



**GEORGIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

# Land Protection Branch Update

**Holly Nelson**  
**Hazardous Waste Program Manager**

**A&WMA**  
**September 2023**



# LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

- **Rick Dunn left EPD to become Office of Planning and Budget Director on 7/1**
- **David Dove, Interim Director until 8/15**
- **Jeff Cown, Former Land Branch Chief, and most recently State Parks Director, back as EPD Director starting 8/16**





# LAND PROTECTION BRANCH ORGANIZATION

Chuck Mueller, Chief

Risk Assessment

NPL Unit

Amy Potter, Risk Assessment

Sarah Visser, Assistant Chief

William Cook, Solid Waste Management

Lena Chambless, Recovered Materials and Abatement

Jay Kemberling, Underground Storage Tanks

Jim McNamara, Hazardous Waste Corrective Action

Holly Nelson, Hazardous Waste Management

Jason Metzger, Response and Remediation

MSW & Industrial Landfills

Waste Reduction

Inspections and Enforcement

RCRA Remediation

RCRA Permitted Facilities

HSI and Abandoned Sites

Environmental Monitoring

Scrap Tire Compliance

Private Party Cleanups

HW Generators

HSRA Remediation

Surface Mining

Lead and Asbestos

EPD Managed Cleanups

DOD Facilities

Voluntary Remediation and Brownfields



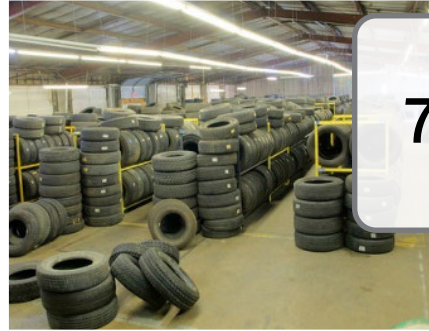
# LAND PROTECTION BRANCH: BY THE NUMBERS

