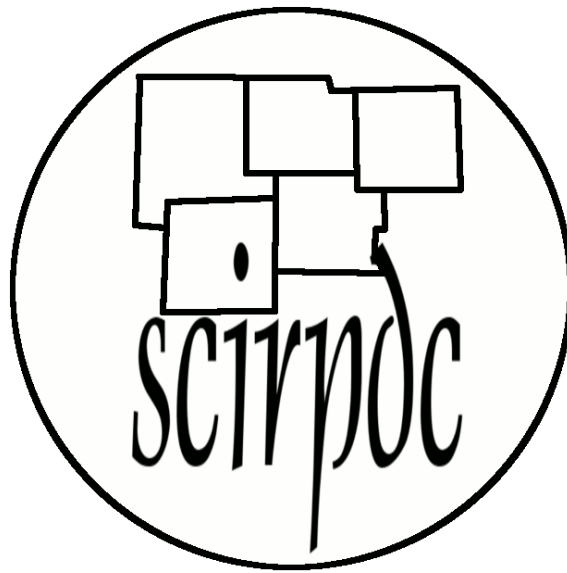


AUGUST 27, 2024



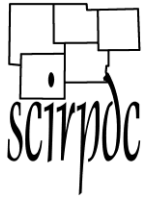
FY-2025 – FY-2029 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN

LUKE J. L. EASTIN
SOUTH CENTRAL ILLINOIS REGIONAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
120 SOUTH DELMAR AVENUE, SUITE A SALEM, ILLINOIS 62881

SCIRPDC AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN

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South Central Illinois Regional Planning & Development Commission

120 Delmar Avenue / Suite A - Salem, Illinois 62881-2000

Phone: (618) 548-4234 Fax: (618) 548-4236 www.scirpdc.com

Serving the Illinois Counties of Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper and Marion since 1972

**RESOLUTION ADOTPOING AN FY-2025 – FY-2029 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN
FOR THE SOUTH CENTRAL ILLINOIS REGIONAL PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT COMMISION**

WHEREAS, Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, along with state and federal regulations note that any recipient of federal funding assistance shall not be permitted , as a recipient of public funding, to deny any person the benefits and assistance normally provided on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age, etc.; and

WHEREAS, it is the Commission’s ongoing responsibility to ensure that no person is unreasonably denied access to: (1) the planning, grant writing, grant management, loan packaging and other technical assistance services routinely provided by the agency’s staff; (2) the direct and indirect low-interest, fixed-rate regional loan programs administered by the Commission; and (3) the periodically available employment opportunities on the staff of the regional organization for which they are well qualified; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Director has prepared an update to the Commission’s earlier Affirmative Action Plan for the regional organization for formal consideration and adoption by the Board of Commissioners.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the South Central Illinois Regional Planning and Development Commission supports the Commission’s existing policies as an Equal Opportunity Employer and Lender are hereby accepted and that the aforementioned document entitled FY-2025 – FY-2029 Affirmative Action Plan for the 60-month period ending September 30, 2029 is hereby adopted by the Board of Commissioners for immediate use and implementation by the Commission’s Executive Director

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS THE 27th DAY OF AUGUST, 2024 A.D.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Barry Adair, Chairman
SCIRPDC Board of Commissioners

Jessica Barker, Corporate Secretary
SCIRPDC Board of Commissioners

Yes Votes: _____
No Votes: _____
Absent: _____
Abstentions: _____

1 **Introduction**

2
3 Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended), Title IX of the Educational
4 Amendments of 1972 (as amended), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended),
5 and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 along with state and federal regulations note that any
6 recipient of federal funding assistance (such as the South Central Illinois Regional Planning and
7 Development Commission – SCIRPDC) shall not be permitted, as a recipient of public funding, to
8 deny any person the benefits and assistance normally provided on the basis of race, color, national
9 origin, sex, disability or age, etc.

10
11 As such, it is the regional organization’s ongoing responsibility to ensure than no person is
12 reasonably denied access to: (1) the planning, grant writing, grant management, loan packaging
13 and other technical assistance services routinely provided by the agency’s staff; (2) the direct and
14 indirect low-interest, fixed-rate regional loan programs administered by the Commission; and/or
15 (3) the periodically available employment opportunities on the staff of the regional organization
16 for which they are well qualified. In addition, under certain circumstances, the Commission may
17 find it necessary and prudent to ensure that the recipients (benefitting parties) of such services,
18 staff assistance and financial resources also comply with the non-discrimination requirements and
19 civil rights principals cited above.

