the bureau's performance in FY 2024 with previous years. The bureau started with 745 investigations open at the start of FY 2024 and 402 open at the end of the fiscal year.

Table 8**Wage and Hour Investigations Opened and Investigations Closed, FY 2021 Through FY 2024**

Fiscal Year	Investigations Opened	Investigations Closed
2021	2,099	2,574
2022	2,517	2,302
2023	2,816	2,812
2024	2,689	3,049

Youth Employment Certificates

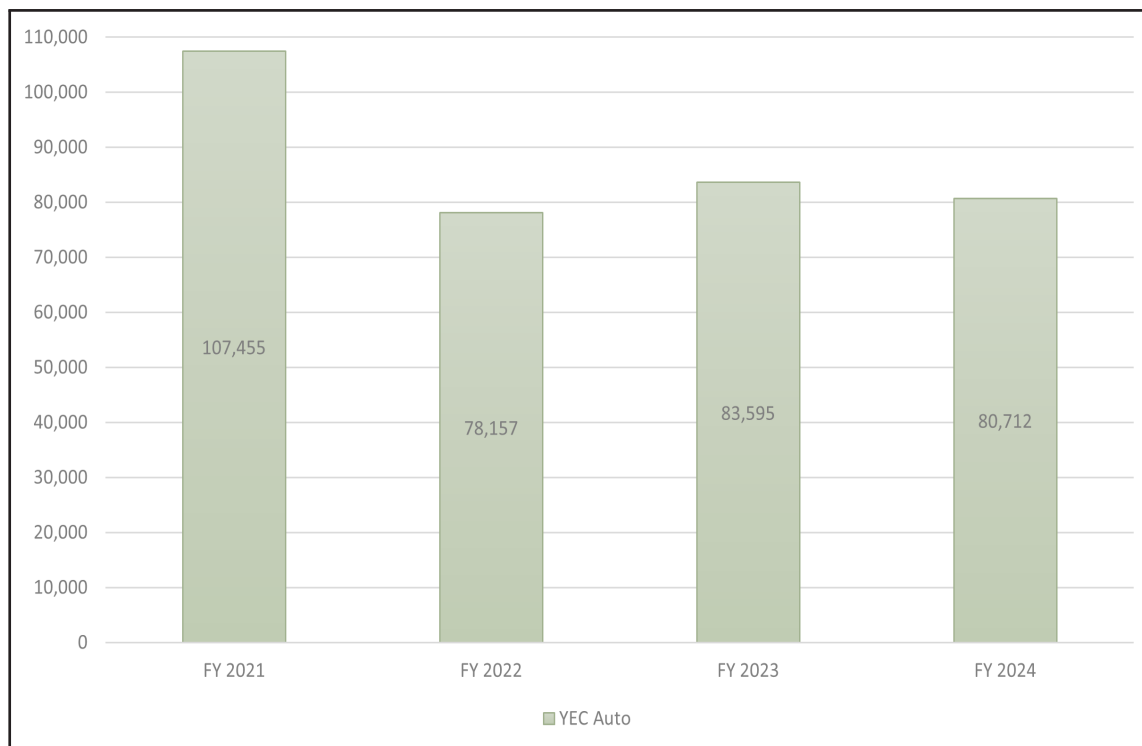
Protecting young workers from inappropriate or unsafe jobs is the cornerstone of the Youth Employment Certificate (YEC) Program. The timely review of certificates issued continues to be a key element in our efforts to protect young workers. The data in Figure 11 indicates that 80,714 youth employment certificates, also known as work permits, were issued in FY 2024, a 3% decrease from the previous fiscal year's total of 83,595. The total number of youth employment certificates issued may change year to year.

Of the certificates issued during FY 2024, 100% were issued online. Online issuance of certificates is the safest and most efficient method, as they provide immediate feedback to employers and applicants when the age and proposed job duties place the employer in jeopardy of violating state or federal child labor laws. As of Oct. 1, 2017, NCDOL's online method became the only option for obtaining youth employment certificates due to a legislative change. The online application is prominently displayed on the homepage of the NCDOL website.