Underground Storage Tanks



29,579

Scrap Tire Generators



7,539

Hazardous Waste Handlers



5,363

Licensed Lead Paint Firms



1,013

Surface Mining Permits



752

Hazardous Sites Inventory



474



# LAND PROTECTION BRANCH: BY THE NUMBERS

Active Brownfields Projects



671

Scrap Tire Piles in Enforcement



70

RCRA Permitted Facilities



54

NPL Sites



17

Active, Permitted Landfills



188



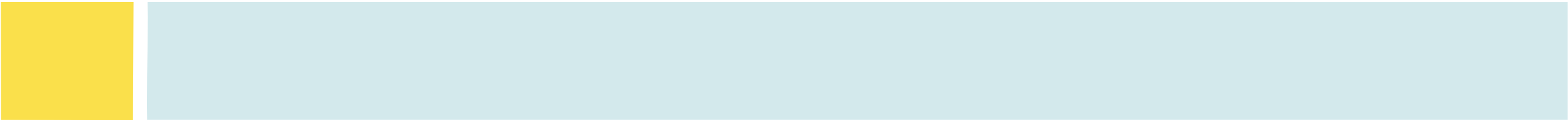
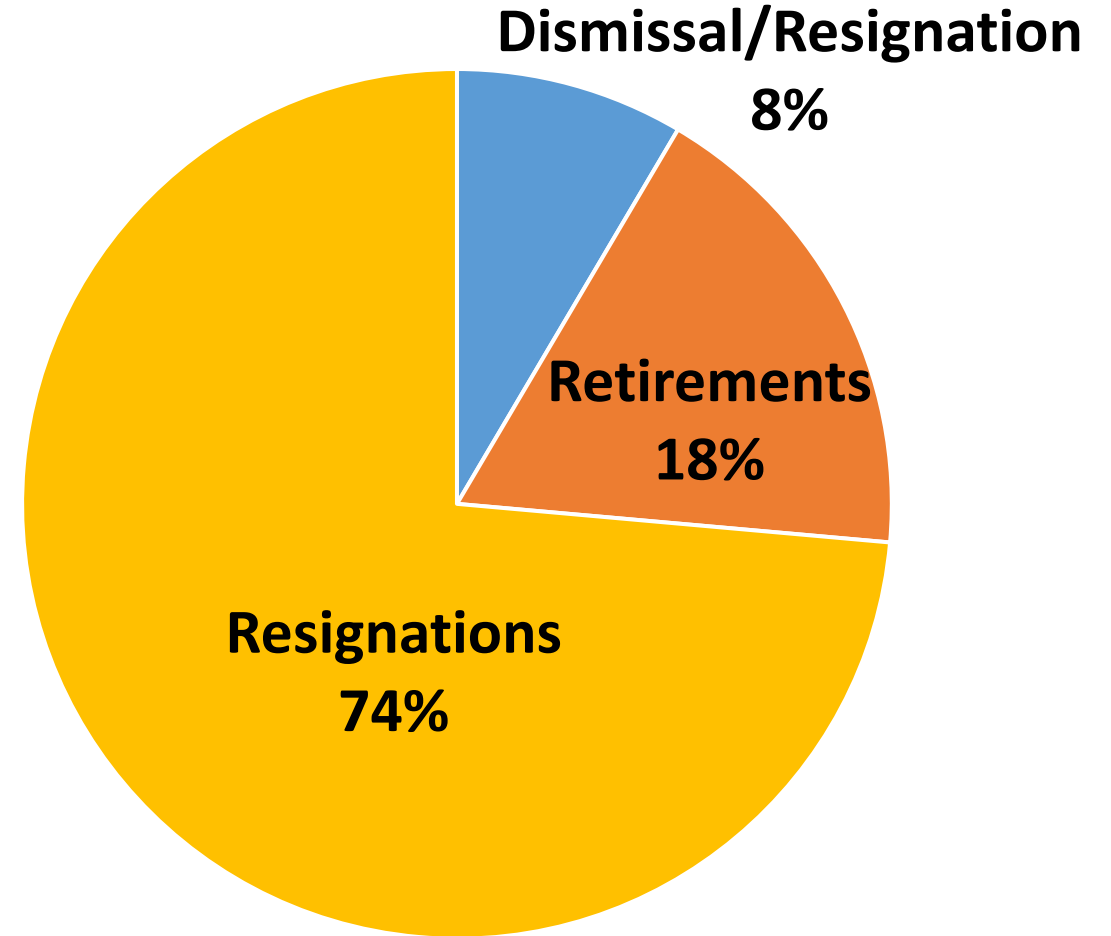
## **BRANCH CHALLENGES**

- **In many programs, the less complex sites have been addressed. This leaves the sites with higher levels of complexity that take longer and cost more to cleanup.**
- **Increasing EPA expectations without additional funding or clear metrics**
  - **Environmental Justice**
  - **Coal Combustion Residuals**
  - **Increased inspection and enforcement involvement**



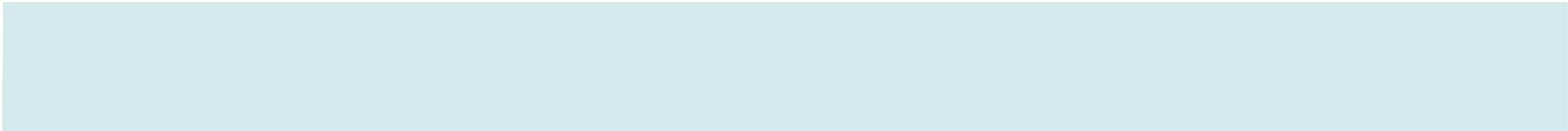
# CHALLENGE #1 - STAFF RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

- **189 Land Branch Employees**
- **109 Positions Turned Over Since 7/1/19**
- **57% Turnover**





# MAJOR PRIORITIES







# COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUALS (CCR) PERMITS

- 9 Closure by Removal Permits Issued
- 1 Closure in Place Permits Issued
- 7 Landfill Permits

January 2022, EPA issued a new interpretation of infiltration. This policy change has impacted the issuance of Closure in Place Permits.