20 **Description of Commission**

21
22
23 SCIRPDC was established in October of 1972 by the joint action of Effingham, Fayette, and Marion
24 Counties utilizing the provisions of the Illinois Planning Act, Chapter 34 <3001, et seq. of the
25 Illinois Revised Statutes (now known as Chapter 55, Division 5, Section 14001 of the Illinois
26 Compiled Statutes). In the summer of 1997, the adjacent rural counties of Clay and Jasper were
27 officially added to the Commission’s jurisdiction. After over 50 years of service, the Commission
28 continues to provide four basic types of professional services to the area’s public and private
29 sector leadership including: (1) planning assistance to local governments; (2) technical staff
30 assistance; (3) grant writing and management services; and (4) business and community
31 development financing services. Such professional services are delivered by the regional
32 organization’s professional staff, occasional part-time employees, and/or consultants. The
33 Commission’s place of business continues to be 120 South Delmar Avenue, Suite A, Salem, Illinois
34 62881-2000.

35
36 The aforementioned services delivered by the Commission are primarily provided to constituents
37 within the Illinois counties of Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper and Marion. However, on occasion,
38 the regional organization enters into contractual agreements which result in the provision of
39 services for a larger service jurisdiction (e.g., staff support services for human services
40 transportation planning for local officials and public transit service providers within a 39-county
41 area in Southern and South Central Illinois, or staff support services for a partnership involving
42 nearby counties and communities outside of the SCIRPDC five-county jurisdiction).

1 In addition to being recognized as a regional planning commission, the regional not-for-profit
2 organization also functions as: (1) an EDA-recognized Economic Development District; (2) an
3 Intermediary Lender for USDA's Rural Development division; and (3) a Illinois-recognized Human
4 Services Transportation Planning organization for state and federally-assisted public transit
5 projects. During the 2010 fiscal period, the regional organization was placed under contract by
6 the State of Illinois, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to actually
7 market, educate local applicants, intake, review and select applicants and projects funded by
8 federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG's) overseen by the US
9 Department of Energy (DOE).

10
11 The Commission's affairs are overseen by a 31-member Board of Commissioners which includes
12 six (6) members from each of the participating five (5) counties plus the agency's board-appointed
13 Executive Director. This same governing body retains the ultimate approval authority for all official
14 or advisory actions taken by the regional organization. A ten-member Executive Committee is
15 empowered to act for the full governing body between regular business meetings which are held
16 on the last Tuesday of each month. Routine daily management of the agency's business affairs is
17 assured through the governing body's employment of a full time Executive Director and other
18 support staff.

20 **SCIRPDC Region**

21
22 As noted previously, the SCIRPDC region and jurisdiction is comprised of the predominantly rural
23 counties of Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper and Marion. Interstate 70 bisects the northern portion
24 of the five-county area from the remaining land area. However, is no appreciable distinction in
25 the physical or cultural development of the communities or counties comprising each sector of
26 the five-county region. collectively represent a land mass of nearly 2,750 square miles - an area
27 2.5 times the size of the State of Rhode Island and 1.5 times the size of Delaware. The five-county
28 District includes forty-four (44) incorporated municipalities, the majority of which are aligned in
29 close proximity to interstates 57 and 70 or one of several major state or federal routes which
30 provide intra state and/or interstate linkages.

32 **Regional Population Trend**

33
34 Between 1950 and 1960 the five-county service jurisdiction lost around 6,000 residents and then
35 stabilized through 1970 at approximately 112,000 individuals. Between 1970 and 1980 the region
36 gained over 13,000 residents, thereby offsetting two-thirds of the losses sustained during the
37 preceding three decades. The prosperity experienced within the Economic Development District
38 during the 1970's can generally be attributed to a significant increase in the level of new
39 commercial and industrial investments within the five-county area which were at least in part
40 attributable to the completion of Interstate 57 and Interstate 70 and the aggressive efforts of local
41 economic development officials. The table below illustrates the region's population trends from
42 1950-2020.

