STATE OF DELAWARE
GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD

2021 ANNUAL REPORT
EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER FOUR

RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNOR
FROM THE GEAR BOARD

DECEMBER 1, 2021

https://gear.delaware.gov/

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STATE OF DELAWARE
GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Order #4, signed by Governor John Carney on February 16, 2017, established the Government Efficiency and Accountability Review (GEAR) Board to develop recommendations for increasing efficiency and effectiveness across State government, improve the strategic planning process, improve the use of metrics in resource allocation decisions, and develop continuous improvement practices.

GEAR is a long-term initiative. GEAR Board meetings are posted to the State's online public meeting calendar. Public participation and comments are encouraged. The Board has met twenty-six times since its formation. The Board has established multiple critical focus areas, identified team leadership and members, completed written charters identifying process and program optimization opportunities, and initiated and completed numerous projects to take advantage of these opportunities.

The Executive Order directs the GEAR Board to issue a report to the Governor in December of each year. The 2021 GEAR Annual Report contains recommendations that may be included in the Governor's Recommended Budget and policy priorities for Fiscal Year 2023. What follows is an Executive Summary of key accomplishments, progress on major initiatives, and key recommendations requiring support from the executive, legislative, and/or judicial branches:

I. GEAR PROGRAM

- **Drive Continuous Improvement Training and Development** -- Consistent with the recommendation made in the 2018 GEAR Annual Report, the First State Quality Improvement Fund (FSQIF) was reinstated in Fiscal Year 2020 and funded at a level of $150,000 per year. A joint GEAR/Department of Human Resources (DHR) initiative focusing on the development of project management, program management and leadership skills of state employees, the Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CIP) training program, graduated its first cohort of 21 certified practitioners in 2Q21 with a second cohort of 15 presently in training. Graduates received 85 hours of CIP training. All CIP graduates subsequently join the GEAR Field Team. The program will continue to train 2-3 cohorts annually.

- **Grow the GEAR Field Team (GFT)** -- Established in 2020, GFT is a community comprised of continuous improvement project management practitioners and GEAR CIP graduates. With approximately 40 members representing nine state agencies and the Judicial Branch, the team is delivering value through the execution of more than 55 agency projects. The team will continue to grow as the number of CIP graduates increases.

- **Create Enterprise Services Delivery Team (ESD)** – Seven teams subordinate to the GEAR Board, i.e. Focus Area teams, were organized by agency affiliation until 2020. Beginning in 2021, several of these teams were reorganized. The Financial Services Delivery, Information Technology Efficiency, and Human Resources Delivery teams were consolidated into a single Enterprise Services Delivery (ESD) Team. Representing most of the State's major financial, information technology, and human resource agencies and functions, the ESD is delivering value through the implementation of nearly 50 cross-agency enterprise projects and programs.

- **Support the Ready in Six Initiative (Ri6)** – The GEAR Public/Private Partnership (P3) task force was created in 2018 to promote private sector engagement in state government activities. Well known for its support of the State's GEAR P3 Award, the GEAR P3 team's scope has expanded to include supporting the recommendations made by the Delaware Business Round Table to accelerate business-related permitting processes at the state, county, and local government levels.

- **Connect GEAR to Employee Recruiting** -- Executive Order #4, which chartered the GEAR Board and program, noted that GEAR – and the culture of disciplined project management and continuous improvement it promotes – has a role in attracting, training, and retaining highly-productive state employees. The Board will consider how it may support this objective including connecting GEAR training to recruiting processes, expanding the CIP cohort count, developing a cross-agency job rotation program that reduces traditional agency silos and exposes future leaders to the essential government functions resident in a wide array of state agencies.

II. Enterprise Services Delivery Team

- **Plan for Replacement of Enterprise-Wide Computer Applications --** Within the next few years the State's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems will need to be migrated to the Cloud. This includes the First State Financial system (FSF), the Payroll Human Resource Statewide Technology System (PHRST) and certain other Department of Human Resource (DHR) tools. By the end of this decade, each of these systems will need to be completely replaced. To be successful at both of these endeavors, the State needs to begin planning now—especially, when there are State and federal funds available now and in the near future that could be used for these projects. Current activities include: bringing the sponsors together (Office of Management and Budget, Department of Finance, Department of Technology and Information and Department of Human Resources) to discuss options, customizations and costs; Oracle is currently estimating the costs of moving FSF and PHRST into the Cloud and conducting an assessment of readiness for conversion to the Cloud; and DTI is looking at contracts and engaging third-party experts (e.g., Gartner) to help the State look at all the options, customizations, and infrastructure.

- **Ensure Transparency in the Use of COVID-19 Funds Allocated to Delaware --** With the signing of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security ACT (CARES Act) and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Delaware and its local governments have received over $1.8 billion in one-time federal funding to address the health, safety and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Transparency in the use of these funds is critical. The GEAR Enterprise Services Delivery Team is working to support a searchable way of tracking allocations to and payments made by Delaware's state and local governments. In the meantime, CARES Act allocations and spending are available at www.de.gov/relief. ARPA allocations and spending are available at www.de.gov/rescueplan. Tracking of State spending can also be done through the State's online checkbook at opencheckbook.delaware.gov. The State Auditor has also launched its voluntary Project: Gray Fox project to enable participating local governments and school districts to upload ARPA spending data available at auditor.delaware.gov/project-gray-fox/.

Office of State Treasurer (OST)

- **Support the Evolution of Digital Government --** In October 2020, OST launched an RFP for comprehensive digital government services in partnership with the Department of Technology and Information (DTI), and Department of State (DOS). The components of digital government services include payment gateway products, payment processing services, reconciliation software, and a single sign-on interface in which residents and visitors will transact and interact with the State of Delaware through a centralized portal hosted on delaware.gov. In August 2021, the State recommended that the payment and reconciliation components be awarded to Fiserv as the new vendor, while the provider for a single sign-on portal remains under review. It is anticipated that this set of services will yield efficiencies in identity management, customer service, transaction processing, data security and overall user experience for Delaware's residents and visitors.

Office of Management and Budget, Division of Facilities Management

- **Lower Lease Costs and Restructure Lease Program --**The Office of Management and Budget/Division of Facilities Management (OMB/DFM) Real Property Management Program covers 126 leases and approximately 1.8 million square feet of rented space occupied by various State of Delaware agencies, costing $33.3 million annually. To date, OMB/DFM lease restructurings have resulted in more than $30.8 million in hard dollar rent savings and more than $8 million in soft dollar rent savings (paint, carpeting, etc.) over the life of the renegotiated and extended leases. On average, reconstructed leases have been extended 10 years with approximate hard dollar rent savings of $2.6 million and soft dollar savings of $1 million annually. The program will continue to expand to encompass all real property utilized by the State.

Office of Management and Budget and Department of Finance

- **Streamline Financial Services Workloads, Payment Flows and Training** - State organizations are responsible for preparing financial transactions and their associated documents in a timely manner, in proper sequence and in accordance with established procedures in the state's Budget and Accounting Policy Manual (BAM). The Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) subcommittee makes recommendations on revisions to such procedures. On March 1, 2021, the FAC implemented changes to streamline the after-the-fact waiver request application approval process: increasing the purchase order threshold from $5,000 to $10,000; permit cabinet-level leaders of State organizations to internally approve after-the-fact waiver requests between $10,000 and $50,000 and provide that the Director of OMB and Secretary of DOF approve only those waiver requests over $50,000. These changes have been successful in providing an appropriate level of oversight and control while reducing the waiver approval workload by nearly 75 percent.

  To further streamline vendor payment flows and internal control procedures, the combined total spend for the traditional PCard and the Single Use Account in calendar year 2020 was $162.9 million. This produced a rebate of $3.1 million to the State available to help fund the State's financial systems. Projections for calendar year 2021 indicate a record level of combined spend of $177 million with a rebate expected to be near $3.4 million. An agreement is being finalized with a travel management company to streamline and reduce costs for the booking of conveyance and lodging.

  Most of the State's training for financial services employees is focused on the proper use of the State's principal ERP systems – FSF and PHRST. To improve foundational knowledge and support career growth for financial services staff throughout State government, DOF's Division of Accounting is developing a course on the fundamentals of basic accounting and payroll that will supplement existing training courses.

Office of Management and Budget, Office of State Planning Coordination

- **Improve Data Integration and Mapping --** The use of multiple data sources for State decision making leads to duplication of efforts, conflicting and competing analyses, and higher costs for both analyses and decisions made. The Office of State Planning and Coordination (OSPC) seeks to work through Governor Carney's GEAR initiative to improve data integration and mapping by leveraging FirstMap for data sharing and creating a central state land use inventory. FirstMap is the State's enterprise Geographic Information System (GIS) and leveraging its structure will provide the mechanism for all State agencies to use a single, authoritative source of geospatial data, specifically purchased for statewide use. The University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration (UD/IPA) prepared a report and recommended the creation of a Geographic Information Officer (GIO) position within the Department of Technology and Information (DTI). This was approved by the Technology Investment Council. It is critical for Delaware state government to have a full and complete understanding of the real property it owns and utilizes. OSPC contracted Esri, a GIS mapping software firm, to undertake a Discovery Workshop to interview key state agency stakeholders and develop a path forward for the creation of a centralized database to serve the needs of all the agencies. The report is expected in November 2021.

Department of Finance

- **Implement an Integrated Revenue Administration System (IRAS)** -- The Delaware Department of Finance, Division of Revenue (DOR) has been using a tax processing system that is more than 25 years old, mainframe based, and consists of over 100 client server applications. The IRAS implementation is fully modernizing DOR's processing systems to create a web-based, real-time, and integrated user experience that automates processing capabilities, optimizes the efficiency and effectiveness of DOR staff, and strengthens security and internal controls. IRAS will improve DOR's ability to mitigate fraud and will increase revenue with new audit programs and better technology to assist with the collection of delinquent taxes. The project is being implemented in three releases addressing the following taxes:

  a. Release 1 (live processing began November 23, 2020) -- Business taxes such as licensing fees, gross receipts taxes, commodities taxes such as alcohol and cigarettes, and trust fund-related taxes. A popular web portal for business taxpayers went live in January 2021. Approximately 105,000 returns, 70,000 remittances and $237 million has been processed through the portal to date – boosting user experiences and significantly streamlining DOR business tax operations.

  b. Release 2 (expected go-live in late 2022) -- Personal income taxes

c. Release 3 (expected go-live in late 2023) -- Corporate income taxes, partnership, S-corporation, and fiduciary income tax returns

Department of Technology and Information (DTI)

- **Drive Information Technology Centralization (ITC) --** With many employees now connecting remotely to the state network, DTI pivoted from an agency-by-agency ITC effort to focus on how best to deliver a highly secure, equitably provisioned computing environment. Development and implementation of the Shared Services Cost Model, in collaboration with OMB, reflecting the total cost of ownership of IT services is crucial to moving ITC forward. Secure End User Services (SEUS) is the first IT service offering to transition to a new Shared Services Cost Model which underpins ITC. Device provision is now bundled into a larger "IT essentials for state workers." Under the SEUS subscription model, costs are based on a per-user annual consumption rate, tied to a service agreement that provides agencies with clear performance metrics. DTI anticipates a two-year transition to SEUS and its associated cost model for centralized agencies.

- **Build Upon Pandemic Response IT Initiatives --** Delaware is rapidly moving toward a constituent-centric enterprise digital government strategy that delivers a consistent and intuitive user experience. Many government services are accessible online — and many others should be — allowing citizen access anytime, from anywhere, and on any device. Delaware has implemented a single sign-on solution with identity proofing to facilitate a single point of entry for digital state services, similar to the Delaware One Stop Business portal. DTI is also embarking on a larger initiative – creating a constituent solution branded as *mydelaware.delaware.gov* – so the general public can consume state digital government services under authenticated identities. In May 2021, Delaware's Broadband Strategic Plan identified approximately 11,600 underserved home and business addresses. DTI has developed and is implementing a $110 million plan to be funded through the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 to provide expanded Internet access in Delaware's broadband deserts and address the needs of Connect Delaware Students for remote broadband access.

Department of Human Resources (DHR)

- **Centralize Human Resources --** DHR was created in 2017 to centralize the delivery of human resources (HR) services to State employees. DHR completed the project on June 23, 2019, with the transfer of 13 agency HR Staff and the execution of Service Level Agreements with 16 agencies.

- **Implement Web-Based One Stop for Employees –** DHR is seeking to implement an "Employee Success Center," a one-stop shop for all employees' human resources needs where employees may request human resource services, find policies and forms, file complaints, find information, and ask questions.

- **Centralize Policies and Procedures --** Critical to centralizing human resources is to standardize human resources policies, procedures, and practices. To date, 18 statewide policies and procedures have been developed and implemented, including a Policy on Policies to standardize the implementation of statewide policies and procedures.

- **Implement COVID 19 Vaccination and Testing Certification --** DHR implemented a COVID-19 vaccination and testing certification policy and created a supporting online process for employees to submit certifications electronically.

- **Centralize Timekeeping Implementation –** The implementation of a central timekeeping system, eSTAR, across the agencies and supported by the Department of Human Resources is critical to implementing centralized management of time-related HR services. With the support of DHR, Phase V implementation began in January 2021 and is expected to be completed by year-end bringing the total number of agencies on eSTAR to 12.

- **Centralize Classification, Recruitment, Hiring, Onboarding and Off-boarding System --** The State needs an integrated recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and off-boarding system to provide a consistent and user-friendly experience to all applicants and new hires. Since 2018, the Department of Human Resources took steps to establish a workgroup, create system requirements, conduct gap analyses, view demonstrations of existing system capabilities, conduct a request for information, and draft a request for proposal.

- **Modernize and Automate Numerous HR Systems –** The State's human resource IT systems are antiquated and inefficient. Employee personnel records are stored in filing cabinets across state agencies making access, retrieval, transfer, and storage difficult. Employee grievances are submitted by email and manually entered and processed. Classification and compensation workflows involve pouring over paper documents in filing cabinets. Employee

relations services delivered through the DHR information line and email are manually tracked via an Excel spreadsheet. DHR is working to modernize and automate each of these systems.

- **Reduce Healthcare Costs --** DHR/Statewide Benefits Office, under the guidance of the State Employee Benefits Committee, is executing strategies to engage benefit members to reduce health care costs to the State, develop and implement training and strategies to engage health benefits members including educating enrolled members about benefit plans, preventive care, and wellness/care management programs. This has resulted in no increase in health care premiums for four consecutive years, with over 97 percent of employees receiving State coverage.

- **Recognize Employees --** The GEAR P3 Awards recognize teams and individual state employees that demonstrate innovation and efficiencies. In 2020, the award was expanded to include the GEAR-P3 Trailblazer Award to recognize individuals and small teams demonstrating innovation and efficiencies. The award program now includes monetary incentives of $10,000 per GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award recipient team and $1,500 for individual GEAR P3 Trailblazer recipients.

- **Expand Leadership Training Opportunities --** DHR launched iLEAD Leadership Essentials in March 2021 for new, current, and aspiring supervisors with learning opportunities using asynchronous training to build the knowledge and skills of a successful supervisor. Over seven months, 175 employees completed the program, and another 275 employees are currently enrolled.

- **Streamline HR Processes Using Lean Principles** -- The Lean HR demonstration works to eliminate time and effort wasted in HR Processes, to deliver high-quality human resources services, in a way that effectively aligns skills with work, and enables the tracking, monitoring, and evaluation of subsequent improvements. In Fiscal Year 2021, DHR processed 95 percent of the classification and compensation requests included in the demonstration within the established timeframes. In collaboration with agency recruitment staff, this activity mapped the recruitment and hiring process, and implemented improvements resulting in a decrease of the time-to-fill (1.2 percent) and time-to-hire (5.5 percent) processes.

III. GEAR Field Team

JUDICIAL BRANCH

- **Reduce Debt Burden for Ex-Offenders** -- The Judicial Branch is focusing on three main issues when it comes to Fees and Fines Reform. First, it wants to ensure a fair system for those who are unable to pay. The goal is to help people to get out of the criminal justice system and lead the most productive lives possible. However, a large amount of criminal justice debt only causes more hardship. Second, the Courts are spending time and resources trying to collect on uncollectable receivables. Finally, the Courts collections policies can vary between courts; consistent and uniform policies on collections are critical to implement a more efficient case management system.

- **Continue E-filing, Case Management and Document Management Initiatives** -- The Judicial Branch is concluding an exhaustive evaluation of the E-Filing, Case Management and Document Management solutions used across the Courts. This evaluation, which included the engagement of consultants, highlighted several critical issues with the solutions currently used by the Courts and the long-term stability of these platforms. Based on these findings, the Judicial Branch is planning to replace and unify all E-Filing, Case Management and Document Management solutions across all Courts. The completion of this project will improve the way that the Judicial Branch conducts business day to day and improves the quality and convenience of the services it can offer the citizens of Delaware.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES (DHSS)

- **Consolidate and Modernize Long-Term Care (LTC) Facilities** -- DHSS Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD) consolidated two long-term care facilities into one building, moving 34 individuals served at Governor Bacon Health Center (GBHC) into the Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill (DHCI). This was done due to the age of the GBHC facility, periodic flooding in the vicinity that impacted bridges and surrounding roads, and the fact that the State no longer owned the property. Staff from GBHC accompanied the residents during the move and both the residents and staff are now located at DHCI. The State has committed $50 million in federal ARPA funding to fully replace DHCI with a modern and efficient 72,000 square foot skilled nursing care facility to serve more than 100 residents.

- **Optimize Psychotropic Medication Use in Long-term Care (LTC)** -- Psychotropic medication is an important component of treatment for many LTC residents; however, it must be approached methodically to navigate clinical, regulatory, and systemic considerations. When used appropriately such medications can enhance the quality of life for some, while others may achieve the same level of quality without medications, or with a lower dose. The Psychotropic Medication Advisory Committee (PMAC) provides a structured, thoughtful approach to the use and management of psych medications in LTC. The objective of this project is to apply the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) model to develop a PMAC system that is practical and sustainable.

- **Implement Person Centered Care (PCC) Models** -- DSAAPD seeks to ensure a focus on PCC (the care preferences and needs of residents and clients) in its policies, services specifications and contracts, and the work of all providers from LTC to Long-term Services and Supports (LSS). This work aligns services with national best practices through contracted experts.

- **Save Energy Costs** -- The Energy Savings Program is an initiative managed by DHSS Facility Operations that is designed to reduce energy consumption via installation of energy efficient electrical end-use improvements, weatherization, improved building automation systems, solar panel arrays, and replacement of boilers, chillers, and other equipment efficiencies. There are two phases of this initiative anticipated to save $880,000 annually. Phase I completed in 2019 established a $4.3M contract and resulted in $276,000 of annual energy savings. Phase II established an Investment Grade Audit Agreement (IGAA) with a report provided in June 2020 covering 41 buildings totaling 1.4 million square feet in scope. Financing was provided by the State of Delaware and a 20-year Master Lease at 1.811 percent was provided by the Bank of America. The Phase II contract value was $11.9 million with its first-year utility savings estimated to be $604,000.

- **Optimize Fleet Utilization** -- The Fleet Optimization Project uses data to identify and calculate the expense of underutilized DHSS fleet vehicles. The project has established an optimization report that is produced monthly and delivered to DHSS division directors and the Office of the Secretary. The report provides a general summary of block and pool vehicle statistics and identifies the multiple DHSS block vehicles that are underutilized. DHSS will realize savings by changing the cost designation on these underutilized vehicles from block to pool. Potential savings are estimated to be $800,000 or greater.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL (DNREC)

- **Inventory Existing Business Processes** -- To begin analyzing department business processes for optimization across the organization, DNREC will first need to have a complete inventory of those processes. A video presentation was developed and shared throughout the department explaining the benefits of process inventories and how to get started building an inventory. Three divisions began their inventorying and identified over 200 processes.

