

Paid by Conn., living elsewhere

Hundreds of state employees work remotely from outside the state

By Bill Cummings
STAFF WRITER

A top official at Connecticut's Office of Policy and Management earned over \$140,000 last year while — with the state's blessing — mostly working remotely from his home in Philadelphia.

The entire staff of the Connecticut Paid Leave Authority, which administrates the state's medical leave insurance program, works remotely because the department does not have a centralized office. While most

work from within Connecticut, others are scattered between Texas and Maine.

Other state workers are authorized to report remotely to their supervisors from beyond the Nutmeg State, including from Texas, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Washington D.C, New Hampshire and Delaware. The vast majority of out-of-state remote workers live in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New York State.

A CT Insider review found at least 248 Connecticut state employees are permitted to work

remotely from another state, with about two dozen workers listing addresses in states beyond Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New York State, under a telework policy, borne out of the need for remote work during the COVID pandemic, which covers all aspects of state government, except for hazardous duty roles, such as correction officers and other law enforcement.

In all, 11,514 executive branch state employees were allowed to work remotely — the vast majority from within the confines of Connecticut — for at least some part of their pay period this year, according to figures provided by state officials. The

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Patrick Sikes/For Hearst Connecticut Media

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'MORE balanced'



Christian Abraham/Hearst Connecticut Media

Stamford QB Jack Healy in action against St. Joseph in Trumbull on Oct. 5, 2024.

FCIAC football rolls out new competitively matched schedules

By Scott Ericson
STAFF WRITER

For decades, Friday nights and Saturday afternoons in FCIAC high school football told two very different stories, with some of the state's most high-profile powerhouse programs rolling to lopsided wins on one side and struggling teams simply trying to keep up on the other.

Now, for the first time, the league is stepping into a new era with competitively balanced schedules designed to narrow that gap.

It is an experiment that mirrors moves made by other conferences across Connecticut. This fall will be the first test of whether a more even playing field can be found in Fairfield

FCIAC continues on A4



Your guide to the season, plus a look at the next generation of top state coaches and the top teams in the FCIAC, SWC and SCC



Mark Zaretsky/Hearst Connecticut Media

Banners welcome students on the first day of school Aug. 25 at Edmonds Cofield Preparatory Academy for Young Men, a new charter school in New Haven.

Charter school footprint grows

State has 22, with several more planned

By Crystal Elescano
STAFF WRITER

Connecticut has 22 charter schools in operation, representing a small but steady share of the state's education system, with several more approved for opening.

This school year, a new all-boys charter school in New Haven, Edmonds Cofield Preparatory Academy for Young Men, opened its doors to more than 50 fifth and sixth grade students.

Earlier in the year, the state De-

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Stamford eyes gas blower ban

The leaf equipment would be allowed only October through December

By Tyler Fedor
STAFF WRITER

STAMFORD — City officials are considering prohibiting the use of gas-powered leaf blowers for most of the year, including replacing its own gasoline-powered landscaping equipment with electric equipment.

The ordinance that would do that was recently posted to the city's website ahead of a public hearing on Sept. 30 during the Stamford Board of Representatives' Legislative and Rules Committee meeting.

The ordinance would prohibit the private use of gas-powered leaf blowers except during the months of October, November and Decem-

Gas blowers continues on A4

New marketplace planned after Mongers closure

By Brian Lockhart
and Andrew DaRosa
STAFF WRITERS

BRIDGEPORT — In the spring, Mongers Market, an antique and vintage shoppers' destination on Railroad Avenue, permanently closed after

seven years in the city.

For Bridgeport native John Paul O'Grodnick, who operated the MOJO Thrifts booth within Mongers, losing the market was a "very sad" moment because it had become more than a place to buy and sell all sorts of interesting

items.

"It drew a lot of the community together," he said.

However, Bridgeport will not be without that kind of multi-vendor marketplace for long. O'Grodnick is helping to open a successor business only minutes from the former Mon-

gers Market location.

The Recollective is projected to open in mid-October at 588 State St., according to O'Grodnick, its operations coordinator. He said the site, just on the edge of downtown and former home to the Hearst-owned

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