Table 1: Population Trends

County	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Clay	17,445	15,815	14,735	15,283	14,460	14,560	13,815	13,288
Effingham	21,675	23,107	24,608	30,944	31,704	34,264	34,242	34,668
Fayette	24,582	21,946	20,752	22,167	20,893	21,802	22,140	21,488
Jasper	12,266	11,346	10,741	11,318	10,609	10,117	9,698	9,287
Marion	41,700	39,349	38,989	43,523	41,561	41,691	39,437	37,729
Region	119,618	113,523	111,795	125,215	121,217	124,434	119,332	116,460

In sharp contrast, the 1990 census of population documented that a third of the population gains realized during the 1970's were relinquished by the five-county area during the 1980's. Specifically, the 1990 census revealed that the region experienced a population out migration trend reflecting the loss of just over 4,000 residents. In 2000, the census revealed that the population had made modest increases of approximately 3,200 people. From 2000-2020 data reveals another population decline of 7,974 people in 2020.

As depicted in the following table, based upon 2020 estimates prepared by the US Census Bureau, the five-county South Central Region comprised of the Illinois counties of Clay, Effingham Fayette, Jasper and Marion respectively, contain some 116,460 residents of which 58,144 were females leaving some 58,316 male residents.

Table 2: Population by Sex (2020)

County	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Total
Clay	6,591	50%	6,697	50%	13,288
Effingham	17,230	50%	17,438	50%	34,668
Fayette	11,346	53%	10,142	47%	21,488
Jasper	4,662	50%	4,625	50%	9,287
Marion	18,487	49%	19,242	51%	37,729
Region	58,316	50%	58,144	50%	116,460

As noted by the table below, the 2020 Decennial Census illustrates that the large majority of the region's population, some 107,307 residents were Caucasians, which equates to 92% of the population.

Table 3: Population by Race (2020)

County	Caucasian	Percent	Non-White	Percent	Total
Clay	12,524	94%	764	6%	13,288
Effingham	32,597	94%	2,071	6%	34,668
Fayette	19,778	92%	1,710	8%	21,488
Jasper	8,968	97%	319	3%	9,287
Marion	33,440	89%	4,289	11%	37,729
Region	107,307	92%	9,153	8%	116,460

Regional Labor Force

According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security, in 2023, the total labor force of the SCIRPDC region included 56,771 residents. Of those individuals within the labor force, 54,336 were considered employed and 2,435 were considered unemployed. The overall unemployment rate across the region in 2023 was 4.46. The table below illustrates the 2023 labor force data county by county.