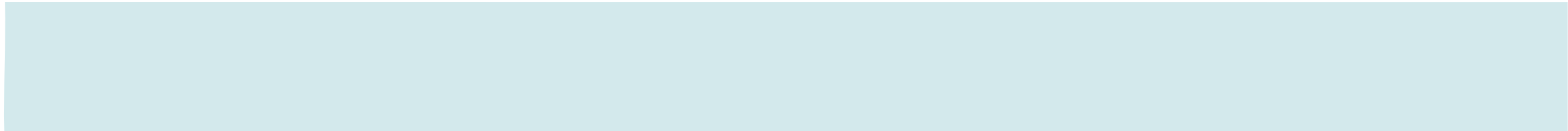
We're working with EPA to ensure all issued permits will comply with the rules and be protective of human health and the environment.

<https://epd.georgia.gov/ccr-permits>



# FINANCING HAZARDOUS WASTE & SOLID WASTE

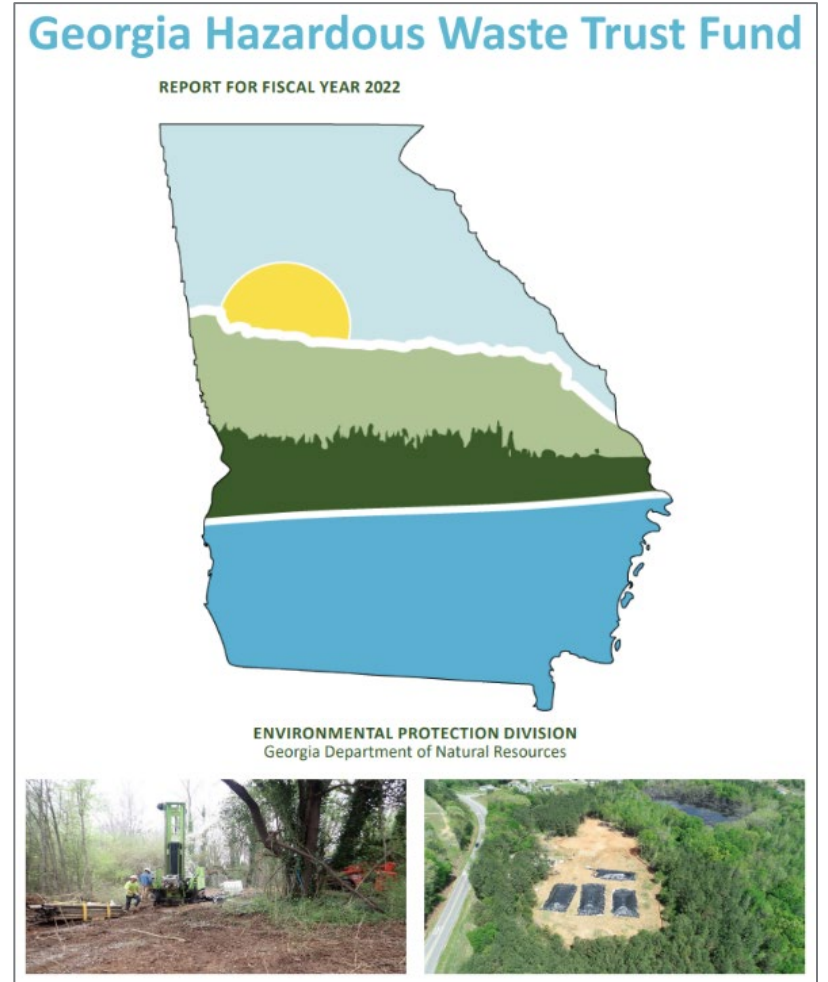
- **Constitutional amendment and House Bill 511 passed, dedicating fees.**
- **Effective July 1, 2022**
- **Planning for increased funding**
  - **Staffing**
  - **New programs consistent with authorized uses**





