



Emerging Leaders and Senior Leaders Institutes

ELI and SLI Application Process Guide and Program Information

The [Emerging Leaders Institute \(ELI\)](#) and [Senior Leadership Institute \(SLI\)](#) support personal and professional development for those on-the-rise in state service. The selection process is highly competitive for each of these programs – be sure to fill out your application with honesty and care.

If you have any questions about either program or the application process, contact your Human Resources and/or Training and Development Teams. You can also reach out to [Enterprise Talent Development \(ETD\)](#).

The Process for Program Applicants

1. **Choose a program.** Review the ELI and SLI program details, applicant qualifications, and course schedule to determine which leadership path is right for you. [Details can be found on the ETD website.](#)
2. **Request an application.** Ask your training and development team and/or agency's HR department for a program application; they will provide you with a fillable PDF. You may be required to provide documentation outside of the PDF application (such as proof of completed annual training or work examples) – work with your supervisor and/or HR teams to ensure you understand your agency's requirements, process, and due date.
3. **Complete and submit your application.** Review application prompts carefully to ensure a thoughtful response. Complete and submit your application by your agency's due date (typically around June 1.) ELI applicants must provide a signed letter of support from their supervisor and signed letter of approval from their Human Resources director. SLI applicants must provide a signed letter of recommendation from their deputy commissioner, assistant commissioner, commissioner, or similar senior leadership role. All letters for either program must be written on agency letter head. Your application cannot be submitted without a recommendation letter(s).
4. **Have patience.** Hundreds of state agency employees apply to the ELI and SLI programs each year. Your application will be seen by up to two separate review committees. It can take a few weeks for each committee to review applications. Whether or not you are accepted into the program, you will be notified in August 2026.



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Program Information

Emerging Leaders Institute (ELI)

This seven-month program builds critical leadership competencies for state government. Participants will gain a deeper knowledge of public sector leadership, advance their own individual leadership effectiveness, and develop important skills, such as strategic thinking.

Senior Leadership Institute (SLI)

This four-month program is delivered in partnership with the University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs. It prepares experienced managers and directors for higher leadership roles and equips them with tools to make an impact in today's complex and challenging environment.

[Visit the ETD website](#) for full details on leadership programs and other skills development opportunities.