- **Incorporate Environmental Justice (EJ) in Everyday Work** -- Environmental justice is defined by the EPA as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies." DNREC is committed to increasing efforts to ensure environmental justice for all communities. In September 2020, Secretary Garvin tasked the department's Continuous Improvement Administrator with leading a team of division representatives in identifying ways to improve how environmental justice is incorporated in its everyday work. The representatives identified six objectives to be incorporated in an environmental justice framework for the department. The division representatives are currently working on three objectives: 1) identify criteria that defines Delaware environmental areas of concern and incorporates the utilization of quantitative and spatial data for decision making; 2) establish concrete actions and strategies to improve the integration of environmental justice into DNREC operations; and 3) ensure DNREC is engaging communities in the decision-making process on issues that affect or concern them.

- **Standardize Document Management across the Department** – The Enterprise Content Management (ECM) project standardizes document management across DNREC providing a cohesive consistent document storage and retrieval system. Business line applications and legacy systems have been converted and integrated with OnBase providing a single document source of truth. Six of nine DNREC divisions are currently live on ECM.

- **Modernize Online Services** -- By modernizing online services, DNREC seeks to transform legacy applications and manual permit, license, and registration processes to better serve its customers and improve efficiency. The modernized solution provides a single portal into many DNREC services offering a familiar customer experience

with status alerts, transaction history and information about additional services of interest. The solution drives administrative efficiencies by enforcing minimum requirements for submission, automating workflows that support functions such as simultaneous reviews, and providing reporting metrics that identify areas for improvement and highlight successes.

DELAWARE DIVISION OF LIBRARIES

- **Build Delaware Communities of Excellence (DECOE) – Year 1 –** Twenty percent (197,990) of Delawareans read at a 3rd grade level or below. Adults with low literacy skills are more likely to be unemployed or underemployed, lack resources for housing, transportation, and other essentials, and disproportionately rely on social safety nets and government subsidies. The Delaware Communities of Excellence is building a collaboration of State agencies and non-profits to produce a statewide ecosystem that will provide services which are easier to access, equitable, cost effective, and which will provide measurable, impactful results committed to tackling the challenge of improving literacy in Delaware.

DELAWARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & THEIR FAMILIES (DSCYF)

- **Streamline the Service Integration Fund Process --** The DSCYF Service Integration Fund (SIF) is a flexible funding stream for solutions to address child and family needs. Confusing SIF guidelines and lack of communication/training reduced SIF requests resulting in unspent funds that could have supported child and family well-being and stability. This project made changes to the SIF Guidelines, the supporting application, and key function job aids. The new streamlined process will reduce lead-time from SIF team application receipt to fiscal processing event from 14 days to 6 days. Quarterly reporting will promote awareness and provide transparency about funding approvals and fund balance throughout the year.

Education GEAR (EdGEAR)

- **Promote EdGEAR** – The EdGEAR team has put forth several recommendations for improvements in OMB/Government Support Services (GSS) services provided to the public education system, including actions that would lead to efficiencies and cost savings in procurement activities, surplus property, and fleet purchases. EdGEAR recommends the creation of a public education specific procurement unit within GSS that would help drive change in a number of procurement processes and provide strong systematic supports. EdGEAR also recommends that surplus property be offered at low or no cost to all state agencies and entities prior to auction, along with other improvements in the disposal process. Lastly, EdGEAR recommends that fleet procurement processes be made more efficient, allowing improved delivery timelines and greater flexibilities to meet the needs of the public education system.

STATE OF DELAWARE
GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW BOARD

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER FOUR

REPORT TO GOVERNOR
FROM THE GEAR BOARD
DECEMBER 1, 2021

Executive Order #4, signed by Governor John Carney on February 16th, 2017, established the Government Efficiency and Accountability Review (GEAR) Board. At the time, the State faced a projected Fiscal Year 2018 budget deficit of $385 million that was addressed that year through a combination of spending cuts and tax increases. It was understood in 2017 that similar deficits would be likely to recur in the foreseeable future if long-term actions and structural spending and revenue reforms were not undertaken. As part of this effort, GEAR was created to develop recommendations for increasing efficiency and effectiveness across State government, improving the strategic planning process, improving the use of metrics in resource allocation decisions, and developing continuous improvement practices.

It is important to note that GEAR is just one component of ongoing fiscal reform efforts that build upon the State's existing strong fiscal governance practices. In June 2018, the General Assembly approved a budget that appropriated 97 percent of available General Fund revenues, holding back $47 million of projected revenues above the constitutional mandated 98 percent rule. That same month, Governor Carney signed Executive Order 21 requiring the Delaware Economic & Financial Advisory Council (DEFAC) to calculate an advisory Benchmark Appropriation based upon sustainable measures of economic growth to guide the development of the Governor's Recommended Budget. In June 2019, the General Assembly adopted a budget largely adhering to the advisory Benchmark Appropriation, using extraordinary revenues for one-time operating and capital expenditures, and establishing a $126.3 million Budget Stabilization Fund to be available for appropriation in exactly the types of scenarios faced by the State in 2017.

GEAR complements these efforts over the long term by supporting efficiency initiatives that reduce or temper State government spending growth, thus freeing up resources for other needs. Since its formation, the GEAR Board has met twenty-six times. The Board established multiple critical focus areas, identified team leadership and members, completed written charters identifying process and program optimization opportunities, and initiated work on projects to take advantage of these opportunities.

The Executive Order directs the GEAR Board to issue to the Governor an annual report, no later than December 1st of each year. This 2021 report contains recommendations that may be included in the Governor's Recommended Budget and policy priorities for Fiscal Year 2023. This report is available at https://gear.delaware.gov.

The Board supports the recommendations described by the following organizations within GEAR:

- GEAR Program Management Team
- GEAR Public/Private Partnership Task Force
- Enterprise Services Delivery team
- GEAR Field Team
- EdGEAR

GEAR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT TEAM

GEAR was established to be the catalyst for a sustained effort to continuously identify, monitor, and implement projects, programs, policies, and processes that enhance the State's operational efficiency, and improve the quality of services delivered to the public in a way that bends the cost of government downwards. GEAR recognizes, supports, and champions the efforts undertaken by all State government agencies to achieve these objectives.

Drive Continuous Quality Improvement Training and Development

Consistent with the recommendation made in the 2018 GEAR Annual Report, the First State Quality Improvement Fund (FSQIF) was reinstated in Fiscal Year 2020 and funded at a level of $150,000 per year. The funding allowed the creation of the GEAR Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CIP) training program which is focused on developing the project management, program management, and leadership skills of state employees.

Throughout 2020, GEAR Program Management Team and DHR Training and Organizational Development organization developed curriculum and prepared to deliver training via vendors skilled at delivering in-person and virtual training events. The CIP training program delivered its first of 21 certified practitioners in 2Q21, and a second cohort will complete training in February 2022. The CIP program is required to train 2-3 cohorts annually.

The CIP program will be co-managed by the GEAR Program Management and DHR Training and Organizational Development teams. CIP will receive oversight and direction from the GEAR Board to ensure the direction of the program continues to meet the strategic imperatives of the State, and to ensure fair representation of the State's diverse population.

Grow the GEAR Field Team (GFT)

Established in 2020, GFT is a team comprised of continuous improvement practitioners with Lean improvement, project management, and change management skills. GEAR Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CIP) nominees are trained in these three subject areas and graduates join the GFT after completing the program. Despite the headwinds of the pandemic, the number of GFT members grew considerably in 2021. Now with 40 members representing 9 state agencies and the Judicial Branch, the team delivers value through the management of 55 agency-based projects. The team size and number of projects under management will grow as the CIP training program accelerates and produces more graduates.

Create Enterprise Services Delivery Team

Since the inception of the GEAR program, teams subordinate to the GEAR Board – known as Focus Area teams – were organized by agency affiliation, among these were the Financial Services Delivery team, Information Technology Centralization team, and the Human Resources Delivery team. In 2021, these entities were consolidated to collaborate on ideas and to identify solutions and resources to support enterprise-wide ideas and projects. There are a number of potential areas for project development where finance, human resources and information technology overlap.

The ESD team presently manages 49 large-scale enterprise-wide projects and programs.

Drive Adoption of Standard Practices and Tools for Projects

GEAR promotes the adoption of a standardized approach to documenting, modeling, and improving business processes. In 2021, the GEAR team published the GEAR Project Management Playbook, a 285-page document describing industry recognized, disciplined project management methodologies needed to ensure successful project outcomes. The Playbook is based on training materials developed by the Project Management Institute's (PMI) Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) program. The Playbook is now incorporated within the CIP training program. GEAR has also significantly expanded the State's use of a standard software package supporting digital business process modeling and optimization.

Connect GEAR to Recruiting

Executive Order #4, which chartered the GEAR Board and program, noted that GEAR – and the culture of disciplined project management and continuous improvement it promotes – has a role in attracting, training, and retaining highly productive state employees. The Board will determine how to meet these objectives including connecting GEAR training to recruiting processes, expanding the CIP cohort count, developing a cross-agency job rotation program to reduce traditional agency silos and expose future leaders to the essential government functions resident in a wide array of state agencies.

GEAR PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (P3)

Strengthen and Grow the GEAR P3 Innovation and Efficiency Award
In 2018, the State and Delaware business community – the latter represented by the GEAR P3 task force -- established an award to recognize and directly incentivize Delaware State employees who have successfully implemented high-impact initiatives that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of state processes, programs, and services.

The financial commitment to the award is $25,000 from the private sector, with a matching $25,000 from the State. The GEAR P3 task force remains essential to ensuring the participation of the private sector in this important award. The GEAR P3 has kept both the Delaware Business Roundtable and the Delaware State Chamber committed and contributing to this program.

GEAR Public/Private Partnership (P3) Support for Ready in Six (Ri6) Initiative
The GEAR P3 task force was created in 2018 to promote private sector engagement in state government activities. Well known for their support of the State's GEAR P3 Award, the GEAR P3 team's scope has expanded to include analyzing and acting on recommendations made to accelerate permitting processes which impact business development.

Launched by the Delaware Business Roundtable and its partners, the Ri6 initiative supports efforts to reduce permit approval process timelines from 24 to 6 months thereby making this State a more competitive option when businesses consider relocating to Delaware. The Roundtable retained a consulting firm to make recommendations on how the State could strengthen its permitting processes by streamlining communication between state and local agencies, providing greater transparency and cost predictability, and implementing fast-track approval programs for high priority projects

Work to implement these recommendations was negatively impacted by the pandemic, as were the program's momentum and funding. Throughout 2021 the GEAR P3 task force worked to re-establish the "Ready in 6" program funding and implementation plans.

The task force is seeking strong private-sector support to help the program stakeholders, e.g. Delaware Prosperity Partnership (DPP), Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), Delaware Department of Transportation (DELDOT), the New Castle County Planning Commission, the Delaware OMB Office of State Planning Coordination (OSPC), and others to identify which permit-to-groundbreaking processes are insufficiently responsive, indicate which State permitting processes should be prioritized to better serve the business community and to prepare for any potential legislative changes needed to help ensure the success of the program. The task force expanded its membership to include new representation from government organizations, legal and other private-sector industries impacted by permitting processes managed at the State, county, and municipal government levels. The GEAR P3 task force members have read the 70-page Ready in Six report and have been discussing how to best develop a 2022 strategy that will drive significant progress. In addition, the Secretary of Finance is coordinating two upcoming meetings with the Secretary of DELDOT and the Secretary of DNREC, with goals of establishing collaboration, aligning goals, and determining the optimal way to engage the private sector in advancing the Ready in Six effort. The GEAR P3 task force can be a catalyst to create momentum state-wide, as the State emerges from the pandemic. The GEAR P3 task force is uniquely qualified to add value to the Ready in Six initiative.

Identify New Public-Private Opportunities
Work continues to increase the momentum of the GEAR P3 task force and the impact of the GEAR program. The task force is working with state agencies, the DPP, and other entities to determine how the public and private sectors may work together to create the most efficient and effective solutions that enable the State to better serve its citizens.

ENTERPRISE SERVICES DELIVERY TEAM

Advanced Planning for Replacement of Enterprise-Wide Computer Applications (Long-Term Project)

Many of the Financial Services Delivery (FSD) projects are well underway or moving to completion and new items that are coming to FSD's attention are enterprise-wide in scope -- they affect other agencies and branches of the state government. When GEAR and FSD were created four years ago it was in response to a $385 million deficit, today the State has $1 billion plus in federal COVID funds and State surplus of $300 million. Given Delaware's revenue volatility, there is still a need for GEAR to address efficiency and process/productivity improvements. To lead GEAR's efforts, the GEAR focus area teams of Financial Services Delivery, Human Resources Delivery and Information Technology Centralization have been consolidated into the Enterprise Services Delivery Team (ESD). The implementation of enterprise-wide solutions often requires long implementation timelines and this team will be used to identify enterprise needs, solutions to meet those needs and resources necessary to carry out the solutions.

The Enterprise Services Delivery Team does not manage projects directly, but rather serves as a forum to develop implementable strategies for how the State can be made to operate more efficiently, for State entities to collaborate when developing ideas, and to identify the resources required to implement projects. There are numerous areas for project development where finance, human resources, and information technology overlap. One such area is operating/supporting enterprise-wide computer systems, e.g., FSF, PHRST, IRAS, Office 365, various human resources and benefits tools. Changes to these systems often require long-term projects on the scale of 3 to 5 years.

Within a few years the State's enterprise systems -- mainly FSF, PHRST and some DHR tools -- will be at the end of their life cycles and therefore candidates for replacement by software-as-a-service (SaaS) or similar off-premises solutions, i.e., "the Cloud." To ensure the continuity of State operations, planning for systems migrations must commence in the near term so projects may take advantage of State and federal funds currently available. The ERP Project Sponsor Group is presently seeking cost estimates for converting the State's legacy enterprise systems to the Cloud. A key consideration is the allowable level of customization to future systems, as customizations negatively impact the cost of system conversions. The level of customization will be addressed by documenting current business processes, and by using continuous improvement best practices to determine what, if any, system customization is needed to conform with regulatory or statutory requirements, and how to identify and avoid investing in customization driven by traditional practices, i.e., "doing it the way it has always been done".

Near-term ESD planning activities include:

1. Bringing the sponsors together (OMB, DOF, DTI and DHR) to discuss options, allowable level of future system customizations, and costs. Currently, the sponsor group is not meeting, however, there is a working group that meets regularly regarding the current level of investments in FSF and PHRST. ESD will seek cabinet-level approval for DHR participation on the ERP Project Sponsors Group and the approach GEAR is undertaking to plan for system replacements over the long-term.

2. Oracle is currently engaged to estimate the costs of moving FSF and PHRST to the Cloud, and an assessment of the readiness for legacy systems migration to the Cloud is in progress. When complete there will be a meeting with the sponsors. ESD is documenting a list of current system customizations to FSF and PHRST so that continuous improvement best practices may be utilized to reduce their number or remove them altogether.

3. DTI is looking at contracts and engaging third-party experts to assist in the development of a strategy that considers all the deployment options, current customizations, and infrastructure. The lift of these systems to the Cloud is as heavy as changing providers.

4. ESD has begun identifying fiscal resources needed to enable legacy system replacements, inclusive of the availability of State and federal resources, i.e., General Fund cash, bond funds, and federal American Rescue Plan Act funds.

Document Management (Short Term Project)

To make document signing processes more efficient so that turn-around time is faster for signing, sending, storing and retrieval, ESD is looking at various document management systems. Going to an electronic document signing/management process is necessary given the high costs of paper, ink, time invested in scanning and sending documents, and time wasted by high-level State officials. Electronic document management will transform State signing processes. DTI, with the support of GEAR, GFT, and ESD are currently implementing electronic signature systems. Agencies are working with their customer relation managers (CRMs) to pilot repetitive signing use cases -- especially those that require signatory components in ERP. There are many opportunities, however, what is needed is an understanding of what is statutorily required by the Delaware Code for valid signatures (Uniform Electronic Transaction Act, 6 Del. C. §12A), e.g., do some documents actually require a signature for authorization or approval?

Currently, two electronic document signing options, Adobe Sign and DocuSign, are being used by State agencies. DTI is implementing the DelSign project with an initial cost of $386,000 for 165,000 signed document transactions, equating to $2.34 per transaction over a three-year contract period. There are several pilot projects which include early adopters from DHSS, DNREC, OPEN, and OST. The functions of finance, human resources, and information technology traditionally require the processing of large volumes of documents. ESD is working to identify high frequency, high irritation documents being signed across agencies, e.g., After-the-Fact Waiver Request Forms. ESD will work with DTI to identify documents and signing processes, and subsequently apply continuous improvement methods to determine what documents actually need to be signed, catalogued, prioritized, improved, or removed.

Tracking COVID-19 Federal Funds Allocated to Delaware and Their Spending

With the signing of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security ACT (CARES Act) and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Delaware has received over $1.8 billion in one-time funding to address the health, safety and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and its emergency declarations. Under the CARES Act funding, over $900 million has been allocated to Delaware for such purposes as Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund ($200.0 million), Housing Assistance ($200.0 million), Delaware Relief Grants ($202.0 million), Child Care Relief Fund ($141.0 million), Health Care Relief Fund ($100.0 million), support for non-profit organizations ($25.0 million), broadband infrastructure ($20.0 million) and Workforce Development ($15.0 million). Most of these funds have been or are in the process of being expended, though the deadline for expenditure has passed for several projects. President Biden recently signed the $1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act and another $900.0 million has been allocated to Delaware (see https://governor.delaware.gov/rescue-plan/). Governor Carney intends to use these funds over the next several years to meet pandemic response needs, build a stronger, more equitable economy in communities hit hard by COVID-19, provide immediate economic stabilization for impacted households and businesses, and address public health, public safety, and economic challenges. Currently, some ARPA funds have been allocated to broadband infrastructure ($110.0 million), Community Investment Recovery Fund ($100.0 million), workforce support for hospitals, long-term care facilities and 24/7 state facilities ($75.0 million), building a new Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill ($50.0 million), workforce development with Forward Delaware and Pathways ($50.0 million) and housing in Wilmington ($24.0 million).

To ensure the citizens of Delaware understand how these funds are being expended as authorized, and policy makers see that the funds are having the impact as expected, the GEAR Enterprise Services Delivery Team seeks to support a searchable way of tracking the allocations to, and payments made by, Delaware's state and local governments. There are currently two models for the reporting of these federal fund allocations. The Office of the Governor's website for public information presents COVID spending (CRF dollars) and vendors (https://governor.delaware.gov/relief/). For the initial COVID CRF funding the State leveraged the Delaware On-line Checkbook, a Socrata reporting tool applied to FSF data, to publicly disclose spending information. Most of these dollars have been expended or the deadline for their spending has passed. As for the ARPA Act funds, the Auditor of Accounts has put in place "Project: Gray Fox." This initiative uses the OpenGov tool to capture the spend of COVID dollars through one portal. Local governments agreed to enter their spend data once a week because this data is not in State's FSF financial management system. State agencies and school districts will pull their spend data from FSF, largely through Delaware State Clearinghouse Committee input into FSF. The Office of State Treasurer is supporting smaller local government's reporting. Given these funds have multiple years before they expire the State can spend more time automating the reporting process, so it is less labor intensive.