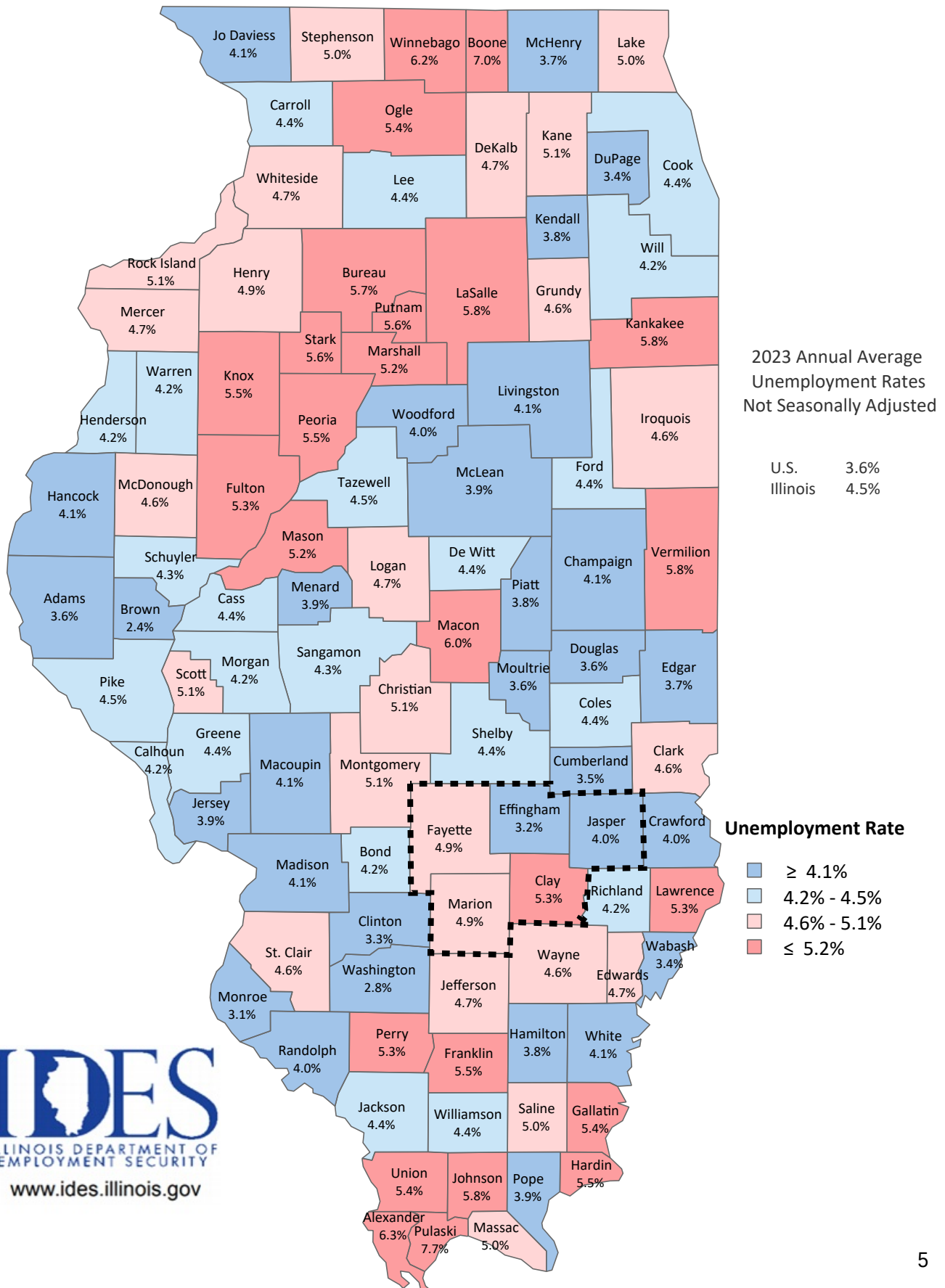
Table 4: Labor Force (2023)

County	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
Clay	5,765	5,458	307	5.3
Effingham	19,570	18,935	635	3.2
Fayette	9,723	9,247	476	4.9
Jasper	4,841	4,646	195	4.0
Marion	16,872	16,050	822	4.9
Region	56,771	54,336	2,435	4.46