In April 2021, the bureau implemented a three-step process for obtaining a youth employment certificate online. In order to receive a valid youth employment certificate, the youth, the youth's parent or guardian and the employer must enter their information through the online portal. Each party must individually and electronically sign the youth employment certificate prior to the youth's first day of work. This step-by-step process with electronic signature capabilities has been effective in streamlining youth employment certificates.

Figure 11

Youth Employment Certificates Issued, FY 2021 Through FY 2024



Notes

Fiscal years are designated by the year they end. The state fiscal year begins July 1 and ends June 30. State Fiscal Year 2024 thus began July 1, 2023, and ended June 30, 2024. The federal fiscal year begins Oct. 1 and ends Sept. 30. Federal Fiscal Year 2024 thus began Oct. 1, 2023, and ended Sept. 30, 2024.

All of the bureaus of the Standards and Inspections Division report data based on the state fiscal year. Most of the bureaus of the Occupational Safety and Health Division report data based on the federal fiscal year. The Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau is the exception. It uses the calendar year as the basis for reporting its data.

Within the Administration Division, the Financial Services Division uses the state fiscal year for reporting its data, while the remaining divisions report data on a calendar year basis. Some of the data are reported for the bureaus and divisions on a preliminary basis and are subject to change in subsequent annual reports.

Reporting Years for NCDOL Divisions and Bureaus

Calendar Year (Jan. 1 through Dec. 31)

Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau
Communications Division, including Publications
Governmental Affairs Division
Human Resources Division
Information Technology
Legal Affairs Division
Research and Policy

State Fiscal Year (July 1 through June 30)

Boiler Safety Bureau
Financial Services Division
Elevator and Amusement Device Bureau
Employment Discrimination Bureau
Mine and Quarry Bureau
Wage and Hour Bureau

Federal Fiscal Year (Oct. 1 through Sept. 30)

Compliance Bureaus – East and West
Consultative Services Bureau
Education, Training and Technical Assistance Bureau
Planning, Statistics and Information Management Bureau

Index of Acronyms

ADR - Alternative Dispute Resolution	NCDOL - N.C. Department of Labor
AFL-CIO - American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations	NFDL - Nonfatal Days Lost
AG - Attorney General's Office	NCGA - N.C. General Assembly
ASH - Agricultural Safety and Health	OAH - Office of Administrative Hearings
ASME - American Society of Mechanical Engineers	OCSS - OSH Construction Safety Specialist
BCSP - Board of Certified Safety Professionals	OE - OSHA Express
BLS - Bureau of Labor Statistics	OFIR - Occupational Fatality Inspection Review
CFOI - Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries	OHST - Occupational Health and Safety Technologist
CHMM - Certified Hazardous Materials Manager	OIS - Occupational Safety and Health Information System
CHST - Construction Health and Safety Technician	OLD - OSHA Legacy Data
CPI - Consumer Price Index	OSH - Occupational Safety and Health
CSP - Certified Safety Professional	OSHA - Occupational Safety and Health Administration
CY - Calendar Year	OSHR - Office of State Human Resources
EEODF - Equal Employment Opportunity Diversity Fundamentals	OSHSPA - Occupational Safety and Health State Plan Association
ETTA - Education, Training and Technical Assistance	OSTM - OSH Star Team Members
FFY - Federal Fiscal Year	PSIM - Planning, Statistics and Information Management
FLC - Farm Labor Contractor	REDA - Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Act
FY - Fiscal Year	REDB - Retaliatory Employment Discrimination Bureau
HB - House Bill	SB - Senate Bill
HR - Human Resources	SEP - Special Emphasis Program
IT - Information Technology	SHARP - Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program
LAD - Legal Affairs Division	SMP - Strategic Management Plan
LMAR - Labor Market Adjustment Rate	SOII - Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses
MESH - Manager of Environmental Safety and Health	SSTM - Special Star Team Member
MSHA - Mine Safety and Health Administration	TRC - Total Recordable Case Rate
NCAC - N.C. Administrative Code	USDOL - U.S. Department of Labor
	YEC - Youth Employment Certificate