Tracking COVID-19 Federal Funds with Project: Gray Fox

In March 2021, the federal government passed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This most recent round of COVID relief funding allotted approximately $1.8 billion to county, state, and local entities. Unlike the CARES Act funds, which were distributed to states, ARPA funds were distributed directly to counties, cities, towns, school districts, and other non-entitlement units (NEUs). The Auditor of Accounts realizes that many Delawareans see the positive impact these funds could have on their communities but feel they have no opportunity to share in deciding how these funds are spent. Additionally, the heightened levels of fraud, waste, and abuse surrounding COVID spending could reduce the positive impact these funds should have. To address these concerns and improve the State of Delaware's current D+ transparency rating, the Auditor of Accounts implemented Project: Gray Fox--a user-friendly online tracker that enables Delawareans to see how county and local governments are spending their ARPA funds as these funds are being spent.

The goal of Project: Gray Fox is to improve transparency and accountability throughout the State of Delaware and allow each Delawarean to become a citizen fiscal watchdog. Project: Gray Fox, uses a patented software system that allows towns, cities, and municipalities to report their ARPA fund expenditures. Given that Delaware's 19 school districts and all state agencies use the state accounting system, the Auditor's Office can pull these expenditures directly and upload the transaction amounts to the Project: Gray Fox website. Because all of Delaware's towns, cities and municipalities use different accounting systems, those officials will have to upload their weekly expenditure data individually. Once the data is uploaded, Delawareans will be able to see not only how much of the ARPA funds are being spent, but what it is being spent for and which vendors are receiving the payments. Delawareans will not only know how and when these funds are being spent but will also be able to compare how neighboring municipalities and school districts are spending their funds.

The Project: Gray Fox portal went live on July 1, 2021, and to date, only some school districts have spent any of their ARPA funds. Given that entities have until December 31, 2021 to finalize their expenditure plan, towns, cities, and municipalities across the state have yet to begin using their allotted ARPA funds. An additional bonus of participating in Project: Gray Fox is that towns, cities, and municipalities that have fewer than 250,000 residents and received less than $5 million in ARPA funds will be able to use their uploaded data directly from the Project: Gray Fox portal and submit it to the United States Treasury for reporting. Furthermore, having all the data available online where constituents can easily access it means there will be reductions not only in public records request response times but also a reduction of manual reporting processes.

In the name of transparency and accountability, an endorsement from the Governor and/or GEAR would be beneficial. Given that Project: Gray Fox is voluntary for county and municipal governments, some municipalities are worried about overextending their resources by participating. However, the benefits from participating in Project: Gray Fox, for officials and constituents alike, outweighs the few minutes of work needed to update the website weekly. Additionally, Project: Gray Fox is garnering national attention, and the entities already voluntarily participating are leading the state – and the country — by example by demonstrating their commitment to good governance and the public they serve.

Improving the State's Banking Architecture

Under the authority of the Cash Management Policy Board (Board), the Office of the State Treasurer (OST) is responsible for providing banking services to state agencies by procuring statewide contracts with banking services providers that can meet a wide range of collection and disbursement needs.

In early 2017, OST, on behalf of the Board, engaged PFM Asset Management LLC (PFM) to conduct a comprehensive study of the State's banking architecture. Upon completing the study in 2018, PFM concluded that the State may be able to conduct its banking business in a more efficient and effective manner, realizing significant cost savings by restructuring its existing contracts.

The Board adopted PFM's recommendations to amend the current banking architecture and approved the issuance of a comprehensive banking Request for Proposals (RFP), including five unique banking components – general banking (electronic collection and disbursement), lockbox services, purchasing card, stored value card, and check printing. The Board also adopted PFM's recommendation to issue a separate local banking RFP, for those agencies requiring physical over-the-counter deposit services.

The general banking RFP was issued in June of 2018, and in November 2018, the Board granted the award for stored value card services to US Bank and the award for all other banking services to JPMorgan Chase. As of August 2019, all contracts related to the comprehensive banking RFP were executed.

To date, OST has migrated all state agencies in need of stored value card services to U.S. Bank. Additionally, over 95 percent of agencies have been migrated to the newly structured general banking services through JPMorgan Chase as of the publication of this report. It is estimated that the remaining agencies will be fully transitioned with legacy accounts closed out within the first quarter of 2022.

The local bank RFP was issued in March of 2019, and in August 2019, the Board approved the decision to award primary over-the-counter collections to M&T Bank, and additional collections for agency bank accounts to Citizens and TD Banks. In 2020 contracts were awarded to all three banks and the impacted agencies were surveyed by OST to develop an account migration plan. Currently, 133 of the 329 accounts are either in progress or transitioned to a new local banking provider.

As the services have been implemented, the new banking architecture has resulted in significant benefits for OST, agencies, and citizens. Several of the identified benefits of this new system include simplified reconciliation processes, streamlined file transmissions, and reduced risk with updated banking products, systems, and reports.

By consolidating service providers and leveraging economies of scale, OST is beginning to realize significant contractual cost savings of approximately $650,000 per year – not including an additional $233,000 estimated increase to the State's annual purchasing card (PCard) rebate being achieved by the Department of Finance's (DOF) Division of Accounting (DOA). Finally, though more difficult to measure, the new service providers provide best-in-class customer service, including expanded user training and educational opportunities.

The Evolution of Digital Government

With the modernized banking systems being fully deployed in 2022, OST has shifted its focus to digital government services in partnership with the Department of Technology and Information (DTI) and the Department of State's (DOS) Government Information Center (GIC). While online payment (merchant) services were historically decentralized, OST launched a strategic endeavor to consolidate the payment infrastructure of more than 160 state merchants, including their security components for credit, debit, and ACH transactions occurring between the State of Delaware's residents, visitors, and state agencies.

The components of digital government services include payment gateway products (software and hardware), payment processing components (banking transactions), reconciliation systems (software and accounting processes), payment card industry data security platforms (technology and processes), and a single sign-on interface in which residents and visitors will both transact and interact with the State of Delaware. Commensurate with the holistic approach taken with general banking, OST, DTI and GIC launched a comprehensive RFP in October 2020 to leverage economies of scale and an improved experience for customers who transact with the State.

A total of twelve responses were received by the RFP deadline of December 18, 2020. The Evaluation Team, consisting of fifteen members, representing OST, DTI, DOS, DOF, and the Delaware Department of Transportation met with finalists between March and July 2021 before selecting four finalists to provide best and final offers.

Best and final offers were reviewed by the Evaluation Team on August 11, 2021. Following the meeting, the Evaluation Team recommended that Fiserv be retained as merchant processor, and that the Cash Management Policy Board (CMPB) enter contract negotiations for the additional services of payment gateway, and account reconciliation and fee analysis services. Currently, deliberations continue with the Evaluation Team surrounding web and application design services for the development of the single sign-on interface. The RFP process is set to conclude at the end of 2021 with contracts being awarded and new products being deployed in 2022.

Several of the measurable outcomes in this new endeavor include:

- streamlined and secure *point to point* payment processing

- implementation of single sign on for a centralized view of payments and use of a digital wallet
- reduced manual transactions with an increase in self-service payments
- improved data security standards implemented
- automated reconciliation

Given the nature of conducting successive resource-intensive, statewide projects, OST continues to adapt its internal resources to meet outcomes. OST shall continue to ensure all State agencies, customers and members of the public receive the appropriate level of operational support, while seamlessly transitioning banking and digital government services to new providers with the engagement of its agency partners. OST's request surrounding this endeavor is that the Fiscal Year 2023, and subsequent budget requests, are supported by the GEAR Board and Office of the Governor to effectively launch and sustain digital government systems.

Service Enhancements for Municipalities and State Agencies

There are several areas in which OST is utilizing continuous improvement practices to gain efficiencies in how it provides services to state agencies and municipalities.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

On June 1, 2021, OST received the first tranche of $43.96 million in funding for fifty-five municipalities throughout the state of Delaware under ARPA. The funding calculations and distributions were required to be completed to the municipalities by June 26, 2021 as required by the U.S. Treasury. OST utilized business process mapping to establish the process by which municipalities would verify their allotted amounts with OST, register to receive payments, and obtain payments. The process map that was generated was shared with multiple state and federal partners to clearly demonstrate how the funds would be disseminated. In addition, in order to provide a layer of transparency available to the public, OST built a dashboard to display data on the distributions to municipalities, as well as a resource page to guide municipalities to credible resources that will assist them in the reporting on the use of their funds. The second tranche of $43.96 million in funding to municipalities under ARPA is anticipated in 2022.

ServiceNow Ticketing Solution

Over the last several years OST has identified a need for a uniform, and transparent method to track and fulfill agency and employee requests. OST has multiple sections in which requests are fulfilled by staff relevant to payment, retirement, and merchant processes. Historically, there is a general lack of transparency with supporting data surrounding these work areas, including the amount of time those processes consume. This is deemed an issue that affects all OST staff who field requests and their supervisors who lack the insight into the service volumes, which ultimately impacts resource planning and quality control.

In response to this, OST has developed a ticketing solution through the ServiceNow platform that will allow traditionally paper-based requests to be submitted to OST through online form fields. The ServiceNow solution will not only provide the metrics needed to assess ongoing service volumes for the office, but it will also serve as a repository with state agency profiles detailing their banking, merchant, and other financial information that will be leveraged across divisions at OST.

Lower Lease Costs and Restructure Lease Program

The Office of Management and Budget/Division of Facilities Management (OMB/DFM) Real Property Management Program consists of 126 leases, covering approximately 1.8 million square feet of rented space occupied by various State of Delaware agencies, at a current year annualized cost of $33.3 million. Based on the magnitude of this cost component in the State's collective operating budget across agencies, this GEAR project began as an initiative to minimize lease costs. Historically, real estate-related tasks were decentralized across numerous state agencies. This led to duplication of effort and expenditure, failure to leverage collective locations, common property ownership and arms-length knowledge of the state of the local real estate market and its related peripheral indications such as borrowing rates, economic development interest and general business conditions.

After the execution of a professional services procurement process, a contractual partnership was formed with the team of Diamond State Management and Delaware Financial Group. Efforts began in the Fall of 2018 with the largest leasing agencies being the first impetus to begin a strategic approach. The target was further defined as the seventy-eight (78) leases that would expire in the ongoing five-year period. Over time, the confines of this target group of leases has been broadened due to market awareness and simple economic opportunity. Since the program began in 2018, forty-one (41) of the 78 leases have been renewed. As a result of the progress made during the last three (3) years contracting with Diamond State Management and Delaware Financial Group, the contract was renewed for an additional year.

This GEAR project continues to achieve the targeted goal while at the same time evolves further towards updating the lease document framework. This includes concessions such as environmental hygiene provisions that protect the state employee workforce, electric vehicle (EV) charging station installation on the leased premises, and owner– implemented cosmetic updates such as signage, paint, carpet, and restroom upgrades. These updates occur at the time of lease renewal and again every five to seven years. The State has also explored new lease locations and build-to-suit opportunities where savings, as well as preferable and stable lease conditions, can be secured.

Total waiver applications in workflow minus the number of applications with dollar values of $10,000 or less minus applications with dollar values above $10,000 and below $50,000 equals number of applications that need cabinet secretary approval, total reductions divided by total number of applications equals percentage of workload reduced.

To date, forty-one (41) leases have been affected either by renegotiation/extension of the lease term or relocation of the State's workforce to a facility with better, more economical lease conditions and/or a newly constructed facility completed as a build-to-suit arrangement. Under build-to-suit terms, one new building is being constructed where financially, the transition to the new building with replicated conditions is expected to pay for itself out of lease savings. Thus far, the project has resulted in more than $30.8 million in hard dollar rent savings and more than $8 million in soft dollar rent savings over the life of the renegotiated and extended leases. Soft dollar savings include paint, carpet, parking lot restriping, bathroom/kitchen updates and other leasehold improvements.

There have been no material changes to the process of leasing space for Delaware's state agencies. As departments decide how to move forward with hybrid work schedules, there may be opportunities to take advantage of spaces that have been vacated or downsized as a result of state employees telecommuting to work. Going forward, lease renegotiation will continue with the contractor's assistance through the end of the current contract term.

FSD Onerous Processes—After-the-Fact Purchase Order Approval Process

Per the Budget and Accounting Policy Manual, State organizations are responsible for preparing financial transactions and their associated documents in a timely manner, in proper sequence, and in accordance with established procedures. Purchase orders are required for purchases exceeding $10,000 (individually or in aggregate). The State will not be liable for any goods or services provided by a vendor prior to the receipt of an approved purchase order. When a purchase order is established or approved after the delivery of goods or services, an after-the-fact situation is said to exist. State organizations finding themselves in this situation must apply for (and receive approval for) an after-the-fact waiver to get the purchase order approved and the vendor paid.

To process and approve after-the-fact waiver request applications it takes a minimum of seven persons: two at the State organization level (business manager and cabinet level leader), three at the Office of Management and Budget (Director of Management Efficiency, Executive Secretary and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget), and two at the Department of Finance (Executive Assistant and Secretary of Finance). Three of the seven persons -- 42 percent -- reviewing and approving these waiver request applications are cabinet secretaries (or cabinet secretary level). All after-the-fact waiver requests had to be reviewed and approved by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Secretary of Finance.

On March 1, 2021, the Financial Advisory Committee subcommittee for onerous paper processing requirements implemented changes to streamline the after-the-fact waiver request application approval process. These changes were 1) increasing the purchase order threshold from $5,000 to $10,000; 2) permitting cabinet-level leaders of State organizations

to internally approve after-the-fact waiver requests between $10,000 and $50,000 and 3) have the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Secretary of Finance approval only for those waiver requests over $50,000. Based on the Fiscal Year 2020 after-the-fact waiver request workload, total potential workload reductions for OMB and DOF cabinet secretaries and staffs was estimated to be just over three quarters of the current workload ($104 - 24 - 55 = 25$, $79/104 = 0.76$).

The changes have been successful in reducing the approval workload for the cabinet secretaries and their staff. Using Fiscal Year 2020 as the base year, 28 waiver applications were submitted for approval after March 1st, of these six could have been direct claimed, 13 would have been kept with the organizations and nine would have been submitted to the cabinet secretaries for approval. In comparison, after March 1, 2021, nine waiver applications were submitted for OMB and DOF cabinet secretary approval (applications with a value of $50,000 or less are no longer submitted for approval). In another comparison, if the changes were in place for Fiscal Year 2020 and all of Fiscal Year 2021 we can look at and compare the waiver submissions for the period July 1st through November 1st. For Fiscal Year 2020, 16 could have been direct claimed, 21 would have been kept with the organizations and eight would have been submitted to OMB and DOF for approval. For Fiscal Year 2021, these figures are 15, 22 and 10, respectively. To date, for Fiscal Year 2022, only six waiver applications have been submitted for OMB and DOF approval.

Post March 1st to June 30th

	Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021	Fiscal Year 2022
Direct Claim	6	NA	NA
Organization Approval	13	NA	NA
OMB/DOF Approval	9	9	TBD
Total	**28**	**9**	**TBD**

July 1st to October 31st

	Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021	Fiscal Year 2022
Direct Claim	16	15	NA
Organization Approval	21	22	NA
OMB/DOF Approval	8	10	5
Total	**45**	**47**	**5**

Procurement Card (PCard) Program

The impact of the pandemic on State travel and other charges for services and supplies to the traditional card program resulted in the first year over year decline in the rebate since 2011. The Single Use Account (SUA) spending remained consistent with calendar 2020 after double digit growth each of the past four calendar years. The combined total spend was $162.9 million with a rebate of $3.1 million. Calendar Year 2021 to date has experienced increases in spending for both the traditional and SUA programs with current projections indicating a record level of combined spend of $177 million. This increases the rebate percentage to 2.0 percent and total projected rebate is expected to near $3.4 million. Due to the pandemic and staff turnover, recruitment of vendors to the SUA program has been curtailed in the past year.

Financial Advisory Committee (FAC)

The FAC resumed quarterly meetings in early 2021 after nearly a year break due to the pandemic. The committee and related subcommittees have completed work on several initiatives to improve workflow and overall efficiencies for State organizations. Effective March 1, 2021, the purchase order threshold was increased from $5,000 to $10,000 reducing the workload across State agencies. The Division of Accounting voucher approval threshold was also increased by the same amounts allowing for improved flow of payments to the State's vendors, particularly during high volume times of processing.

At the request of the FAC Travel Subcommittee and DEMA, OMB issued an RFP for a travel management company to streamline and reduce costs for the booking of conveyance and lodging. OMB is working to finalize an agreement with the selected vendor(s) and recommended travel policy changes were completed with implantation to occur once a final agreement is completed with the travel management company. Travel was curtailed during Fiscal Year 2021 and is expected to increase during Fiscal Year 2022 but not expected to return to pre-pandemic levels until Fiscal Year 2023 or later.

The FAC Training Subcommittee has two teams working on preparing a basic accounting and basic payroll training for fiscal and payroll staff throughout the State. Development of the courses is in progress and the subcommittee teams plan to present trial runs later in Fiscal Year 2022. The trainings will provide fundamentals of accounting and payroll not currently included in the courses for users of the State's financial management accounting system (FSF) and the State's payroll and human resources system (PHRST). Once fully developed and tested, the courses will be presented on an as needed basis to State employees.

Reintroduce Strategic Planning and Performance Budgeting Processes

Per Executive Order #4 GEAR was tasked with recommending changes to the Delaware Governmental Accountability Act that will better drive strategic planning, help develop meaningful performance metrics, foster more effective monitoring of performance and allocation of scarce resources as part of the budget process, and promote continuous improvement programs throughout State government. Two bills have been drafted to amend the Delaware Governmental Accountability Act: SB 263 (2018) and HB 133 (2019-2020).

The proposed amendments of the act shift the focus from the budget books to the budget process. The new language specifies that the State's annual budget process should be part of a performance management system, dedicated to incentivizing continuous process improvement and making government more efficient. This performance management system (not a new IT application) is composed of 1) strategic planning, 2) performance measurement/evaluation and 3) performance budgeting. The Governor and the Legislature (Joint Finance Committee (JFC)) would be directed to use performance metrics when evaluating programs and program enhancements during the annual budget process. Full implementation of the revised act would come with the FY 2023 budget process (starting Fall of Calendar Year 2021)—agencies would present budget requests for Fiscal Year 2023 that incorporate performance metrics to support reallocation of resources to more productive programs/projects or support requests for additional resources for existing or new programs/projects.

The original bill, drafted in 2018, passed the Senate and was on the agenda for floor vote in the House when events intervened, and it was not brought up for a vote. Because it was the end of the second legislative session, the bill could not be carried over into the next legislative session. In the Spring of 2019, a revised Delaware Governmental Accountability Act bill was sponsored by co-chairs of JFC and other legislators and introduced as HB 133. It passed the House unanimously, was reported out of the Senate Elections, Government and Community Affairs Committee and placed on a Senate agenda for consideration on June 30, 2019. Due to other considerations on the Senate floor, HB 133 was not brought up for a vote. The bill remained available for consideration by the Senate in its upcoming second session. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 and the associated lockdown restrictions, HB 133 was again not brought up for a vote in the Senate in 2020. The bill has expired and will need to be reintroduced if it is to be considered in the 151st General Assembly.

Improve Data Integration and Mapping

The use of multiple data sources for State decision making leads to duplication of efforts, conflicting and competing analyses, and higher costs for both analyses and decisions made. The Office of State Planning and Coordination (OSPC) seeks to work through Governor Carney's GEAR initiative to improve data integration and mapping through the following recommendations.