Illinois Unemployment Rate by County

Annual Average 2023 - Not Seasonally Adjusted

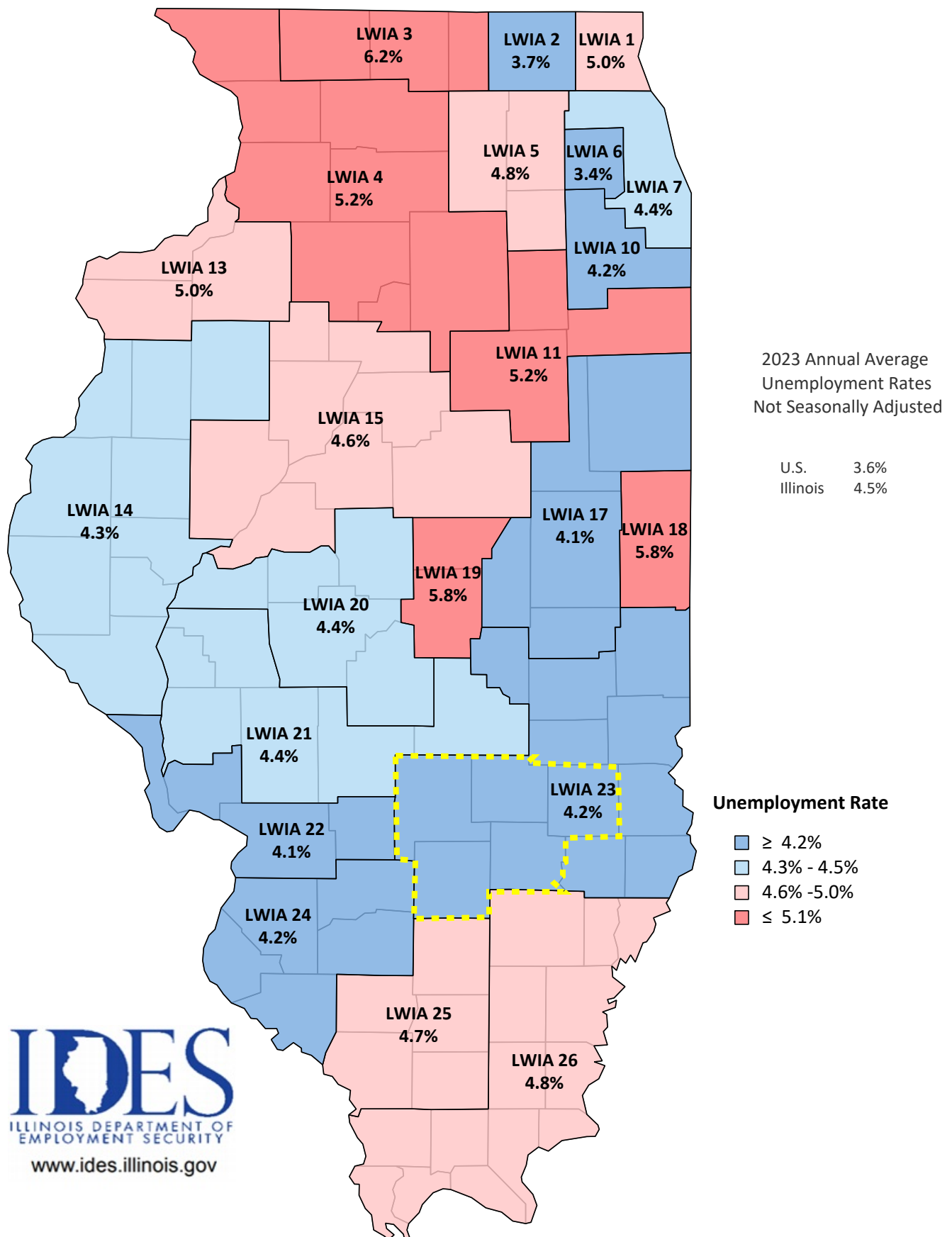
IL Dept. of Employment Security, Economic Information & Analysis Division



Illinois Unemployment Rate by Local Workforce Innovation Area

Annual Average 2023 - Not Seasonally Adjusted

IL Dept. of Employment Security, Economic Information & Analysis Division



SCIRPDC Personnel & Management

Due to the relatively small size of the South Central Illinois Regional Planning & Development Commission, the regional organization cannot justify the expense associated with a full-time Personnel Manager. Accordingly, the recruitment for, hiring, promotion and dismissal is generally accomplished through its Executive Director in accordance with the agency's Personnel Policies. Such policies are updated regularly by the Commission's administrative staff and formally adopted by the 31- member Board of Commissioners.

In accordance with its responsibilities to operate as an equal opportunity employer, the Commission's recruitment process is initiated by the Executive Director through the placement of an advertisement for employment in either local news media platforms within the five-county SCIRPDC region or through online job matching and hiring websites. Such advertisements, whether issued as hard copy or electronic text, always include a statement indicating that the agency is an equal opportunity employer. This same statement also appears at the bottom of the Commission's general stationery as well.

In addition, the Commission routinely also issues information regarding the existence of a staff vacancy or new staff position to regional workforce development centers and the two community action agencies (i.e., CEFS Economic Opportunity Corporation, and BCMW Community Services, Inc.) which generally serve the areas economically disadvantaged and minority residents, etc. On occasion, the regional organization will also share such information for posting with the Illinois Association of Regional Council (ILARC) and/or the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) in the hope that such efforts might identify a candidate which has already gained on the job experience that could prove to be helpful to the Commission in filling the position.

As noted in earlier sections of this Affirmative Action Plan, the South Central Illinois Regional Planning & Development Commission recognizes its responsibilities to its state and federal funding agencies and the region it serves to ascribe to a policy of providing equal employment opportunity in a fashion that ensures that no person is reasonably denied access to (1) the planning, grant writing, grant management, loan packaging and other technical assistance services routinely provided by the agency's staff; (2) the direct and indirect low-interest, fixed-rate regional loan programs administered by the Commission; and/or (3) the periodically available employment opportunities on the staff of the regional organization for which they are well qualified.