# HAZARDOUS WASTE TRUST FUND

- Established in 1992
- Fees collected from generators of hazardous waste, solid waste tipping fees and penalties
- Abandoned site cleanup
- Reimburse local governments for old, leaking landfills
- Program Ops/Oversight

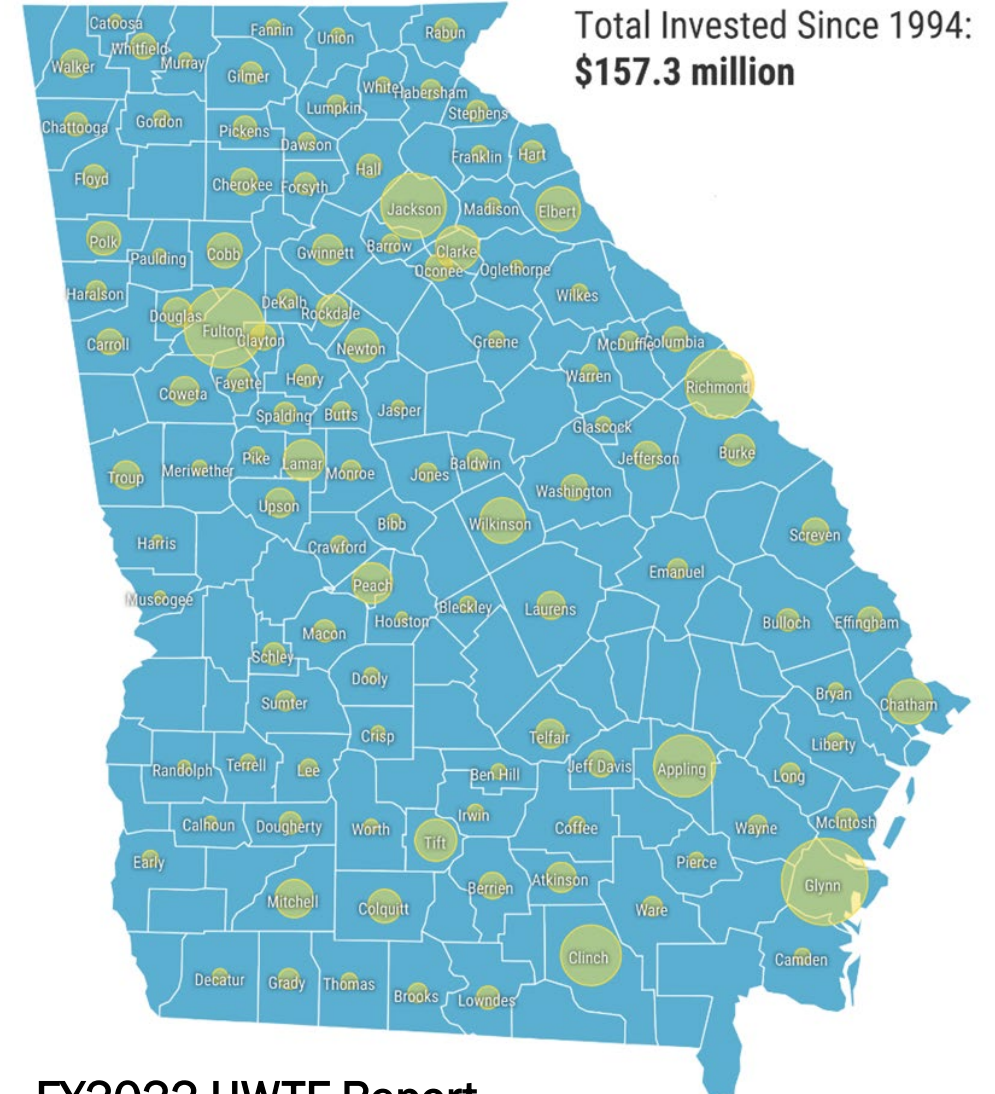


Annual Reports: <https://epd.georgia.gov/hazardous-waste-trust-fund>



# HAZARDOUS SITE INVENTORY

- Since 1994, the Fund has identified **916** hazardous sites.
- **447** have been removed after meeting appropriate environmental standards or emergency action.
- **469 (51%)** remain on the inventory. **64** are classified as abandoned and will need future state funds to cleanup.





# SOLID WASTE TRUST FUND

- Established in 1990, funds come from a fee on each new tire sold