Leverage FirstMap for Data Sharing

FirstMap is the State's enterprise Geographic Information System (GIS), but it is not used uniformly by State agencies to purchase data. A comprehensive geospatial management structure for the needs of all State agencies is needed. Leveraging FirstMap's structure and data will provide essential information for all agencies to use for long-range planning of school sites, demographic trends, transportation, state service centers, natural resources, and other uses. The goal of this project is to provide the mechanism for all State agencies to use a single, authoritative source of geospatial data, specifically purchased

for statewide use. This will be economically advantageous for the state, provide one uniform data 'source of truth' for all agencies to use, and ensure all agencies have access to necessary information.

The University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration (UD/IPA) was contracted by DelDOT to perform an independent survey examining current practices, the efficacy of these practices, and ways to improve management and coordination of all geospatial data and mapping efforts. The UD/IPA report recommended the creation of a Geographic Information Officer (GIO) position within the Department of Technology and Information (DTI). DTI presented this request to the Technology Investment Council in August 2021 and the motion to fund a GIO was approved. Additionally, DTI proposed that funding be established to collect the core statewide geospatial datasets (aerial imagery, land use/land cover, and LiDAR). There is current legislation that will need to be modified to reflect the establishment of a GIO under the DTI umbrella.

The findings of the UD/IPA study should be supported with additional or reallocation of resources -- human and financial -- to support the coordination/management efforts, as well as updating of the geospatial data coordination legislation.

Establish a State Land Inventory

It is critical for Delaware state government to have a full and complete understanding of the real property it owns and utilizes. The reasons are obvious, including ensuring proper maintenance, insurance coverage, emergency planning procedures, environmental compliance, and safety considerations, among others. The Office of State Planning Coordination contracted UD/IPA to assess current agency practices for collecting, maintaining, and sharing information on state lands and facilities. This report was completed in September 2019 and is available on OSPC's website. The report is considered Phase 1 of the initiative to establish the State Land Inventory.

The OSPC has contracted Esri to undertake a Discovery Workshop to interview all the state agency stakeholders and develop a path forward with the creation of a centralized database to serve the needs of all the agencies. The Esri report is expected in November 2021. After which the OSPC will begin the Business Case process with DTI to implement the recommended design.

Support should be given to this effort through the encouragement of agency representation and collaboration. It is possible there will need to be an executive order or Memorandum of Understanding to enforce collaboration among all involved agencies, so a more efficient and unified tracking of real property occurs within a single centralized database. Finally, the development of the centralized database will need to be funded.

School District Enrollment Projections

School district enrollment has a significant impact on the State operating and capital budgets. Centrally updated enrollment projections done on a regular basis can be used to improve long-range planning and the allocation resources in both operating and capital budgets within individual school districts and across multiple districts. Statewide enrollment projections have been produced twice in the recent past, once in 2007 and again in 2014. These efforts were useful at those points in time, but they have not been updated to reflect changing demographic conditions. This project would develop a schedule and prepare regular updates to statewide school district enrollment projections and use these updates to improve long-range planning and resource allocations, e.g., determine needs for new schools and evaluate school district capital master plans. Additionally, the updates will be beneficial for other entities that interact with children in the allocation of their resources.

Options for producing these projections will be explored in the coming year, including discussions with the Delaware Population Consortium (DPC). As discussed in last year's report, the DPC has recently been formalized and reconstituted because of the passage of Senate Bill 7, which was signed by the Governor on May 14, 2019.

Risk Assessment Survey

The mission of the Auditor of Accounts (AOA) is to serve Delawareans by providing independent, objective oversight of the state government's use of taxpayer dollars with the goal of deterring fraud, waste, and abuse through unbiased assessments, including the use of various audits, special reports, and investigations of financial operations designed to ensure statutory compliance while enhancing governmental economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. Delaware currently has a D+

rating in transparency as graded by the United States Public Interest Research Group. In efforts to improve this transparency rating and improve the trust of Delawareans in their state government, AOA has instituted a range of initiatives.

Among these initiatives is the Annual Risk Assessment Survey. Begun in 2019, the Annual Risk Assessment Survey helps determine what audits the office conducts the following fiscal year. This survey is emailed to all state employees and asks specific questions about their agencies and divisions. Questions on the survey include, but are not limited to:

1. Turnover rates in the agency, office, or division

2. Internal controls environment

3. Office culture

Based on the answers received, AOA determines which agencies, offices, or divisions are most at risk for fraud, waste, and abuse. In spring 2021, AOA conducted its third Annual Risk Assessment Survey of all state departments. In total, 1,734 state employees completed the survey, and 762 completed the related internal controls survey. The surveys featured a combined 50 questions, which asked state employees about whether financial risks are assessed in their agencies and how their control environments and activities are structured. Survey results shows that 1 out of every 7 respondents believes that fraud, waste, abuse, loss, or misappropriation of funds has happened in their agency in the last 12 to 18 months.

For Fiscal Year 2022, AOA's engagements include, but are not limited to: OST Bank Reconciliations (Q1, Q2, Q3, & Q4), the Annual Fire Report (which includes all volunteer fire companies), and a variety of special reports. In Fiscal Year 2021, AOA completed over 80 engagements, including more mandated engagements than ever before. This is an increase of more than 10 engagements from the previous year. For Fiscal Year 2022, AOA has at least 74 engagements planned to date. Although a portion of the work AOA does is contracted out, the office still needs a full staff to support the number of in-house engagements completed each year. A fully staffed and fully funded AOA would serve all state agencies by allowing its auditors to identify cost savings for them through our engagements. The results and analyses from these engagements would assist all state agencies and organizations in operating transparently, as well as more effectively and efficiently. The value that AOA brings to Delaware isn't in direct revenue generation; instead, it is in its ability to guide all other agencies in how to improve the way they spent their allotments of taxpayer dollars. The office indirectly helps other agencies save money by identifying fraud, waste, and abuse of taxpayer funds and consequently increasing those agencies' spending efficacy.

Implement an Integrated Revenue Administration System (IRAS)

The Delaware Department of Finance, Division of Revenue (DOR) is responsible for collecting more than $2.2 billion in annual state taxes, processing $300 million of tax refunds, ensuring compliance with the State's tax laws, and aiding taxpayers. The Division of Revenue is moving away from mainframe technology that is over 25 years old consisting of more than 100 client server applications. Implementation of the IRAS system will fully modernize DOR by creating a web-based, real-time, integrated user experience, automating processing capabilities, optimizing the efficiency and effectiveness of DOR staff, and strengthening security and internal controls. IRAS will improve DOR's ability to mitigate fraud and will increase revenue with new audit programs and better technology to assist with the collection of delinquent taxes. The project will also create numerous opportunities for improved efficiency and taxpayer service through collaboration with other state and local agencies. For example, in August 2021, DOR began a pilot project to collect the public accommodations tax for one county and one municipality, allowing the hotels and motels to utilize a single filing system to pay tax to multiple entities. DOR and the Department of Labor will discuss how IRAS could be leveraged to help modernize the State's Unemployment Insurance tax collection system. IRAS also provides a higher level of system recovery via the Microsoft Azure Government Cloud.

In addition to modernizing DOR's processing systems, IRAS is dramatically improving the user experience for taxpayers through the development of a modern public facing portal that provides taxpayers access to online filings, account information, service requests, and the ability to delegate access to tax preparers. The public-facing portal (available at https://tax.delaware.gov) went live for taxpayer registration in December 2020 and has been available for tax filings since January 2021. To date, more than 105,000 returns have been filed through the portal and more than $237 million in payments have been received and applied to taxpayer accounts. The portal has also created online filing opportunities for

industry sectors that were previously only available on paper. DOR has also recognized a significant reduction in paper filings, which reduces manual processing efforts and streamlines return processing, allowing for the reallocation of personnel to higher-value, revenue-generating activities.

The IRAS project is being implemented in three releases, as follows:

- Release 1 (went live in Fall 2020) – Business related taxes such as licensing fees, gross receipts taxes, commodities taxes such as alcohol and cigarettes, and so-called "Trust Fund Taxes" which are taxes due to the state that are collected through third-parties such as personal income tax withholding, realty transfer taxes, lodging taxes and public utility taxes

- Release 2 – Personal income taxes

- Release 3 – Corporate income taxes as well as partnership, S corporation, and fiduciary income tax returns

Prior to the start of the project in Summer 2019, the IRAS initiative yielded several benefits that can be leveraged across other Delaware agencies. A procurement and project readiness methodology, focusing on large state government IT project implementations was created in collaboration with the Department of Technology and Information (DTI) and OMB's Government Support Services (GSS). As part of this methodology, a consistent and repeatable process was documented and used. The process included an initial discovery step reaching out to more than 30 States to better understand their experiences and lessons learned on similar projects working with vendors that provide revenue administration products and services. Leveraging input from states that had successful implementations, an RFP with more than 1,500 requirements was created. During onsite sessions, bidders were required to demonstrate more than 70 real-life scenarios.

Governor Carney and the General Assembly approved funding for the project in the Fiscal Year 2020 budget and a contract was awarded in July 2019. To gain fast traction at project initiation, almost a dozen project readiness activities were undertaken to develop a thorough binder of information on DOR systems, processes, and tax laws that was provided to the selected vendor prior to arrival on site. On-site activities began in late July 2019 and included development of a project management office and a project structure.

Information Technology Efficiency

Delaware has adopted a standardized Information Technology (IT) services delivery model with shared services either delivered or brokered by the Department of Technology and Information (DTI) to maximize the benefits of Information Technology Centralization (ITC). DTI developed a plan that defines the delivery strategy for moving State government to commoditized enterprise IT services while maintaining a system for supporting agency-specific needs in transition. The goal is a secure state computing environment maintained by right-sized IT resources and solutions that are financially supported in an equitable way which funds future investments in IT innovation. Significant executive level support must underwrite this transformational change that will be foundational for delivering the digital government priorities and initiatives Delawareans deserve.

This year's annual report highlights continued impacts, both positive and negative of the global pandemic. Fulfillment of telework support, along with the expansion and acceleration of efforts to meet broadband needs, necessarily caused a re-examination of planned centralization tasks and changed timelines for ITC transitions and reallocations. More than anything, this year's continuing challenges have highlighted the value and necessity of centralizing essential IT services for security, efficiency, access, and ongoing modernization.

Prior Recommendation Strategy

Implement an enterprise IT centralization strategy that provides an equitable, efficient, and cost-effective approach to delivering IT services. The key objective is to establish a multi-agency governance board to institute standardization across commodity-based services, including server infrastructure, network, end-user computer support and service desk. These

efforts will enable the state to leverage data as a strategic asset, deploy an enterprise cyber security strategy, reduce spending, and deliver intuitive digital government for all Delawareans.

Overview of Current Initiatives

IT Centralization (ITC) forms the foundation for IT efficiency. Work on the most recent phase of ITC began in August 2019 after Governor Carney signed Senate Bill 153. This legislation updated to DTI's enabling statute (Title 29, Section 90c), with several key features:

- Authorization to develop a full Shared Services Cost Model to support the total cost of ownership of IT service delivery

- Developing and implementing a comprehensive cyber security program

- Reallocating IT assets and staff from executive branch agencies to DTI

- Reconstituting a representative Technology Investment Council to be responsible for Delaware's statewide technology plan

- Responsibility for statewide IT procurement standards and processes

- Developing and implementing data sharing among executive branch agencies

The pandemic necessarily caused a reframing of ITC undertakings, with an increased focus on mitigating cyber security threats, meeting broadband access needs, and establishing an approved Shared Services Cost Model (chargeback) strategy that begins with a Secure End User Services (SEUS) package providing state worker IT essentials.

This year, DTI initiated or continued work on multiple projects in support of IT efficiency.

IT Centralization
Cyber security vulnerabilities heightened Delaware's need to move rapidly to increase security of end points, with many employees now connecting remotely to the state network. DTI pivoted from an agency-by-agency ITC effort to focus on how best to deliver a highly secure, equitably provisioned computing environment. Device-as-a-Service and Policy and Governance were subsumed by Shared Services Cost Model efforts and a more comprehensive Secure End User Services initiative which folded in aspects of both to create this modern bundled service offering.

Development and implementation of the Shared Services Cost Model, in collaboration with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), reflecting the total cost of ownership of IT services is crucial to moving ITC forward. It forms the basis of a strategy for continued IT service improvement and is crucial for Delaware centralized IT to be self-sustaining and right sized to support digital government. For DTI's Administration staff, this work took precedence over enterprise IT vendor management development efforts -- though that continues with work ongoing around vendor contract review to eliminate redundancies, consolidate procurement, and move toward enterprise shared services. SEUS is the first offering developed for consumption under this new cost model and is being piloted as Phase 1 of the transition to a full shared services cost model methodology. Not all shared services costs have yet been developed for consumption under this model, e.g., mainframe, data center, among others. The timeline for full implementation of this chargeback model will require addressing the three-year legislative deadline to complete ITC reallocation of resources and assets for executive branch agencies.

Secure End User Services (SEUS)
Secure End User Services (SEUS) is the first IT service offering to transition to a new Shared Services Cost Model which underpins IT Centralization and impacted a pre-pandemic plan to offer Device-as-a-Service (DaaS) separately. Cyber

security end-point vulnerabilities caused a re-thinking of DaaS and the need to couple device security with other more comprehensive protections. Device provision is now bundled into a larger "IT essentials for state workers", an offering that:

- Maximizes security compliance, procurement economies of scale; stabilizes procurement of technology equipment, assuring support needs uniformity, and timely equipment life cycling and refreshment

- Packages the costs of imaging, end user support, maintenance, repair/replacement services for workers' essential desktop equipment, but excludes peripherals such as mouse, keyboard, and monitor which have highly variable life cycles

- Uses Microsoft Office 365, SEUS's productivity and collaboration tool, this is central to transitioning from a capital expense (device-based software) to an operating expense (per-user-per-year subscription Software-as-a-Service) model which makes IT service costs more predictable and scalable. Delaware completed Phases 1 and 2 of onboarding agencies to Microsoft Office 365's Government cloud-based modern suite of collaboration, communication and productivity tools this year and it is a feature of SEUS

- Includes cyber security monitoring, training, and authenticated user identity and access management

- Provides communications network access and support for voice and Internet

- Assures a predictive, consumption-based cost model for budget planning

Under the SEUS subscription model, costs are based on a per-user annual consumption rate, tied to the a service agreement that provides agencies with clear performance metrics. DTI anticipates a two-year transition to SEUS and its associated cost model for centralized agencies.

Future ITC Enterprise as-a-Service Offerings
Work continues on other proposed offerings for consumption under the new Shared Services Cost Model. Full implementation remains to be determined, with agency transition to SEUS as the highest priority.

Data Center-as-a-Service (DCaaS)
This service offering maximizes procurement economies of scale within the State, stabilizing data center hosting costs by shifting spending from episodic large capital investments to continuous operating expenses, through these and other features including:
- Service catalog selection of standard, updated technology (e.g., modern facility environment, security compliance, etc.)

- Hosting service includes infrastructure and a range of support, maintenance, backup, and security services governed by contract

- DCaaS hosting which meets state standards and policies

- Consumption-based cost model that is predictive for agency and State budget planning

- Analytics and monitoring to help with regulatory compliance, while also optimizing software licensing and hardware management

Under the DCaaS subscription model, costs vary only based on monthly consumption, tied to the contract.

Mainframe-as-a-Service (MFaaS)
This service offering modernizes Delaware to take advantage of more cost-effective platforms over the next five to ten years. As workloads are migrated off the mainframe, the infrastructure cost burden is split amongst an increasingly smaller pool of agencies. Consumption-based billing for this brokered service, for which a Statement of Work is being finalized, enhances agency ability to quickly adjust services to workload needs.

Pandemic Response Initiatives

What follows below are initiatives that have developed or been affected by the pandemic response and should continue or be expanded.

Enterprise Digital Government: Single Sign-On for State Workers and Constituents

Delawareans have a view that State agencies collectively are "the government" and thus have a corresponding expectation that they will be able to access services in a seamless manner. Digital services have been historically deployed at an agency/division level in a non-integrated manner. Delaware is moving rapidly towards a implementing a constituent-centric enterprise digital government strategy that delivers a consistent and intuitive user experience. Many government services are accessible online -- and many others should be -- allowing citizen access anytime, from anywhere, and on any device. The State has migrated services to the Internet but without an enterprise strategy, services that must be sought from various agencies. Opening government to individuals and businesses, and breaking down the traditional barriers, encourages innovation and increases efficiency and productivity for everyone.

Delaware has implemented a single sign-on solution with identity proofing to facilitate a single point of entry for digital state services, similar to the Delaware One Stop Business portal. The vision is for a universal directory experience where anyone can register and prove their identity to conduct business with state agencies under that authenticated profile. Initially, Delaware onboarded state and school employees to Delaware ID, the access and identity management solution for state workers. Now, we are embarking on the larger initiative making the constituent solution *mydelaware.delaware.gov* available for the public to consume state digital government services under authenticated identities.

DTI and Department of State's Government Information Center (DOS GIC) continue to work together, along with others, as collaborative partners to develop a strategy to integrate existing systems and deploy new systems into a modern enterprise platform. It includes several technology projects that support the target digital government platform: an underlying customer relationship management application, single sign-on authentication and identity proofing (state worker phase completed; now, citizen platform in implementation phase), email marketing solution, data management and analytics tool, online payment tool, and cloud service. An enterprise digital government access model built on a cloud platform that easily connects and interfaces with existing backend systems across departments is a key component to enabling increased citizen self-service and overall satisfaction. With the right strategic partners, Delaware can determine a course that leads to transformation from the legacy brick-and-mortar government services model to design and implement digital government experiences (optimized website design, forms, and other online transactions) that meet current and future customer expectations. DTI continues to partner with Department of State, Department of Finance, Department of Human Resources, and Office of the State Treasurer to further the digital government strategy, with support from the Office of the Governor.

Accelerated Expansion of Broadband Access Across Delaware

In May 2021, Delaware's Broadband Strategic Plan identified approximately 11,600 underserved home and business addresses. This, along with the needs of the Connect Delaware Students (remote broadband access) and the availability of American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 to fund expanded access in Delaware's broadband deserts, DTI developed a proposal for $110 million in federal funding:

- $90 million to support wired broadband infrastructure expansion, with a particular focus on the edge-out approach to extend existing cable infrastructure (high value on a per-premises basis, and subsidy programs that encourage affordability)

- $18 million to extend through two calendar years the Connect Delaware Students Program for underserved families as bridge during the buildout of wired expansion

- $2 million in funds to support a broadband team to provide administrative staffing (one lead, three managers) to oversee the total $110 million

Human Resources Centralization

Projects in the Department of Human Resources (DHR) continue to focus on five areas: centralizing the delivery of services; modernizing the delivery of human resources services using technology; reducing healthcare costs; training, developing,

and recognizing the great work for employees; and streamlining HR processes using process improvement strategies. The following describes the scope and breadth of the Department of Human Resources projects focused on improving the delivery of HR services with a focus on efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability.

The Department of Human Resources, created in 2017, continues to streamline processes, deliver central policies and procedures, provide expanded training opportunities, and optimize the delivery of human resources services. In 2021, DHR launched an initiative to understand the workplace culture. DHR provided employees in Executive Branch agencies several opportunities to share their voices related to race, diversity, inclusion, and workplace climate. Listening sessions and the Race, Diversity, and Inclusion Survey provided employees opportunities to share personal perspectives and ideas for improving the State's workplace environment. In October 2021, an Organizational Climate Survey invited employees to share personal viewpoints about their overall workplace experience. And DHR supported the State's COVID-19 efforts by managing the COVID-vaccination and testing certification for over 14,000 Executive Branch employees.