SCIRPDC utilizes a uniform application for employment for all job openings, which is accompanied by a specific job description for staff vacancies. A copy of this uniform employment application is included within this Affirmative Action Policy as an attachment.

The Commission will make a reasonable effort to ensure that its advertisements for employment are issued sufficiently far enough in advance of the planned hiring date that all interested candidates (regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age) are afforded an

1 opportunity to be fairly considered. Once the suspense date arrives for applying for employment
2 consideration, no further applications will be considered by the Commission. Typically, the best
3 qualified two or three candidates are contacted by telephone or e-mail to ensure that they are
4 still seeking employment and interested in the Commission as a potential employer. If they are
5 still interested, a specific time for a personal on-site interview with the Executive Director (and in
6 some instances other affected staff members) will be quickly arranged.

7
8 The Commission's offices located at 120 South Delmar Avenue (Suite A) in Salem, Illinois are in
9 compliance with ADA accessibility standards and the regional organization is prepared to make
10 reasonable accommodations for otherwise qualified candidates with physical disabilities (i.e.,
11 sight or hearing impairments, confinement to a wheel chair, etc.).

12
13 Following all such personal interviews and a check of the references of the best qualified
14 candidate, a written offer of employment with the Commission will be extended to the chosen
15 individual by the Executive Director. The written offer of employment will confirm all aspects of
16 the working agreement by and between the Commission and the new employee. The candidate
17 selected will also be provided with a current copy of the agency's Personnel Policy Manual which
18 in large part will govern the agency's expectations of the new employee.

19 20 **SCIRPDC Affirmative Action Goals**

21
22 As of July 2024, the Commission has a staff of six full time employees through which planning,
23 technical assistance, grant writing and management and loan packaging services are delivered to
24 the local governments and businesses within Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper and Marion County,
25 Illinois. Generally speaking, the size of the regional organization's staff is governed by a variety of
26 factors including:

- 27
- 28 • the specific needs of the area's member local governments and businesses;
- 29 • the availability of financial resources to support personnel to address such needs;
- 30 • the ability of existing staff members to assume such new responsibilities; and
- 31 • the approval of the 31-member Board of Commissioners.
- 32

33 Given the continued financial constraints confronting both state and local governments, it would
34 be optimistic to presume that the current size of the Commission's staff would increase
35 appreciably in the near future covered by this Affirmative Action Plan. However, it is possible that
36 staff vacancies may be created through attrition, retirement and dismissals, etc. The
37 Commission's current policies for filling any future staff vacancies or new staff positions will
38 continue to give preferential consideration to the internal promotion of existing proven, well
39 qualified employees. The chart on the following page provides an overview of the regional
40 organization's current workforce of as of July 2024.

Table 5: Staffing Chart (2024)

Staff Position	Male	Female	Minority*
Executive Director	1		1
ED Planner/Loan Mgr.		1	
Economic Dev. Planner	1		1
Office Mgr./Bookkeeper		1	
HSTP Coordinator		1	
Assistant HSTP Coordinator		1	
Total	2	4	2

*Staff member identifies as non-white or more than one race

As noted in the Staffing Chart above, of the six full-time staff at SCIRPDC, two employees are male, four employees are female and two employees are considered part of a minority group. Furthermore, currently 33% of the staff are male, 67% of the staff is female, and 33% of the staff is considered part of a minority group.

The Commission's affirmative action goals for FY-2025 through FY-2029 is to maintain the current reasonable balance between male and female staff members and if possible, recruit qualified minority candidates to fill any staff vacancies or new staff positions that may evolve during the five-year period covered by this updated Affirmative Action Plan. To accomplish these modest affirmative hiring goals, the Commission will continue its present practice of posting its equal employment opportunity message in both hard copy and electronic employment opportunity notices at a strategic location within the Commission's offices in Salem, Illinois. In addition, the Commission will continue to include notifications of employment opportunities, and its policy of functioning as an equal opportunity employer in all recruitment materials.

SCIRPDC 2024

Updated: July 2024

Approved by Board of Commissioners:
August 27, 2024