

lems in those three areas.

As it stands, the total number of paychecks currently being issued by the state stands at 224,166, according to Pam Orzechowski, a spokeswoman for state Comptroller Edward Regan. That compares to about 221,155 issued in January.

The total biweekly state payroll cost in January stood at \$162.7 million while it's currently about \$174.8 million, Ms. Orzechowski said.

However, she also noted that the total state payroll figures included checks for employees of the state Legislature, the judiciary, state authorities and for federally funded jobs — positions not considered part of the Cuomo work force reduction program.

Nonetheless, the state is issuing about 3,000 more paychecks every two weeks than

it was when Cuomo took office and began planning to reduce the size of the state work force.

Wayne Diesel, first deputy commissioner for the state budget division, said that the number of state paychecks issued wasn't an accurate gauge of the success of the Cuomo job-reduction program.

He noted that the Cuomo administration has continued state programs to encourage more "job-sharing," a situation which can mean two or more paychecks being issued for what is, in reality, one job.

Diesel said that administration officials, when evaluating the success of the Cuomo work force reduction program, look at the total number of state employees paid for directly by state taxpayer dollars. In January there were "about 182,000 and there are now a bit more than 172,000," he said.