DHR has several plans for 2022: implementing an automated Delaware Learning Center helpdesk; providing an LGBTQ+ tool kit including the ability to request preferred first names; and providing trauma-awareness training for employees to bring awareness of trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The training will also include strategies to build resilience and self-care.

Centralize Human Resources
Centralized Human Resources

DHR was created in 2017 to centralize the delivery of human resources services to State employees. The Executive Branch human resources staff were centralized under the Department of Human Resources and services level agreements signed as of June 23, 2019. DHR continues to identify opportunities for improvement and deliver centralized services.

The task to centralize human resources, including staffing, policies, procedures, and practices was initiated per 81 Del. Laws. C. 66 d 1 (29Del. C. 90D) to address the needs of employees and deliver services that are most important to the State. DHR completed the project on June 23, 2019, with the transfer of 13 agency HR staff and the execution of Service Level Agreements with 16 agencies. HR staff not transferred to DHR due to statute or contractual obligations include Delaware National Guard, Department of Education, and Delaware State Housing Authority. DHR created a policies and procedures workgroup to systematically prioritize reviewing, revising, creating, and implementing processes. See **Centralized Policies and Procedures** project.

DHR asks that the GEAR Board continue to support DHR with the centralization of services through and appropriate HR technology.

Employee Success Center

To file a complaint, request human resources services, or find a policy or form, employees need to know which website to find the information. DHR is seeking to implement a one-stop shop for all employees' needs related to human resources. The HR Service Employee Success Center is one source of information and services for State employees to improve the delivery of HR services through the employee lifecycle.

DHR seeks to implement central web-based one-stop shop for all employees to find forms, documents, policies, or request human resource services with the capability to track requests, send automated notifications, and manage staff workload. The Employee Success Center is one source for employees seeking information and resources, including submitting requests electronically, chatbot capability, and request tracking capability. DTI provided DHR with a quote for the Service Now HR Service module. This project is not funded as of the date of this report.

DHR requests that the GEAR Board support the funding and implementation of the Employee Success Center to facilitate the efficient and effective management and delivery of HR services for employees. "We must do things differently than we've always done them and find smarter ways to operate more effectively and protect taxpayer dollars," said Governor

Carney. This HR technology project will enable DHR to achieve this efficiency and provide consistent and equal access to human resources information.

Centralized Policies and Procedures

Critical to centralizing human resources is to standardize human resources policies, procedures, and practices. Over 40 policies, procedures, and HR guidance documents needed to be reviewed and prioritized for DHR to implement standardized HR policies and procedures across the Executive Branch. New policies and procedures are created and implemented as needed to support statute changes and other workplace practices issues. DHR developed and implemented 18 statewide policies and procedures to date, resulting in increased consistency across state agencies, leaders, managers, and employees. DHR continues to systematically revise and implement new policies to address the most critical issues.

DHR created a policies and procedures workgroup to prioritize and systematically work through the review, revision or creation, and implementation process. To date, policies and procedures have been developed and implemented, including a Policy on Policies to standardize the development and implementation of statewide policies and procedures. These policies included Telecommuting, Military Leave, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Family and Medical Act (FMLA), Parental Leave, Call Back Pay, Gender Identity, Standards of Conduct. These were in addition to two COVID-19 policies, including the latest for Vaccination and Testing. There were also 26 forms and several frequently asked questions documents to accompany the policies.

DHR seeks continued support as it works to implement centralized policies, procedures, and practices.

COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Certification

According to Governor Carney, "There's no better way to protect our most vulnerable neighbors from this virus than getting the COVID-19 vaccination." DHR implemented a COVID-19 vaccination and testing certification policy and procedure on September 30, 2021. Randomly selected employees must provide proof of either vaccination or testing as a means of verification or be subject to administrative action. Employees are encouraged to become vaccinated to protect the State's workforce and those it serves. More information on locations for vaccines is on the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services website for coronavirus vaccinations at https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/vaccine.

On August 12, 2021, Governor Carney announced that State employees would be required to provide proof of vaccination or undergo regular testing to help prevent the transmission of COVID-19. He charged DHR to develop a policy and a certification process for the Executive Branch.

An electronic vaccination and testing certification process was implemented to enable employees to certify their status and paper forms were provided for employees without computer access. To date five thousand paper forms were manually entered into the electronic system, making management of the project challenging. The solution also includes a policy with procedures required to be acknowledged by Executive Branch employees, job aids with instructions for employees, and frequently asked questions to support the capability to certify vaccination or weekly testing.

In addition to the DHR developed policies and procedures, frequently asked questions and a user guide to walk employees through the certification process were added to DHR's new COVID-19 vaccination and testing certificate website (https://dhr.Delaware.gov). DTI, in partnership with DHR, created an electronic vaccination and testing certification process that includes a tile integrated into the "ID.Delaware" portal (https://id.delaware.gov) for employees to submit certifications electronically. DTI is providing data and status of certifications weekly. The COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Policy and Procedures were assigned to Executive Branch employees in the Delaware Learning Center (DLC) beginning September 29 with required acknowledgment. The electronic testing and certification process began on September 30. Employees in each agency are randomly selected weekly to show proof of vaccination or weekly testing.

Employees need to be encouraged to become vaccinated to protect the State's workforce and those it serves. And share the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services website for coronavirus vaccinations at https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/vaccine.

Modernize Human Resource Delivery

Centralized Timekeeping Implementation

Implementation of a central timekeeping system, eSTAR, across the agencies and supported by the Department of Human Resources is critical to implementing centralized management of time-related HR services. There were over six different timekeeping systems in the Executive Branch in 2018. A centralized timekeeping system will enable DHR to realize efficiencies and centrally manage time-related human resources functions. Over the past year, DHR provided staffing to support the implementation of Phase V. As of the end of the year, 12 Executive Branch agencies will have migrated to eSTAR for timekeeping. For DHR to implement centrally managed services, such as Family and Medical Leave (FMLA), short and long-term disability, a centralized timekeeping system is essential.

Implementation of eSTAR in the centralized agencies began in phases beginning with DHR in 2019 (Phase IV). With the support of DHR, Phase V implementation began in January 2021. It included centralized agencies with the exclusion of the Department of Education, Department of Transportation, Delaware State Housing Authority, and Delaware State Police. DHR supported this project by providing technical, project, and training resources. eSTAR Phase V implementation completion is expected by December 31, 2021. The timing of Phase VI is yet to be determined.

Continued support is needed to implement eSTAR in the remaining agencies to enable DHR to implement centrally managed services, such as Family and Medical Leave (FMLA), short-term disability and long-term disability, where a centralized timekeeping system is essential.

Delaware Learning Center Helpdesk Tracking System

The Delaware Learning Center (DLC) supports over 44,000 employees, community providers, first responders, and temporary employees. The DLC staff manages system support requests from employees, external learners, and over 100 training administrators using email and telephone calls without a central system to track and manage the requests since the implementation of the system in 2016. Over 10,000 email and telephone requests for assistance are processed manually with a staff of one. An automated helpdesk with web request form capability, automated tracking, and reporting capabilities is necessary to effectively manage employees' training inquiries and requests for assistance related to the DLC. A system is needed to automate the helpdesk and streamline processes to ensure consistency in responding to requests for assistance. The efficiencies created by implementing a DLC Helpdesk system support the GEAR Board's human resources and information technology objectives.

It is time to implement an automated system for the tracking of requests coming into the Delaware Learning Center with workflow, automated notification, and analytics, as well as provide a user support platform to enable users to find answers to their questions easily. DHR is moving forward to request a formal quote and statement of work from the Department of Technology and Information.

DHR requests ongoing funding for licensing maintenance and support.

Centralized Classification, Recruitment, Hiring, Onboarding and Off-Boarding system

The State needs an integrated recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and off-boarding system to provide a consistent and user-friendly experience to all applicants and new hires. It is also a major step to move towards an automated and integrated process with consistent messaging and processes for all new hires including electronic checklists, automated notification and tracking of completed tasks, and move the State away from paper forms and manual entry into the State's Oracle/PeopleSoft HR system by human resources staff.

Pre-centralization of human resources, each agency managed the hiring, onboarding, and off-boarding process through paper forms and files. A workgroup formed in 2017 outlined requirements for the implementation of a centralized hiring, onboarding, and off-boarding system. Although there is a central recruitment system, the contract expired in June 2020. The need for a new contract presents the State with an opportunity to implement a centrally managed and integrated classification, recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and off-boarding solution.

The State needs an automated and integrated recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and off-boarding system to provide a consistent and user-friendly experience to all applicants and new hires. The solution or solutions need to have full workflow, electronic paperless forms capabilities, the ability to manage classification data, referral lists, and automated processing such as e-Verify for employment verification. Implementing a recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and the off-boarding system is a major step towards a single source for new employee information leading to a constituent and centralized processes.

Since 2018, the Department of Human Resources has taken steps to establish a workgroup, create system requirements, conduct gap analyses, view demonstrations of existing system capabilities, conduct a request for information, and draft a request for proposal. With the expiration of the State's recruitment system in 2020, the Office of Management and Budget granted an emergency extension of the existing contract to complete a gap analysis against existing Oracle/Peoplesoft technology. The requirement gathering phase of this analysis is currently in progress.

DHR requests that the GEAR Board support the implementation of an automated and integrated classification, recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and off-boarding solution to ensure applicants and new hires have consistent and positive experiences and to enable the Department of Human Resources to deliver centralized services to applicants, new hires, and employees separating or retiring from state service.

Electronic Employee Personnel Records

The State needs to move from manila folders to digital storage to improve the security and management of critical employee personnel records. Filing cabinets are used to store paper employee personnel records across the State, making access, retrieval, transfer, and storage difficult. The State needs to store and manage employee personnel records in a system electronically so that employment history is maintained throughout the employee's tenure, and security and management of these critical documents is improved. DHR is seeking to implement a solution piloted by the DHR staff supporting the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. Implementation includes deploying a solution in the Cloud.

In 2020, the DHR staff supporting DNREC implemented a pilot electronic content management system to digitize the management of employee personnel records. The system included digitizing employee records and implementing a complete electronic employee record management system (ePersonnel Records). DHR seeks to migrate the system from an on-premises solution into the Cloud in phases statewide.

DHR requested a revised quotation and statement of work from the vendor and now is seeking resources to digitize employees' historical records.

Labor Relations Salesforce System Review

Currently, requests related to grievances and appeals are submitted via email and manually entered in a system. Tracking complaints manually is neither efficient nor effective. The system needs to be expanded and enhanced to enable complaints, grievances, and appeals to be submitted and tracked electronically. DHR is seeking to automate a centralized system with the ability for employees to submit complaints, grievances, and appeals and enable automated notification and enhanced tracking of requests from receipt to the response. The DHR and DTI LREP Salesforce Project Team are evaluating the requirements and will partner to identify potential system enhancements.

DHR and DTI reviewed the existing system and identified several enhancements to evaluate in phases. Completed Phase I enhancements in October 2021, including adding drop-down menus, standardizing department codes, and training on reporting. Review of Phase 2 requirements begins in November 2021 and includes:

- Evaluating a web grievance request form

- Expanding capabilities to manage Step 2 grievances and managing complaints at the agency HR level

- Evaluating the implementation of an enhanced reporting tool

DHR seeks support of the expanded system functionality if funding is required.

Classification/Compensation Workflow Tracking System

The staff reviews and analyzes classification and compensation requests manually by pouring over paper documents stored in filing cabinets. A homegrown system requires manual entry of dates to track requests as they move along the approval process. There is a need to modernize and digitize the classification and compensation processes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the review and analysis of requests and that allows the data capture in a database.

DHR seeks to integrate electronic forms, signatures, storing of supporting documentation, and tracking workflow, automated email notification, and escalation of classification and compensation requests. DHR is seeking to automate the process and provide the ability to submit requests electronically, enable automated notification, and enhance tracking of requests from receipt to the response. This project has three phases. The first phase consists of drafting requirements, forms, and workflows. The DHR Classification and Compensation staff are almost complete with the requirements, forms, and workflow documentation for over 20 processes. The target completion date is November 1, 2021. Phase two includes obtaining DTI system recommendations and quotes. Phase three is the implementation of the solution.

DHR asks GEAR and leadership to support modernizing the delivery of HR Services through the implementation of technology that enables electronic forms, data capture and analysis, and tracking.

Employee Relations Helpdesk Tracking System

DHR Employee Relations team provides services to over 16,000 employees. Over 100 calls and emails are received monthly and, in some cases, result in the creation of frequently asked questions, all of which are captured and tracked manually using Excel spreadsheets. During COVID-19, the team gathered questions from employees and the HR team across the State to create frequently asked questions. DHR is seeking to automate the request/inquiry process and provide employees with the ability to submit requests questions/complaints/inquires electronically. The solution should also enable automated notifications and enhance tracking of requests from receipt to the response.

This project had a rocky start with lots of competing priorities delaying the workgroup from meeting routinely. As of October 26, 2021, the project is on hold pending the hiring of a business analyst as per the Department of Technology and information. The requirements need to be completed and processes mapped.

The GEAR Board is asked to support the continuous improvement efforts of DHR as the team works to identify ways to modernize the delivery of HR services.

Reduce Healthcare Costs

As health care costs continue to climb, the Department of Human Resources/Statewide Benefits Office, under the guidance of the State Employee Benefits Committee, must develop strategies to engage benefit members to reduce health care costs to the State for State employees, pensioners, and their dependents. Engaging benefit members included education and training as well as other strategies to reduce healthcare costs. These efforts resulted in no increase in health care costs for the fourth consecutive year, with over 97% of employees receiving healthcare from the State. DHR seeks support from leadership in future education and training efforts and adoption of implement workplace wellness strategies.

DHR has developed and implemented training and strategies to engage health benefits members, including educating enrolled members about benefit plans, preventive care, and wellness/care management programs. These training strategies included education using online videos, virtual training, and other communications, created a new webpage with musculoskeletal pain and prescription resources, implemented a new employee assistance program open to all employees through January 2021 and updated the COVID-19 Benefits Resources page with links to self-care, resilience, and return to work resources. A Workplace Wellness Policy Workgroup was established in March 2021 to develop a statewide workplace wellness policy.

Support is needed for funding for executive branch agencies for workplace wellness efforts (i.e., healthy events, programs, and employee campaigns). Need to also encourage DHR's efforts to leverage HR centralization and union partners to engage employees in health care education, provide adequate and timely administration of disability benefits.

Train, Develop and Recognize Employees

The objective of the Department of Human Resources/ Division of Training and Strategic Initiatives is to implement and enhance employee development and recognition programs using best industry practices. DHR implemented several new and enhanced statewide training and recognition programs in 2021.

Implement GEAR-P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award

The GEAR P3 Awards recognize teams and individual state employees that demonstrate innovation and efficiencies. It is important to build on and streamline the success of the State/business community awards that recognize excellence in innovation and process continuous improvement in State government. This year two State agency teams and four individuals were recognized for their work. DHR seeks to continue to promote the GEAR P3 Awards and partner with the GEAR and the business community to recognize the great work of State employees.

As the capacity to manage process improvement expands, it is expected that more projects will be recommended for a GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award. In 2020, the award was expanded to include the GEAR P3 Trailblazer Award to recognize individuals and small teams demonstrating innovation and efficiencies. The award program now includes monetary incentives of $10,000 per GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award recipient team and $1,500 for individual GEAR P3 Trailblazer recipients. It is critical that program funding keep pace with anticipated growth in the number of those eligible and deserving of the awards. Currently, the program operates with $25,000 in State funds and $25,000 in business community matching funds. It is important to grow these important recognition programs and to streamline the awards selection, recognition, and funding processes and build sustainability into the award program.

In 2021, the Governor recognized the Judicial Information Center COVID Response Team and the Government Support Services Central Contracting Team as GEAR-P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award recipients (https://dhr.delaware.gov/training/award/team). And four individuals were selected as recipients of the GEAR P3 Trailblazer Award from the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, Department of Technology and Information, and Department of Finance https://dhr.delaware.gov/training/award/excellence.

The GEAR Board should continue to promote the GEAR P3 awards to the cabinet officials and partnerships with the business community.

Implement the Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CIP) certificate program

Delaware's private sector and citizenry expect State agencies to implement projects that lead to more effective and efficient state government. The Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CIP) Certificate Program builds the State's bench strength of employees with the skills necessary to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government processes and programs. In partnership with GEAR, DHR developed a program to equip employees with the skills to conduct process optimization projects.

The purpose of the CIP Program is to increase the State's internal capacity to promote, facilitate, and implement systematic and sustainable improvement efforts by developing groups of skilled practitioners to lead and support those efforts. These groups of trained practitioners will assist and support one another as contributing members of the GEAR Field Team. This program leverages partnerships with the University of Delaware and the Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership. The program fosters relationship building and information sharing among participants to establish a diverse community of continuous improvement practitioners across organizations. Individuals who complete the program will join the GEAR Field Team to share projects strategies and build capacity across the State to sustain and promote continuous improvement efforts.

In February 2021, the CIP program launched with 21 State employees representing eight agencies. Participants completed 85 hours of training in June 2021. Projects worked on during training are added to the GEAR portfolio and presentations made by participants during GEAR Field Team and GEAR Board meetings. As of October 2021, 15 employees are currently

enrolled in the certificate program, representing eight agencies, including four agencies new to the program. Project team assignments and mentors were added to the program to enhance participants' training experiences.

DHR requests support for a $100,000 increase to the First State Quality Improvement Fund (Title 29, Chapter 60B). The additional funding would support the implementation of a Project and Process Leadership Program part of the iLEAD Leadership Program series to prepare the State's future leaders. Increased First State Quality Improvement Fund program funding would also allow CIP to train up to 30 employees annually and implement training as part of the new Project and Process Leadership program.

Implement the iLEAD Leadership Program

Citizens of Delaware and the private sector expect State agency leadership to have the skills necessary to establish a vision, implement plans, achieve goals, and maintain a workplace culture of excellence. DHR is requesting an increase of $100,000 to the First State Quality Improvement Fund (Title 29, Chapter 60B). The additional funding will support the implementation of the Organizational Development leadership program to prepare the State's future directors and leaders. There was a need to modernize and replace the decade-old leadership program and address the different needs of aspiring supervisors, frontline leaders, project, and process leaders.

To build future leaders, DHR created the iLEAD Delaware Leadership Program. The vision is that the iLEAD program is a series of four leadership development curriculums: Leadership Essentials, Frontline Leadership, Project and Process Leadership, and Organizational Leadership (iLEAD State of Delaware Leadership Program). Implementation includes four phases. Leadership Essentials (Phase 1) is for new, current, and aspiring supervisors with learning opportunities using asynchronous training to build the knowledge and skills to be a successful supervisor. Frontline Leadership (Phase 2) focuses on meeting the challenges faced by frontline leaders in the day-to-day supervision of a team, including communication, decision-making, managing conflict, and managing employee performance. Project and Process Leadership (Phase 3) develops skills for managing programs, leading, and improving processes, and facilitating organizational change. This program compliments the CIP certification program with quality improvement development experiences focused on engaging and influencing others. Organizational Leadership (Phase 4) is for more experienced managers and those responsible for setting agency vision and goals, implementing plans, and ensuring agency agility.