- The responsibility for collecting and remitting the \$1 fee shifted from the retailer to the distributor effective July 1, 2023.
- Funds scrap tire management, scrap tire cleanups, abandoned landfills, emergencies at solid waste facilities, and grants to public entities.





# SOLID WASTE TRUST FUND GRANT PROGRAM

**Tire Products Grant (\$1 million)** - New for FY24, will fund the direct costs of incorporating scrap tire-derived products into projects that would otherwise use new or virgin materials, or for research projects to support scrap tire innovation.

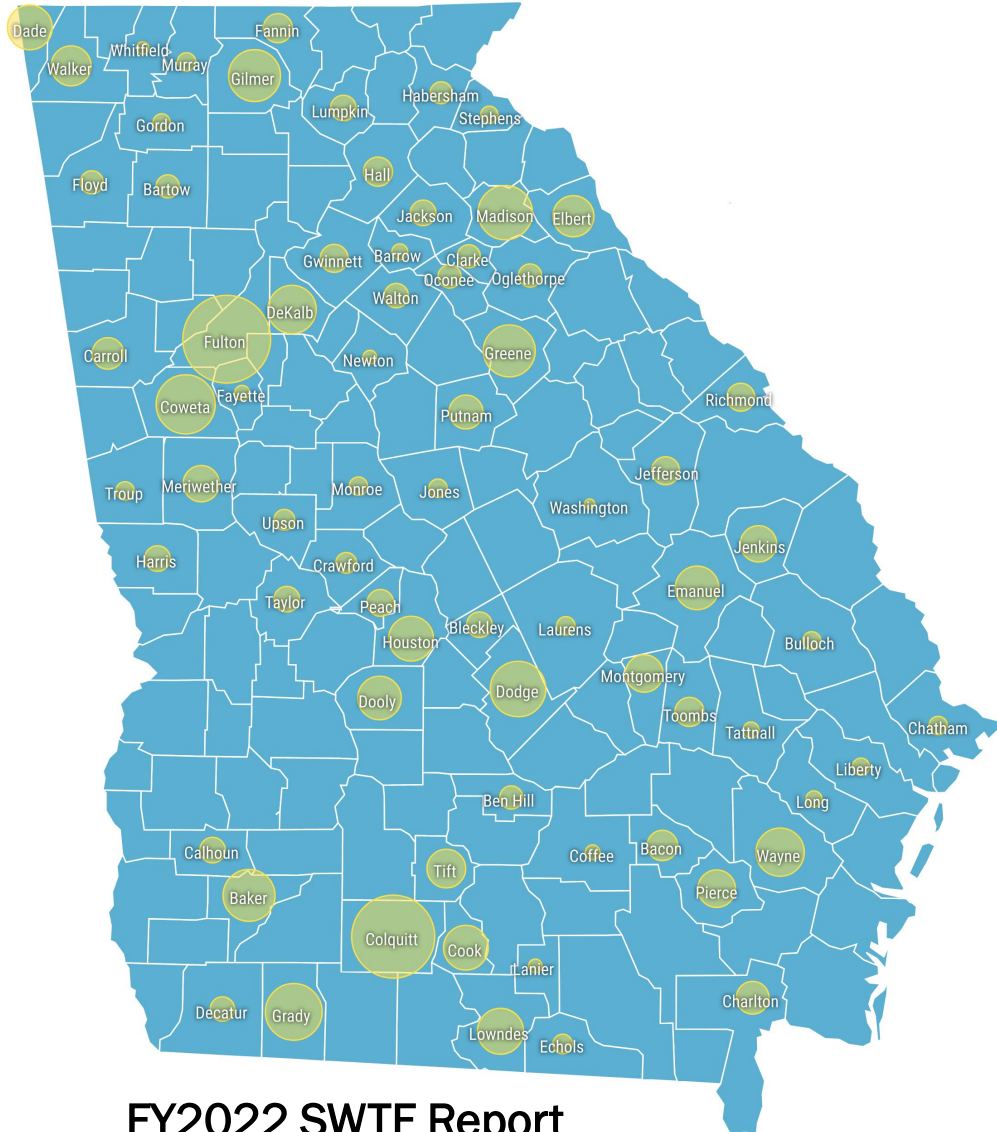
**Recycling and Waste Diversion Grant Program (\$2 million)** - Funds projects to reduce solid waste, recover valuable materials, support manufacturing, and encourage innovation. Awarded \$2.7M to 21 projects in FY23.

