

Boomerang Re-Opens the Door to Employment for State Retirees

California state government is about to experience its largest wave of retiring state employees in history. According to the State Personnel Board, 70,000 or 34 percent of state employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years. When workers retire, they take valuable knowledge and experience with them. This can result in temporary staff shortages and potential delays in services and processes.

Over the past several years, state government has leveraged its ability to hire skilled, knowledgeable temporary workers through the retired annuitant hiring process. Retired annuitants (RAs) are allowed to work up to nine months per year at or below the classification level at which they retired.¹ Currently, there are several thousand RAs working in various state departments. At this point, hiring RAs is primarily a paper-driven process.

In March 2007, recognizing the need to streamline the RA hiring process, the State and Consumer Services Agency established a team to develop an online service to streamline and simplify the retired annuitant hiring process. The team includes representatives from interested departments within the State and Consumer Services Agency. This effort is one of many under development to address the impact on state government due to the retirement of the baby boomer generation.

The online solution that the project team is developing is called "Boomerang, State of California Retirees Job Connection." <https://boomerang.ca.gov/boomerang/>

Boomerang Program Implementation

On September 5, Phase I will be implemented with state department participation limited to the departments under the State and Consumer Services Agency. Phase I implementation allows State retirees to provide information online regarding their employment history, education, skills, and employment goals. The information will be stored on a secure database. State retirees will be able to add, edit, and delete their information via a secure logon and password combination.

On November 1, Phase 2 will be implemented. Phase 2 allows participating state department staff the ability to search for potential employees to fill job openings. Hiring staff will be able to contact the potential employees directly via email or phone. Boomerang will be open to all eligible state retirees, regardless of the department or agency that they worked for. By January 2008, the program will be expanded to include all state departments.

¹ A retired state employee may be appointed to a temporary position if they meet the requirements of Government Code Sections 21152 or 21153. These Government Code Sections, which are under the jurisdiction of CalPERS, allow any employee who is retired from CalPERS to be temporarily employed under specified conditions and still receive retirement benefits. A retired annuitant is allowed to work a maximum of 960 hours per fiscal year.