DHR launched iLEAD Leadership Essentials in March 2021 for new, current, and aspiring supervisors with learning opportunities using asynchronous training to build the knowledge and skills of a successful supervisor. Over seven months, 175 employees completed the program, and another 275 employees are currently enrolled. iLEAD Frontline Leadership launched on July 1 to replace the decade-old Supervisory Development Certificate Program (SDC) with 109 enrolling in the program. To be accepted into the Frontline Leadership program, individuals must complete the Leadership Essentials program, complete an application, and gain supervisory approval.

Support is sought for an increase in First State Quality Improvement Fund program funding by $100,000 to support the implementation of the additional two phases of Project and Process Leadership and the Organizational Leadership programs.

Streamline HR Processes – Lean HR Demonstration

As part of the centralization of HR staff and the service level agreement negotiations, DHR agreed to create a Lean HR Demonstration. This effort focuses on service delivery metrics related to classification and compensation requests, recruitment and hiring, and Step 3 grievances.

Classification and Compensation Service Delivery - Lean HR Demonstration

The Classification and Compensation Section reviews and analyzes data related to requests that impact pay grades, salary ranges, position establishments, career mobility, compensation, and classification of positions. The timeliness of the reviews is critical to the management of staff in state agencies.

The Lean HR Demonstration works to eliminate waste in HR Processes, deliver high-quality human resources service, effectively align skills with work, and track, monitor, and evaluate the improvements. In Fiscal Year 2021, DHR processed

95 percent of the classification and compensation requests included in the demonstration within the established timeframes. DHR continues to seek to modernize the delivery of Services through technology that enables electronic forms, data capture and analysis, and tracking. This effort is part of the Classification/Compensation Workflow Tracking System project.

In 2019, DHR established the Lean HR Demonstration to map work processes, identify opportunities for improvement, train HR staff, and track the status of six request types, including advanced starting salary, critical reclassifications, position establishments, casual/seasonal exemption request, dual incumbency, and straight time overtime. Overall, DHR processed 95 percent of the classification and compensation requests included in the demonstration within the established timeframes. Results in Fiscal Year 2021 included: 100 percent of advanced starting salaries for new hires, 94 percent of critical reclassification, 91 percent of position establishments, 100 percent of dual incumbencies, 85 percent of casual/seasonal exceptions, and 100 percent of straight-time overtime requests met the target timeframes.

The review and analysis of these requests are performed manually by staff who must pour over paper documents stored in filing cabinets, which are then tracked using Excel spreadsheets and an Access-type database that is updated as each request is received and completed. DHR asks GEAR and leadership to support efforts by DHR to modernize the delivery of HR Services through the implementation of technology enabling electronic forms, data capture and analysis, and tracking. (See Classification/Compensation Workflow Tracking System project description.)

Talent Acquisition - Recruitment and Hiring Lean HR Demonstration

Filling positions and keeping them filled is critical to the mission of State agencies. DHR identified an opportunity to develop agency-specific strategies to reduce the time to fill vacant positions. Several agencies expressed concerns about the vacancies in hard-to-fill positions. The department developed statewide recruitment strategies and implemented several initiatives for hard-to-fill positions resulting in a reduction of time to fill and time to hire across several agencies.

In collaboration with agency recruitment staff, DHR mapped the recruitment and hiring processes and implemented improvements that included tracking agency time-to-fill and hiring performance standards to ensure process improvements in collaboration with agency hiring managers. This resulted in a 1.2 percent decrease in the time-to-fill, and 5.5 percent reduction in time-to-hire, metrics. DHR worked with agencies with hard-to-fill positions and implemented recruitment and retention incentives for hard-to-fill positions. The continued support and involvement of hiring managers are critical to continuously improving the metrics.

In Fiscal Year 2021, there were varying degrees of improvement within each agency. Across the Executive Branch, there was a 1.3 percent reduction in the time-to-fill metric – the average time-to-fill reduced from 75 days to 74 days -- and a 5.5 percent reduction in time-to-hire – the average time-to-hire duration was reduced from 54 days to 51 days. Additionally, recruitment and retention incentive programs were expanded for hard to fill positions in several State agencies, including:

- Nurses in the Department of Health and Social Services and the Delaware Veterans Home

- Correctional Officers in the Department of Correction

- Family Service Specialists, and Youth Rehabilitation Counselors and Treatment Specialists in The Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families

- Engineers in the Department of Transportation

State salaries offered are, on average, lower than in the competitive private-sector marketplace. In a post-COVID talent shortage environment, this imbalance of State salaries to the marketplace strains our ability to attract talent to fill vacancies. Current DHR staff levels negatively impact our ability to maintain a high level of agency engagement when conducting efficiency improvement initiatives. Support for DHR Talent Acquisition strategy development -- which involves a continuous improvement approach with agencies – and more direct ownership by hiring managers for process improvement activities is needed to improve key metrics ongoing.

GEAR FIELD TEAM

Overview of Current Initiatives

Reducing Debt Burden for Ex-Offenders

A traffic ticket or criminal conviction typically leads to the assessment of fines and fees. A $29 speeding fine will total well over $100 after additional fees are applied. Most fees are statutorily mandated. The Courts assess and collect fines and fees; some of the collections are submitted to the General Fund and some is budgeted by the General Assembly for specific operational costs for the State. Some examples of specific services that are partially or fully funded through fee assessments include the Delaware Justice Information System (DELJIS), the Victims Compensation Fund, Transportation Trust Fund, Ambulance Services, Local Law Enforcement, and Court Security.

The Judicial Branch is focusing on three main issues when it comes to the issue of fees and fines reform. First, it wants to ensure a fair system for those who are unable to pay. The goal is to help people get out of the criminal justice system and lead the most productive lives possible, but for many, a large amount of criminal justice debt only causes more hardship. Second, the Courts are spending time and resources trying to collect on uncollectable receivables. Finally, the Judicial Branch's collections policies can vary between courts. Consistent and uniform policies on collections are critical to implement a more efficient case management system.

The following are some of the reforms that the Judicial Branch has accomplished, or plans to accomplish:

- The Judicial Branch has been working with the Department of Justice and the Office of Defense Services to find workable solutions to reform the system. These cooperative efforts resulted in the introduction of HB 244 of the 151st General Assembly. The Judicial Branch supports HB 244

- The Judicial Branch has written off the debt obligations of non-restitution cases that are over 10-years old. The fees and fines associated with these cases are cleared out of DELJIS and the courts will not be attempting any collections of these cases. 86 percent of these cases had never seen a payment. For cases over 10-years old involving restitution, everything has been written-off except for restitution

- The Judicial Branch continues to work on a plan that would give discretion to the Courts to adjust assessments based on a defendant's ability to pay. This would require legislation. The Judiciary needs to review the approaches for determining ability to pay and accessing the appropriate information. The Judicial Branch does not want to create a system that would require many additional resources or delay sentencing in the courts

- The Judicial Branch also supports the elimination of many fees. As the elimination of fees would impact the state budget, this may need to be an incremental solution. Two examples of fees that could be considered for elimination include the Public Defender Fee and DOC's Supervision Fee for probationers. The collections for these large fees are submitted to the General Fund. This would also require legislation, and elimination of the two named examples are included in HB 244

- The Judicial Branch is working internally to develop consistent and uniform collections and payment policies and processes throughout the branch

The Judicial Branch is looking for GEAR Board support of fee reform legislation to create an ability-to-pay process that can be easily and efficiently implemented by the courts and to eliminate certain fees entirely. The Judicial Branch is also looking for support in the budget process to fund state services without assessing fees on those involved in the criminal justice system.

Pretrial Reform

The objective is to use best practices to determine more objectively persons at risk to reoffend or fail to appear in court. Non-violent, low-risk people should not be jailed simply because they cannot afford secured bail. In addition, those who are considered a risk to public safety, or a flight risk should be detained pending trial.

The "Bail Reform Act" (House Bill 204 of the 149th General Assembly) was signed on January 25, 2018. The Bail Reform Act encourages the use of non-monetary conditions of release when those conditions reasonably assure the defendant's appearing at court proceedings, public safety, and the integrity of the judicial process. This Act sought to reduce the unnecessary pretrial incarceration of defendants who are not wealthy enough to pay cash bail, as well as to reduce the resulting loss in employment, pressure to plead guilty, economic toll on non-affluent defendants and their families, and other substantial harm that results from the excessive use of cash bail. The risk assessment tool ("DELPAT") was developed to make these determinations and the Interim Court Rule went into effect January 1, 2019.

While statistics were being tracked the first year of implementation, it has been virtually impossible to determine quantifiable outcomes of the Bail Reform Act given the significant delays and changes to court case processing caused by the pandemic.

Under the Interim Rule, judicial officers must address some of the most difficult bail decisions involving charges of domestic violence and must make bail decisions with limited information and no recommendation from the Department of Justice and the Office of Defense Services at the initial appearance. A committee, including members of the Judicial Branch and representatives of the Department of Justice and the Office of Defense Services, drafted an updated rule in the spring of 2021, but the finalization of that rule was put on pause with the introduction of Senate Bill 7.

Though the Interim Rule, and proposed Final Rule, included certain "signal" offenses which would require cash bail, SS 1 for SB 7 with SA 2, SA 1, and HA 4, signed by the Governor on June 30, 2021, updated the bail statute with a new list of serious offenses enumerated in the bill for which the bail presumption is secured cash bail. On May 13, 2021, Chief Justice Seitz formed the Domestic Violence Bail Review Task Force. Chaired by Justice Randy Holland (Retired), Supreme Court of Delaware, the Task Force released their report and recommendation on August 25, 2021. The report recommended a new risk assessment tool specifically designed for domestic violence cases. Arizona State University is working with the State of Delaware under the auspices of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council to develop such an instrument.

The Task Force report outlined the information that the judge needs in deciding to set the amount and conditions of bail when domestic violence is alleged. The information, when available, would come from the arresting officer and public records. The report also outlines the role of that other agencies or groups can play in informing the judge's decision on bail when domestic violence is alleged.

A Final Rule is being drafted which will incorporate the changes of SS 1 for SB 7 with SA 2, SA 1 and HA 4 into the previously drafted rule. The Courts and the Statistical Analysis Center are working on methods to develop meaningful statistics on bail reform considering pandemic disruptions.

E-filing, Case Management and Document Management

The Judicial Branch is concluding an exhaustive evaluation of the e-Filing, Case Management and Document Management solutions used across the Courts. This evaluation, which included the engagement of consultants, highlighted several critical issues with the solutions currently used by the Courts and the long-term stability of these platforms. The issues included:

- Reliance on custom built applications for Civil and Criminal Case Management

- Dependency on employee knowledge of custom-built systems

- Reliance on older technology for Civil and Criminal Case Management and dependency on staff that are becoming harder to find and more expensive to retain

- Too many disparate systems storing data which limits the quantity and efficiency of reporting and analytics (two Civil Case Management Systems, two Criminal Case Management Systems, three e-Filing Systems)

- Limited public access solutions for Civil and Criminal data

- Dependency on paper for some Civil and most Criminal case management practices

  - No document management for Family Court Civil

      o   No document management for all Criminal jurisdictions

Based on these findings, the Judicial Branch is planning to replace and unify all e-Filing, Case Management and Document Management solutions across all Courts with a unified solution.

The urgency for e-Filing, Case Management and Document Management became even more significant during the pandemic, when access to the courthouses was limited. It was difficult for the public to file documents, submit other court paperwork, or make payments remotely without a modern and unified system. One court had to create an ad hoc E-Filing system with email inboxes to accept court filings.

The completion of this project will improve the way that the Judicial Branch conducts business day to day and the quality and convenience of the services it can offer the citizens of Delaware. Improvements will include:

- Reducing the Judicial Branch use of the Mainframe by migrating Family Court's Civil Case Management System and the CMS Case Management System. Also reducing the need for programmers that specialize in outdated programming language; these resources are becoming very difficult to find in the work force

- Eliminate State hosting responsibilities for e-Filing and Case Management systems, including responsibilities such as Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance and Continuity of Operations (COOP) disaster recovery planning

- Standardizing data formats will make reporting faster and more consistent across Courts

- Using the same system across courts will improve the ability to train and cross-train employees across courts, allowing more opportunity for shared resources between them. This also assists Judicial Branch employees as they seek opportunity in other courts for promotion

- Reduced foot traffic within the courthouses due to remote data access and e-Filing

- Convenient and streamlined e-Filing options for filers, including guided filing solutions for Pro-Se litigants

- Improved public access solutions for Civil and Criminal data with opportunities for remote access of individual and bulk data

- Remote work solutions for courts currently dependent on paper files

  - Allows "Work from Home" functionality as a recruitment and retention tool

  - Ensures staff could operate in situations like COVID-19

The Judicial Branch has been awarded American Rescue Plan Act funds for the implementation of this initiative. Contract negotiations are on-going.

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

Overview of Current Initiatives

Consolidation of Long-Term Care facilities in Delaware

Acute care hospital capacity to treat COVID-19 step down patients and critical staffing levels in Delaware's two state-run long-term care facilities, Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill (DHCI) and Governor Bacon Health Center (GBHC), presented a challenge. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, hospital capacity to treat individuals with COVID-19 positive status, that no longer needed an acute level of care, was of great concern to the medical community, Delaware Emergency Management Agency, the Division of Public Health and Delaware leaders. In addition, staff levels at both 5-star rated facilities reached critical levels due to many factors including Covid-19 infection, quarantine, and isolation of staff and the inability to move staff on different units due to infection control measures.

The solution was to methodically, safely, and thoughtfully relocate the 34 residents along with the long-time dedicated staff at the Governor Bacon Health Center to the Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill. This relocation would allow GBHC to be converted to a step-down facility for non-emergent, non-acute, covid-positive patients to convalesce with nursing supervision and supports until they were able to return home. This consolidation also alleviated the criticality of staffing shortages as staff were combined into one location.

All 34 residents and their dedicated staff were relocated over the course of 6 weeks by unit. Each unit that was relocated spent 14 days in a separate wing of the Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill with a separate outside, dedicated entrance to comply with CDC guidance on infection control and new admission quarantine guidance. Once each unit had completed their quarantine period, they were integrated into the facility and the next unit completed the move.

The integration balanced the needs of residents, staff, and family members. Each resident, their family and their advocates including the Division of Health Care Quality and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman were consulted and engaged in the transition process. Because of the attention to detail, dedicated staff at both facilities and unwavering person-centered leadership the consolidation resulted in zero loss due to transfer trauma. Team members at Governor Bacon Health Center and Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill and their union representatives were engaged in the consolidation discussion immediately following the announcement in March of 2020. Consideration was given to staff who did not want to transition to Smyrna and those few employees were redeployed to DHSS locations in New Castle County. A temporary shuttle service was offered to staff who faced potential transportation barriers. Family members and caregivers of each resident were consulted. A map of where each resident's family/caregiver lives was reviewed and alternative options were discussed with each resident and their loved ones. Ultimately, all families and residents chose to transition to DHCI.

Additional benefits with this transfer include avoiding vulnerabilities at the GBHC such as power outages, fire, and flooding, and environmental factors caused by the age and location of the building such as mold, and uneven and broken sidewalks. Residents of DHCI receive services that were not readily available at GBHC including behavioral health services. Consolidation of the two facilities maximized the resources available across the two facilities enabling the state to provide a better quality of care.

Optimizing Psych Medication Use in LTC

Delaware's state-run long-term care (LTC) facility operates under heavy regulations, as all facilities do, particularly in the domain of psychotropic medication use. The Psychotropic Medication Advisory Committee (PMAC) was created to monitor the use and effectiveness of psychotropic medication in LTC residents. This is an interdisciplinary model developed to address regulatory, clinical, and systemic needs.

The Center for Medicaid & Medicare Services (CMS) has defined quality measures for all LTC facilities nationwide and publishes a monthly report of performance compared to all state and national facilities. Behavioral health-related metrics, including psychotropic medication use, account for 35 percent of a facility's performance. Additionally, the American Healthcare Association (AHCA) set forth a target initiative for LTC facilities to decrease use of antipsychotic medication by 10 percent by 2021. Furthermore, best practices in the field of dementia treatment recommend minimizing

use of antipsychotics in particular, due to the black box warning and increased risk of death. Use of psychotropic medication in LTC is also heavily regulated at the federal level. Finally, and most importantly, effective use of psychotropic medication is an important aspect of optimizing the LTC resident's quality of life.

Using the PMAC model, DHCI has met and exceeded all targets and performance metrics. Success has been achieved and maintained for 3 years. While the committee is highly successful from a clinical and regulatory perspective, there are challenges and barriers to sustaining the committee's operations. This project was initiated to apply Lean process improvement and continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts to develop a more efficient process that can be integrated into the system of care offered by the facility.

Two significant problems are being addressed. First, the process is complex, and there are workforce limitations. To address this, a set of agile teams with clear PMAC roles and responsibilities has been established, and an operations manual is under development. The work to-date focusing on decreasing the complexity of the process has resulted in an 80 percent reduction in lead and cycle time, and an average of 67 percent increase in the number of completed reviews. Second, there are data management barriers which require more efficient technology solutions to manage data and organize health information, i.e., acquiring a better electronic medical record (EMR) system and building a dashboard. This proposed solution is still in the planning phase.

DHSS hopes to raise awareness of the importance, and complexity, of using and appropriately managing psychotropic medication use in LTC.

Implementing Person Centered Care in LTC

Moving toward Person Centered Care (PCC) involves shifts on multiple levels of a system. One of the most important, and challenging, areas is culture change. Previously, the traditional medical model was used, which is an outdated approach to making decisions about a person's care. While well-intentioned, this model is typically seen as dictating what happens to a person, rather than making decisions with the person. Residential facilities such as LTC have often prioritized efficiency over preference and making care decisions based on what a care team thought was best for the person, rather than asking the person for their input and creating an approach around who they are, as a person.

As a LTC facility, DHCI needed to make these culture changes as well, and was awarded a grant to help with these endeavors. The goal is to transform the attitude of the staff, adjust the way care is provided, change the way care plans are made, prioritize quality of life, and to use a new language when supporting residents and discussing care. DHSS believes this can be achieved through training and consultation with experts in the field and adding new types of services for the residents to promote the shift in care.

The plan to achieve these goals is currently underway. This is a 3-year grant that will close in 2022. The primary focus currently has been training staff, which is a major undertaking. DHCI staff collaborated with subject matter experts (SME's) to create a customized training program to introduce PCC concepts and help staff develop a deeper understanding of what it means to be person-centered. Multiple versions of training were developed for different professionals who work in the facility, so that everyone is supported in understanding their role in a person-centered culture. This has included a one-hour virtual training for all staff; a 3-hour live training for clinical staff; and an additional full-day live training primarily focused on nursing staff. Following the training, these SME's will continue in a consultative role and work hands-on with nursing to ensure that the culture continues to shift.

To date, over 500 individuals completed the half-day training on PCC basics. Approximately 136 staff have completed an additional full-day training, with plans for another 300+ staff to be trained as well.

By sharing this project with the GEAR Board, it is hoped there will be increased awareness of this effort and the values it reflects on behalf of the Division of Aging & Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD) as it serves the State's citizens.

Expanding Nonpharmacological Services at DHCI

Quality of life and behavioral health are important areas of emphasis in long-term care. Addressing these closely related areas of well-being may include psychotropic medication, but ideally, DHSS wants to minimize and/or avoid the use of medication when possible. To accomplish this goal, DHSS emphasizes the use of nonpharmacological, or non-medication, therapies and supports. Many modalities are already used at DHCI, including, but not limited to, Music & Memory, cardio drumming, iN2L tablets, and a sensory room. To continue building a person-centered culture and minimize psych medication use, DHSS received grant funding to add new services for the residents, including animal assisted therapy, yoga therapy, and art therapy. The grant funding will allow the facility to explore the benefits and feasibility of adding such services on a continued basis.