**Local Government Scrap Tire Abatement Reimbursement (\$500k)** - Reimburses local governments for the direct costs associated with recycling tires abated in their communities. This program is non-competitive and funds are available year round.

<https://epd.georgia.gov/solid-waste-trust-fund-grant-program>



# LOCAL GOVERNMENT REIMBURSEMENTS



FY2022 SWTF Report

Funding available for:

- Right of Way Cleanups
- Tire Dump Cleanups
- Amnesty Days

Since 2016 the program has reimbursed local governments more than **\$2.3 million** to remove the equivalent of **911,459** passenger tires!

Annual Reports:

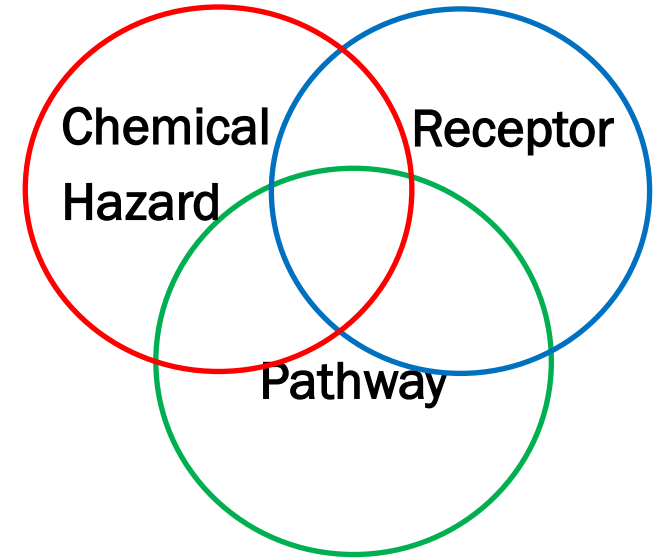
<https://epd.georgia.gov/outreach/publications>



# HAZARDOUS WASTE GUIDANCE

## Georgia Risk Assessment Guidance

- Technical Advisory Committee meeting, discussing and working on drafting
- Focus is on streamlining the process, improving consistency across programs, and addressing chemical specific issues
- Goal is to have a draft for broader stakeholder input by Q1 2024







# CAREERS AT EPD

- Work-life Balance
- Fulfilling and rewarding work
- Annual and sick leave accrual
- 13 Holidays per year
- Primarily work from home
- Alternative work schedules
- Minimal travel and in-state
- Variety of Healthcare Plans
- Combined Pension / 401K match



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<https://careers.Georgia.gov>



# QUESTIONS?