Each therapy will be offered for 8 weeks, and 10 residents will be included in each therapy, for a total of 30 residents receiving services. Pre- and post-assessments of emotional well-being and quality of life will be completed. This information will inform decisions when considering the benefit and impact of each therapy type. DHSS will also evaluate the implementation process to identify any areas of challenge or potential improvement. After completing the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle, DHSS intends to provide another round of 8-week therapies to another 30 residents to determine if improvements make the service more sustainable. DHSS will also have the opportunity to assess the impact of each therapy type on various types of clinical situations, including the effect of services on those with dementia, traumatic brain injury, and history of COVID-19.

The intent is to use this information to make decisions moving forward about the appropriateness and best use of therapy modalities. The priority will be determining if the therapy has provided benefit or resulted in improvement for the residents. Other considerations will include the appropriate use of resources, including budgeting for the services ongoing, use of staffing, efficiency of the process, flow of the services, etc. This information will be used to create a plan to sustain services that are shown to be feasible, beneficial, and well-received by the residents.

Currently, DHSS is in the planning stages. Therapies will launch in late October 2021 with an anticipated initial evaluation scheduled for January 2022. DHSS intends to finalize the grant-funded portion of the project by late spring 2022.

Person Centered Care in DSAAPD's Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS)

Moving toward Person Centered Care (PCC) division-wide involves culture change shifts on every level of the system. Currently, LTSS have often prioritized more of a "menu" style of offerings and authorized the highest level possible, over a participant's preference. Care and service decisions are made based on what a care team thought was best for the person, rather than asking the person for their input and creating an approach around who they are, as a person. Through the PCC culture and service shift in LTSS, this will ensure service recipients oversee their own care. One major difference will be that caregivers will also be included as a service recipient themselves to ensure that they are receiving the support and care that they need while providing care to their loved one.

The current grant through the National Academy of State Health Policy (NASHP) is a policy grant that identifies the needs of caregivers through targeted focus groups. This grant will be completed in May/June of 2022 and will include a report of the needs of those caregivers in Delaware. Through this work, Division of Services for Aging & Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD) is partnering with the Division of Medicare and Medical Assistance (DMMA), Easterseals Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore, and American Association of Retired Persons Delaware, regarding policy changes to better support caregivers throughout Delaware. The division will compile a sustainable action network of community advocates to continue this important work past the grant period. Caregivers are an extremely important part of the care continuum, and they need to be properly supported. Through the community reset project with Advancing States, and the technical assistance grant through National Center for Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS) this shift can begin and will also assist in identifying the training needs of division staff and providers. This shift in thinking will ensure that service participants are in the "driver's seat" of their own care and will take their own goals, needs, preferences, values, lifestyle, and support team involvement and incorporate it into their care plan goals. The goal is to transform the attitude of the staff, adjust the way services are provided, change the way care plans are made, prioritize quality of life, and to use a new language when supporting participants.

The plan to achieve these goals is currently underway. A separate, 3-year LTC grant that will close in 2022 sets the basic PCC foundation for all staff, and the staff is excited and ready for more. That grant, along with the community reset through Advancing States, is paving the way. The primary focus will be training staff, which is a major undertaking. DSAAPD will be collaborating with subject matter experts and creating a concrete plan with NCAPPS to create a customized training programs to expand on PCC concepts and help staff develop a deeper understanding of what it means to be person-centered. Trainings will be developed for all levels of staff including leadership, social workers, case managers, fiscal, provider relations, sister agency staff (especially where services overlap) and will branch out to service providers. Proper training and service modifications will ensure a seamless PCC experience in all aspects of service delivery.

DSAAPD hopes that by sharing this project with the GEAR Board, there will be increased awareness of this effort and the values it reflects as it serves older Delawareans, adults with physical disabilities and caregivers statewide.

DSAAPD Training Revamp Project Reform Alignment & Intrinsic Staff Engagement in Training (RAISE-IT)

The administration of DSAAPD values the investment of training and development of its staff. The Training Unit takes a strategic approach to specialized professional education intended to produce measurable results. Through these measures we have found that certain training opportunities are underutilized, particularly in trainings labeled "voluntary" (about 43 percent of offerings) versus those considered "mandatory" (about 50 percent of offerings). Of the 134 live/in person trainings offered in the year 2019, prior to transition to electronic learning due to COVID, the average attendance rate across both categories was about 50 percent (range = 27-67 percent); however, this is a combination of both mandatory and voluntary, which inflates the number of attendees in voluntary offerings. After performing a root cause analysis, the team determined that event attendance has not met target metrics due to an incongruent conceptualization of the purpose of training, based on long established organizational culture and history that was developed over the course of many years. Current administration is committed to changing the culture across the agency in numerous ways, which assists greatly with the change management portion of the project. The current culture affects how training is embraced by the current target audience. A comprehensive project management plan, and a strong change management plan have been developed to start the process of establishing a new foundation which will encourage increased attendance, among other goals.

The first goal is to build interdepartmental partnerships and commitment to facilitate utilization of training events. At this time these are primarily focused on the Planning, Policy & Program Development Unit, as well as the Quality Assurance Department. These team members will participate in the overall project management plan as key players. Building a strong relationship with the Nursing Department will facilitate the most crucial changes that need to be made. The next goal is to establish a monitoring system by standardizing the training process, to accurately assess the effectiveness of the training. This will be achieved through collaboration and creation of a registration commitment with key departments; co-creation of a calendar based on identified needs and preferences of the participants; and using multiple modes of communicating training opportunities.

The team intends to propose an iterative implementation plan with multiple Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles. DSAAPD will use the Prosci PCT model to monitor its progress in the four critical aspects of change management, i.e., leadership/sponsorship, project management, change management, success. The change management plan is designed to increase awareness and desire for change while concurrently establishing a governance model. Once these two targets are underway, DSAAPD will begin implementing the technical component of the project management plan.

Energy Savings Program

DHSS has entered a Phase II energy-savings performance contract with Seiberlich Trane Energy Services, a Delaware based energy service company (ESCO). This Phase II project builds upon the success of the Phase I project completed a couple years earlier.

Energy-savings performance contracts are advantageous for the State of Delaware and its agencies as they allow separate funding to be provided for work that has energy and cost savings over its life cycle. As such, DHSS has been able to be proactive and comprehensively improve its facilities and equipment to reduce long-term financial and operating risk. Many of the energy saving measures implemented would have eventually or soon needed to be replaced using traditional capital

budget dollars. These projects help DHSS and other state agencies get more facilities improvements done than would otherwise be possible with their budgets.

These energy-savings projects also help the State accelerate its movement towards reducing its carbon footprint, using renewable energy, and saving energy. They also help put local contractors to work and create additional construction and engineering jobs.

The Phase I project focused mostly on converting the lighting systems throughout nearly all of DHSS facilities state-wide to LED lighting, as well as a few other miscellaneous energy-savings measures such as fixing/replacing steam traps and installing high-efficiency water fixtures. Primarily, the goal for Phase I was to prove out the project contracting model as being successful and as being a good fit for DHSS. Because of the success of Phase I, a more comprehensive Phase II plan was created.

Under Phase II, a wide range of energy-savings measures were evaluated across all DHSS facilities including solar photovoltaic power generation, new HVAC equipment, HVAC systems commissioning, laundry system improvements, and much more. Measures were evaluated based on their cost-effectiveness, their environmental impact, and if they helped avoid upcoming major capital project costs for the State.

Savings were calculated to be $880,000 per year for both phases. Phase I established a $4.3 million contract and resulted in $276,000 of annual energy savings. Phase II established an Investment Grade Audit Agreement (IGAA) and report which was received June 2, 2020. There were 41 buildings totaling 1.4 million square feet in scope. Financing was provided by the State of Delaware and a 20-year Master Lease at 1.811 percent was provided by the Bank of America. Phase II contract value is $11,931,827. First year utility savings are estimated to be $604,453. The creation of 138 construction and engineering jobs is also expected.

Fleet Optimization Project

Vehicles are assigned to a working unit as either "block" or as "pool." A block vehicle is billed for a full month regardless of actual usage and is not shared with other working units. Pool vehicles are billed only when they are actually used, and pool vehicles are shared among various working units. DHSS consistently has approximately 400 block vehicles spread among multiple locations. Vehicle usage that has been measured and reported every month, indicates that more than half of the block vehicles assigned to DHSS -- and billed for an entire month -- are considered "underutilized" by the Office of Management and Budget. Underutilization is defined as used less than 60 percent of available time. It is recognized that some operational units need block designated vehicles to accommodate special circumstances. Those special operational units may experience a quick and urgent need that requires that they have a block vehicle at their disposal. It is also recognized that some of those special operational unit's block vehicles may on occasion be underutilized.

The Vehicle Optimization Project reports the large number of underutilized block vehicles to those accountable within their organizations in the hope that the working units controlling those vehicles will consider changing their cost designation from block to pool if circumstances allow. Underutilized vehicles changed from block to pool designation would yield instant and significant savings. Underutilized vehicles moved to the pool designation would cease being billed for a full month and would begin being billed only when used.

There are multiple opportunities to reduce vehicle expense. This project looks at the opportunity after a vehicle has been delivered and assigned to a working unit. Consistently, the cost of keeping underutilized block vehicles at DHSS is estimated to be $800,000 annually. Working units have been slow to change vehicle designation from block to pool or provide justification for maintaining an underutilized block vehicle. The impact of not changing underutilized vehicles from block to pool designation has been vehicle expenses that continue to be higher than they would be had vehicles been changed to pool designation.

DHSS Dashboard

DHSS has 11 divisions delivering a variety of services. Before the creation of the DHSS Dashboard, department leaders needed to solicit data and information from multiple division leaders to understand the current state of the agency. An

integrated report that focused on the Key Process Indicators (KPI) from the various DHSS divisions did not exist. Data driven decision making was hindered in the absence of one central dashboard report. The current state process was suboptimal given the time spent engaging multiple divisions to get KPI information.

The proposed solution was to create one central dashboard presenting the KPI information to leaders to facilitate decision making. Moving to one report versus multiple reports, has improved the ability to base decisions on relevant data, while increasing the quality and speed of decision making.

The department leadership now receives the DHSS dashboard report monthly. The data in it facilitates their decisions given timely understanding of the current state of the department. Leadership receives this one report with KPIs instead of soliciting data from multiple sources and reports.

This project has demonstrated that dashboards are effective, repeatable, and scalable. The DHSS Dashboard has been extremely successful, and the continuous improvement method employed is available to be leveraged in other Departments if desired.

Inperium Conexio

Connections Community Support Programs, Inc. previously delivered vital services to recipients with intellectual disabilities, mental health group homes, veteran's housing programs, sober living, and methadone treatment among other services. DHSS could not afford a gap in service delivery since these services were critical and essential to the health and wellbeing of the service recipients. Failure to bring the new service provider, Inperium Conexio, fully onboard before Connections ceased operations could have resulted in a range of physical injuries.

There were many tasks to identify and complete to allow the new service provider to begin to receive and treat clients. Some of these tasks included licensing, permits, contractual agreements, staffing, non-profit status, finding treatment locations, and many more. The project team used project management methodology to identify the tasks, track them in a work breakdown structure and project plan, and they met in project meetings to discuss the open tasks. With each project meeting, the open tasks were discussed and marked complete or not complete, and if not complete, the completion percentage was noted, signaling that task needed further attention.

During the project, the project team steadily achieved completion of the open tasks. The project was completed October 7, 2021 at which time there were no more material tasks impeding Inperium Conexio from receiving and treating service recipients.

Business Process Optimization using ARIS

DHSS leadership recognized that one of its procurement processes was suboptimal and therefore was an opportunity for improvement. Leadership asked the project manager to review the process and identify how it might be improved. The project manager used the GEAR-approved Aris business process analysis tools to create process maps that showed the before and after process to collaborate with the team and demonstrate visually that the proposed changes yield better processing results. By using Aris as part of this process redesign, DHSS realized improved process speed and decreased errors.

The presenting problem to be addressed was first identified and thoroughly defined before proposing changes and removing the process inefficiency. Specifically, the project focused on the DHSS Division of Management Services procurement process and the inefficiencies created by the suboptimal intersection with the Fiscal Management section. Fiscal Management was involved in the process, but problems occurred because of the timing of its engagement. Fiscal Management was not involved until late in the process. This created problems in some procurements because Fiscal Management performs necessary queries regarding funding, and when those queries do not occur until late in the process, occasionally procurements will be halted or need rapid attention to cure funding questions.

The solution was to use Aris to model the current state of the process to establish common understanding of the end-to-end process flow across all of the participants in the process. Once the visual representation of the current state model was shared, project meetings with stakeholders revealed where changes could be made in the future state process to optimize it by moving where Fiscal Management should become involved in the procurement process. Only when the current state and future state processes were compared side-by-side using the Aris tool, could the problems encountered by Fiscal Management's late involvement be resolved by involving them earlier in the process. Using the Aris tool turned a textual written procedure into a visual set of process maps that facilitated the analysis and design of an optimized process flow that has eliminated fiscal process bottlenecks.

The results show that using Aris to create swim lane process maps is an effective way to turn a written procedure into a visual image that key stakeholders can use to better understand the current process and collaboratively design an optimized future state process. Business Process Analysis and optimization will be applied to other point initiatives as appropriate and is being considered as a general practice across all DHSS processes to provide transparency, ensure continuity of operation, and to provide a vehicle for savings driven by process optimization and continuous improvement.

Vaccinate Vulnerable Citizens

In January 2021, an internal Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) workgroup was formed. The DHSS Vaccine Distribution Workgroup was established to draw on division level knowledge to inform and assist the development of a plan to assure vulnerable populations were afforded equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Divisions participating in the workgroup included the Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD), Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance, Division of Public Health, Division of State Services Centers, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, and Division for the Visually Impaired. The workgroup met weekly for five months and continues to meet on an ad hoc basis.

Through the workgroup's efforts, several community vaccine events were held for direct support professionals, family caregivers, people with disabilities, and older adults. The workgroup spearheaded 38 vaccine events, distributing 1st and 2nd doses of both Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines. Events were held in all three counties and at a variety of community locations, including state offices, provider partners, and libraries. Events were both walk-up and drive-thru. 9,358 doses of the vaccine were administered at these community-wide events. In addition, homebound vulnerable adults were inoculated by DSAAPD nurses, college nursing students, and volunteer pharmacists in the comfort of their own homes. In an innovative partnership with Paratransit, 168 doses were delivered to riders in their homes and 67 doses were administered by DSAAPD nurses to home-bound individuals. The hard work of the workgroup resulted in nearly 5,000 people receiving both doses of the vaccine, in a time when vaccines were not broadly accessible.

As the COVID-19 vaccine became more widely available, the workgroup shifted focus to reaching vulnerable adults who may need additional accommodations to receive the vaccine or who may be hesitant. This has resulted in the development of campaigns to target persons with disabilities and educational materials for providers of the vaccine. Working with the marketing firm that has done much of the COVID-19 outreach for the state and disability partners, the workgroup did an environmental scan of needs of people with disabilities in receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. This helped to inform the campaign and materials that were developed. DSAAPD's Aging and Disability Resource Center serves as a hub of accessibility and accommodation information and provides phone support for Delawareans seeking additional vaccine help. In addition, the workgroup formalized partnerships with important community leaders in the aging and disabilities networks to increase training and awareness of the vaccine and accommodations available. Partnerships include Community Legal Aid Society Inc. of Delaware, Developmental Disabilities Council, Freedom Center for Independent Living, Independent Resources Inc., State Council for Persons with Disabilities, and University of Delaware Centers for Disabilities Studies. These partners continue to support the workgroup by providing necessary training on important topics including the Americans with Disabilities Act, accessibility, and guardianship.

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL (DNREC)

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control continues its focus on delivering the highest possible value to customers while protecting and managing the state's vital natural resources. Continuous process improvement measures have optimized multiple business processes in 2021.

Overview of Current Initiatives

Department Inventory of Business Processes

DNREC has nine divisions focused on our mission to engage stakeholders in conservation management, protecting public health and the environment, providing quality outdoor recreation, improving quality of life, leading energy policy and climate preparedness and educating the public on historic, and cultural and natural resource use, requirements, and issues.

Visibility of all division business processes is needed to evaluate, prioritize, and optimize internal business functions. The proposed solution is to create an inventory and common repository of processes across the department. This will improve the division's ability to be proactive in determining areas where efficiencies can be created, ensure accountability, and assist in the training of employees to ensure consistency in process execution. DNREC is working with GEAR to utilize the Aris process modeling software to document and review processes in multiple divisions and are developing training for employees engaged in creating a business process inventory.

Over 200 processes have been documented, thus enabling more detailed examination. As a result of these "deep dives", one division created dashboards that provide data identification and the ability to share information with, and to respond to, stakeholders on a shared GIS platform. In another division, deep dives have resulted in the consolidation of multiple permit and license forms, the standardization of best management practices. It is expected that self-permitting, and general permits for high value/low-risk activities will result in a 25 percent reduction of staff workload in impacted sections, and a reduction in the average customer permit approval time from two weeks to two hours.

Department Development and Implementation of Continuous Improvement Training and Education

DNREC's goal is to create a culture of continuous improvement. DNREC believes such a culture improves everyone's ability to identify opportunities to increase operational efficiency. Achieving the consensus needed to create this culture is always a challenge. It requires an understanding of the value of continuous improvement principles and processes and requires a commitment to the methodology. To accomplish this objective, DNREC needs to equip employees with the tools necessary to identify the opportunity and implement change. Ensuring that employees understand that problems are opportunities, and most problems are system issues, not people issues, is key in building buy-in and awareness.

Often employees are aware there are issues – i.e., bottlenecks, waste -- but often don't know how to identify and fix them. They may not see any way to make changes, or symptoms are addressed and not the actual problems. Training courses developed by DNREC provide practical information on how to improve and create efficiencies through the identification and resolution of the actual problem and not the symptoms. The training courses build on one another and provide employees with techniques to simplify and improve various aspects of their work.

DNREC's training begins with a 30 minute on-line introductory course that provides a basic overview of continuous improvement methodology anchored in the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle. The next course in the series is the Introduction to Problem Solving, which expands the learner's knowledge by providing a basic understanding of problem solving methods and concepts. This course explains how to spot waste, identify, and solve problems, and how to use a Lean A3 report. The third course in the series, Problem Solving with Data, shows participants the important role data plays in finding solutions. The final course in the series is almost entirely hands-on and provides an opportunity to practice problem solving through a variety of activities.

The Continuous Improvement series of courses were deployed at the end of 2019. More than two hundred and fifty employees have participated in the online and face-to-face training. Courses were suspended during 2020 due to

the pandemic. Courses are being re-designed to include virtual and hybrid approaches to learning versus all in person learning.

DNREC Environmental Justice (EJ) Project

The overall goal of the EJ project is to improve and increase the integration of environmental justice in DNREC. This requires increasing employee awareness and understanding of environmental justice, expanding the incorporation of environmental justice into departments decisions and actions, and improving communication and outreach with environmental justice communities.

Division representatives proposed the creation of an environmental justice framework that:

- Identifies criteria that defines Delaware environmental areas of concern and incorporates the utilization of quantitative and spatial data for decision making

- Establishes concrete actions and strategies to improve the integration of environmental justice into DNREC operations

- Ensures DNREC is engaging communities in the decision-making process on issues that affect or concern them

- Establishes and expands existing partnerships to further environmental justice

- Ensures environmental justice considerations are included in all department natural resources and environmental protection services to minimize disparate and cumulative impact

- Establishes department-wide policies and practices that implement environmental justice statewide

The division representatives are currently working on the first three of the aforementioned objectives. Increasing the knowledge of environmental justice is important to establish concrete actions and strategies to improve its integration across DNREC. DNREC partnered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to begin the department education with a two-part EJ training delivered to almost 100 employees. The plan is to continue the education incorporating Delaware specifics using a vendor that specializes in Social and Environmental Justice. Post training a division immediately began to take actions to review their process on grant funding projects. DNREC has also created an internal webpage that provides information regarding EJ initiatives, resources, and links to other states resources, EJ FAQs, and a link for employee suggestions or questions.

The department is currently working on a Delaware spatial mapping tool for use in decision making and evaluating areas of concern. The Center for Disease Control's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) has been identified as the demographic criteria. DNREC has identified sources of data and are collaborating with other state agencies GIS professionals experienced with data analysis.

To ensure DNREC is engaging communities in the decision-making process on issues that affect or concern them, DNREC is working on an external EJ webpage, the development of a Secretary's Environmental Justice Advisory Committee, and is partnering with Delaware State University to conduct research on how it can improve public outreach and community engagement.

Enterprise Content Management (ECM) Project

DNREC completed a study and provided final recommendations to achieve the agency's information technology vision as identified in its IT Strategic Plan. The plan will "make environmental information available to 'anyone, from anywhere at any time on any device'." This requires that all content be available in electronic format. DNREC has made considerable progress in the last 15 years towards realizing this vision by taking the following steps:

- Building an Enterprise Environmental Information System – Delaware Environmental Navigator

- Creating an online portal providing information on various aspects of DNREC's programs

- And implementing niche ECM solutions to solve program specific needs

The next step towards realizing the vision is to implement an ECM at the enterprise level. This will result in a paperless office and will make all content available electronically. DNREC determined that migrating its existing ECM solution to one listed on DTI's Document Imaging Standard (AP-IMG-001) is in the best interest of the department. DNREC chose Hyland OnBase as the solution for implementing ECM on an enterprise level. The goal of enterprise ECM is to convert all incoming mail and paper documents, other than magazines and junk mail, into electronic format and forward the documents to recipients either as an email attachment or through a workflow system. All documents will subsequently be indexed and stored for later retrieval. Similarly, all outgoing paper documents will also be scanned and stored on servers after indexing.

The scope of the foundational system focused on installing the software and supporting servers. A department wide taxonomy was defined to consistently store and notate all electronic documents while maintaining specific division and program needs for storing, archiving, and searching. All business-line applications that provided documentation have been converted from legacy systems to OnBase ECM.

The implementation is nearing completion. Six of nine divisions are live on ECM. The remaining two objectives are for the Waste and Hazardous Substances (WHS) and Water divisions to test business-line applications converted to OnBase and for WHS to finish testing their document migration. Final go-live planning is underway and scheduled to be completed by year's end.

Department Modernization of Online Services ePermitting

DNREC administers thousands of licenses, permits and registrations each year. Customers have been required to pick up paper forms, determine which forms are necessary, enter the same information multiple times and return the forms and/or follow-up separately with supplemental documentation. DNREC staff must often re-enter the data from the paper forms, work with the customer to correct or complete information and track documents through separate processing streams.

DNREC has implemented an ePermitting, licensing, and registration web portal as a central location for customers to apply for a broad range of services from fishing licenses to well permits. In addition to simplified online forms and guidance, the portal supports customer accounts, so they only need to provide standard information once. Customers can find all their submission information in a single place and can receive notifications and alerts to stay informed of permit status or upcoming renewals. DNREC staff can tag required form fields as mandatory, apply error checking to increase the accuracy of submissions, and allow reviewers to process applications more quickly. Support documents, such as the Permit Application Background Statement, can be included in permit specific processes to reduce questions about which forms are needed. Digitized permits and licenses can also be updated or suspended as required. In addition to improving the customer experience, a central, interrelated system provides a new opportunity to collect and analyze data, track and review processes end-to-end, link inspection and compliance information, and reduce paper and printing costs.

Today more than 300,000 transactions have been completed using the DNREC ePermitting portal. Once a customer has an account on the portal the time to complete the submission process is significantly reduced. For simple requests, like a fishing license, the average time to get the license was reduced from 16 to 4 minutes. Accessibility has improved for customers as well. The fully mobile enabled portal can be accessed anytime, anywhere. In fact, over 40 percent of requests are submitted from iPhones -- functionality that didn't exist until the portal was implemented -- and about 15 percent of requests are submitted after 5:00 pm. Moreover, while well and septic permits will not be fully integrated for several months, customers can already download and upload various water, well and septic forms using the portal thereby eliminating the need to visit a DNREC facility.

The ePermitting portal improves the experience for business customers as well. Features include the ability to authenticate digital signatures, provide a single view of permits and licenses associated with the business, and support for online payments versus paper checks.

In the near future Commercial Fishing Licenses, Aqua Culture Leases and Non-Hazardous Transport permits will be available, and Air Quality permits for small sources and Reg 2 will soon follow. DNREC hopes to continue integrating permits into the portal beyond the original 53 permit types selected. Future portal development also includes expanded

integration with the Delaware First Map GIS platform so DNREC and the public can more easily see location-based permits, and collaboration with county and municipal organizations will be improved to enable more timely decisions.

EQuIS

DNREC collects a high volume of environmental data from field notes, site and laboratory sampling, contractor, and remote device submissions. As technology continues to evolve, more data is captured by data loggers, real-time sensors, and other Internet of Things (IoT) sources. Qualitative and quantitative data points are crucial to understanding the big picture. But as data and data sources increase so do the challenges of storing, validating, and analyzing that data. For data to properly inform governmental and scientific decisions, it must be timely and well managed.

DNREC is implementing EQuIS as an advanced environmental data management and decision support system. In addition to capturing and structuring data, EQuIS supports electronic field forms so data collected from remote locations or remote sensors is instantly uploaded and usable. Numerous states and the EPA use EQuIS to manage large amounts of data pertaining to hydrology, geology, air and the associated compliance monitoring activities. While the Division of Waste and Hazardous Substances has utilized EQuIS for several years, the department is expanding EQuIS tools to the Division of Water, Watershed and ultimately the Division of Air Quality. The driver to create an enterprise solution is to collect and share data across all divisions and programs and to establish a common repository and knowledge base with shared analytical tools and dashboards. Well-managed environmental data can contribute to better analysis, understanding, decisions, actions, and outcomes.

Implementing an enterprise solution – particularly when changing long used processes – can take time. DNREC and DTI have established an EQuIS Governance Committee and have documented guidance on using the solution and the consistent application of quality controls. Templates, queries, dashboards, and compliance alerts are being configured within EQuIS to provide standard tools and meaningful information to participating programs. As the use of reports and data visualizations expand, automatic analysis like red/green compliance flags and trending alerts can help prioritize what might need immediate attention. Training on the use of electronic field forms for real time data submissions with photos and georeferenced information is ongoing. Opportunities to leverage capabilities within EQuIS are identified regularly.

The continued expansion of EQuIS will assist DNREC with making environmental data more timely, accessible, and easier to use. There are several manual forms being evaluated or in development for use in EQuIS. Examples include emergency response incident documents, storage tank inspection forms, and motor vehicle lane check forms. As funding is identified, professional services are assisting with growing this valuable solution.

eBOARD Solutions

The Division of Water is responsible for the issuance of 24 different licenses. Licensees are accountable for professional conduct regarding the same. This activity and the resulting recommendations to the Secretary occur in three different sections, with a board and licensing coordinator for each. The adoption of uniform processes, forms and document handling ensures the highest standard of operation and minimizes the risk of adverse outcomes, if the department is challenged on actions taken. This standardization of processes and forms, on the eBOARD Solutions platform, improves efficiency with respect to both staffing and customer service requirements. Differing means and procedures, between the three licensing boards in the Division of Water, invites the risk of decisions being overturned on appeal. Having different processes also diminishes the ability of the division to maintain operations, when turnover or reassignment of roles requires changes in staff therefore requiring the division to establish standard procedures for its advisory boards.

Licensees are entitled to due process and equal protection. Licensees -- new applicants, renewal applicants and existing licensees -- are subject to the scrutiny of the licensing boards. The boards make recommendations to the Secretary, or designee, regarding approval, suspension, or revocation of licenses. The consequences of such recommendations may have a significant adverse economic impact on a person's livelihood, or the viability of a business. Actions taken by the boards must be transparent and consistent so that any action can be defended as an action that is consistent with due process and equal protection claims. These would include possible claims of discrimination, or selective enforcement. eBOARD

Solutions will provide continuity of operations. The platform and means by which communications and supporting documents are shared will be consistent across the Sections that administer licensing programs. This ensures the ability to deliver a consistent scope of requested documents. In addition, the ability of others to adapt to the role of licensing coordinator, over time, will not be constrained because of the use of unique or personalized systems. The archiving of communication and supporting documents will be further supported by the deployment of the department-wide Enterprise Content Management (ECM) system.

eBOARD Solutions has been adopted as the platform for licensing boards and support staff by the Department of State, Division of Professional Regulation. Implementation of the same by the DNREC Division of Water represents the adoption of best management practices. The platform will be used for the posting of agendas, minutes and document sharing, across three Division of Water Sections, for the respective licensing boards. Implementation will occur in three phases:

1. Establish the platform and templates for administrative use

2. Establish the policy, procedures, and accountability for compliance with the same

3. Transition to the use of the platform for all communication between administrative staff, managers, and board members

Thirty staff members, managers and licensing advisory board members have been trained and provided with access to the common platform for communications, eBOARD Solutions. Templates for meeting postings have been established for three advisory boards and utilized over a period of thirteen months. Document storage in the Enterprise Content Management system has been classified into three categories, with respect to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

Overview of Current Initiatives

Delaware Communities of Excellence (DECOE) – Year 1

Literacy is defined as "An individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English; compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society." A recent study shows that 1 in 5 adults in Delaware are reading at or below a 3rd grade level, and we rank 34th in adult literacy proficiency. Literacy Delaware recently reported that: "If you took everyone in Delaware who reads at a 3rd grade level or below you would fill up nine University of Delaware football stadiums [197,000 people]." This means that many adults in Delaware are unemployed or underemployed due to low literacy skill: do not have a taxable income; do not have the income to buy homes, cars, and other essentials; and rely on social safety nets which influence government spending needs.

The Division of Libraries, as the backbone organization, formed the Delaware Communities of Excellence (DECOE) which is a collaborative of State agencies and private sector organizations coming together as a statewide ecosystem to provide services that are easier to access, equitable, cost effective, and provide measurable impactful results committed to tackling the challenge of improving literacy in Delaware. Delaware Communities of Excellence's goal is to enhance the quality of life for all Delawareans by developing a comprehensive literacy ecosystem that promotes equity and impacts Delawareans for the purpose of enhancing the quality of life in Delaware. The Delaware COE employs a collective impact approach within the Baldrige Framework, because large-scale social change requires broad, cross-sector coordination. Key stakeholders include Delaware libraries, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Literacy Delaware, and Sussex County Health Coalition.

The DECOE advisory board includes members from:

- University of Delaware Kids Count
- Department of Education
- Rodel Foundation
- Delaware Association of Nonprofit Agencies
- United Way of Delaware

- Unite Delaware
- Highmark
- Empowerment Grant Delaware
- Delaware State University
- Philanthropy Delaware
- Laffey McHugh Foundation

DECOE has undertaken the following:

- Worked with the University of Delaware's Kids Count and Institute for Public Administration to identify appropriate performance measures and indicators to create a Literacy Dashboard of services across the lifespan of citizen readers

- Commenced planning to provide collaborative space for partners providing literacy services in Delaware, and identify programs and services to fill in the gaps

- Launched the Northstar Digital Literacy program to provide free digital literacy training to Delaware residents

- Delaware libraries have offered free books to every Delaware child under 5 through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

- The Communities of Excellence 2026 application was completed and submitted

DECOE will partner with the Department of Education to provide free year-round access to eBooks for children through the Overdrive Sora student mobile device app.

DECOE recommends non-profits -- especially those involved with literacy – and state agencies involved with public and/or social services join UniteDE and work together to provide more efficient, cost-effective services accessible to all Delawareans. DECOE will seek to recruit additional partners for the program.

DEPARTMENT OF SERVICES for CHILDREN, YOUTH & THEIR FAMILIES (DSCYF)

Overview of Current Initiatives

DSCYF Service Integration Fund Improvement Project

Originally established in 1994, the Service Integration Fund (SIF) provides DSCYF case managers access to financial resources for individualized solutions to address child and family needs.

The fund:

- Supports a multi-generational, and strength-based approach
- Allows for creative funding solutions beyond current contracted services and funding streams
- Mitigates risks and meets needs to enhance child safety and family stability, preserve current living arrangements, and support transitions from residential programs to community settings

SIF supports solutions to youth and family needs, barriers, or gaps that cannot be met through typical contracted services. The fund can be utilized to address basic needs that, when unmet, increase caregiver stress and contribute to family instability, fund solutions that keep a child in their home or current placement or enable kinship caregivers to welcome a child into their home in lieu of entry into state custody, support transitions back home from foster care or residential placement, and enhance child and family well-being. Research on adverse childhood experiences, stress and adversity, and social determinants of health tells us that when people are supported in times of adversity and stress, the occurrence of negative outcomes is reduced, and well-being increases.

Despite SIF being a small fund, it has been underutilized in recent years, resulting in unspent funds that could have supported individualized solutions to address child and family needs, and promote stability and well-being. Unclear guidelines and inconsistent interpretations of the guidelines have created confusion and time delays. Lack of awareness about the fund among case managers and supervisors contributed to the reduction in requests.

The goals of the SIF Improvement Project are:

- To increase fund utilization to meet child and family needs as designed
- Consistent application of guidelines by SIF county representatives and fiscal processing
- Requests reaching fiscal processing can be processed without additional information 90 percent of the time
- To reduce mean lead-time from 14 to 6 days from receipt of the SIF request to fiscal processing
- To reduce the lead-time range from 4–30 days to 1–12 days

The SIF Improvement Project will conclude in December 2021. In collaboration with the SIF county and fiscal teams, the project team updated the SIF Guidelines and Procedures and the SIF application. Job aides were developed to provide directions for application completion, review, and approval/denial processes. Submission of complete applications with accurate information will reduce the time it takes to review the application, make an approval/denial decision, and for the fiscal team to process payment. These documents are available to staff on the DSCYF extranet. Training on the purpose of SIF, the guidelines, and how to request funds was developed. In October 2021, staff were offered three virtual sessions about this information, and were presented with the opportunity to ask questions about the fund and application processes. A recording of this training event will be available on the Delaware Learning Center for on-demand access. Next steps include circulating quarterly reporting, and the creation of a funding dashboard. The report will serve as a reminder of the fund's existence, provide transparency, and the dashboard will provide a visual representation of performance.

EDUCATION GEAR (EdGEAR)

EdGEAR was established in 2019 as a GEAR-equivalent program optimized for the primary- and secondary-education ("K-12") systems. The EdGEAR Board consists of two school district superintendents, one charter head of school, four school district Chief Financial Officers, GEAR representatives and Department of Education (DOE) staff. EdGEAR created a target list of initiatives for 2020 including (1) eliminating duplicative information systems, (2) optimizing procurement, (3) efficient distribution of surplus and the disposition of assets, and (4) capital projects issues. Due to the pandemic, work on these issues began in 2021. During its meetings in 2021, EdGEAR focused on several services provided through the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Government Support Services (GSS) and made several recommendations (outlined below).

Overview of Current Initiatives

Procurement/Contracting

Procurement activities for public education are currently covered through a combination of supports through OMB/GSS and the Data Service Center, with a significant amount of work occurring independently at the local level. The current structure does not optimize opportunities for consistent, statewide procurement activities within public education.

Creation of a contracting team within OMB/GSS that is dedicated to public education procurement and supports. While administered by GSS, this team would closely collaborate with a public education advisory group to ensure that the needs of the school districts and charter schools are met effectively, efficiently, and timely. This group should establish priorities for procurement activities. Some options that EdGEAR believes should be included in priorities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Exploration of multi-state consortiums for public education

- Expansion of the types and number of statewide contracts to ensure needs of public education area addressed, i.e., substitute services, educational temp services, etc.

- Improvement of piggyback opportunities for contracts statewide, by ensuring that necessary language is built into statewide RFP and contract templates. Additionally, communication around this process should be increased to ensure that all state entities are aware of opportunities and the process to access other state contracts

- Exemption of Amazon from procurement laws. Amazon will not bid on State RFPs, but we know that in many cases they are lowest cost option. Allow state entities to "document" why they made the purchase and demonstrate low-cost option for financial records and auditing purposes, instead of creating a burdensome administrative process that takes too long and wastes staff resources

- Elimination of the "I found it cheaper" process. Similar to Amazon above, allow state entities to document at the local level. If audits reveal that they are not following State policies and procedures, then they should be held accountable

The results of implementing these procurement changes will be improved procurement processes and practices for public education. A streamlined, comprehensive system will allow for improved efficiency ensuring that all federal and state requirements are met and increased opportunities for cost savings.

EdGEAR seeks the support of the GEAR Board for the recommendations put forth by EdGEAR to ensure implementation.

Surplus

Currently school districts and charter schools are not given priority access to available surplus property. Additionally, disposal processes need improvements to reduce burden on state agencies and entities.

State entities, including school districts and charter schools, should be given first opportunity/access to purchase State-owned surplus property, at minimal or <u>no cost</u>. This should be an ongoing, routine process rather than once or twice a year.

Disposal processes should be more efficient and transparent. Some examples: Does GSS pick up or do state agencies and entities have to incur an expense to have it delivered? If property is not required to be handed to Surplus, can state agencies and entities sell it or trade it in? Can schools give technology devices to students as they graduate out of the system or as technology nears end of life?

Implementation of these recommendations would allow for more effective use of state-owned property by other state agencies and entities, prior to sale to the public. By allowing this access, state agencies and entities will have financial savings and reduce unnecessary waste.

EdGEAR seeks the support of the GEAR Board for the recommendations put forth by EdGEAR to ensure implementation.

Fleet

There is currently a significant delay in the procurement of Fleet vehicles, often taking up to a year or more. That does not allow our school districts and charter schools to operate efficiently when fleet needs arise.

Reduce lead time on procurement of vehicles; the process needs to be faster and more flexible. Explore opportunities to purchase vehicles from local dealerships, especially in instances when the larger fleet process is months or even a year behind. The vehicle procurement process must be more responsive to needs of our state entities.

Improved efficiency in the fleet procurement process will lead to increased access for school districts and charter schools. Ability to negotiate directly with local dealerships may also result in cost savings for vehicles that are on lots and ready to go.

EdGEAR seeks the support of the GEAR Board for the recommendation put forth by EdGEAR to ensure implementation.

The Committee will be meeting before the end of 2021 to determine the next areas of review. The list of potential areas currently includes school construction (e.g., designing for maintenance, energy, and operational efficiency, addressing $1.5 billion in deferred maintenance, and looking across schools to assess common areas of need in term of roofs, HVAC systems and paving), referendum process and science and/or social studies coalitions.