



**STATE OF DELAWARE
GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW (GEAR)**

**2022 GEAR BOARD ANNUAL REPORT TO GOVERNOR CARNEY
REQUIRED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER FOUR**

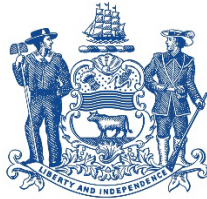
**RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNOR
FROM THE GEAR BOARD**

DECEMBER 1, 2022



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STATE OF DELAWARE GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Order #4, signed by Governor John Carney on February 16, 2017, established the Government Efficiency and Accountability Review (GEAR) 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 thirty-two 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 with measurable outcomes 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 2022 GEAR Annual Report contains recommendations for consideration in the Governor's Recommended Budget and policy priorities for Fiscal Year 2024. What follows is an Executive Summary of key accomplishments, progress on major initiatives, and recommendations requiring support from the Executive, Legislative, 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 as a line item in the Department of Human Resources (DHR) budget and funded at \$150,000 per year. The DHR Training and HR Solutions and GEAR developed the Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CIP) as a joint venture and partnership to build project management, Lean process improvement, and change management skills of State employees. The resulting CIP training program has graduated 52 practitioners to date with an additional cohort of 18 presently in training and another cohort planned for spring 2023. All CIP graduates subsequently join the GEAR Field Team. DHR has submitted the Fiscal Year 2024 budget request for an additional \$200,000, endorsed by GEAR, to provide two annual cohorts, support the expansion of CIP, and implement project and process leadership training.

Grow the GEAR Field Team (GFT) and Enhance the GEAR Program Portfolio - Established in 2020, the GFT is a community comprised of continuous improvement practitioners and GEAR CIP graduates. With approximately 60 members representing fourteen State organizations, and the Judicial Branch, the team is delivering value through the execution of more than 70 projects which represent a majority of the GEAR Program Portfolio. In 2022, the GFT has been focused on the application of CIP skills toward the delivery of quantifiable outcomes, including the return on investment of projects that demonstrate a cost savings. GEAR estimates that a rough order of magnitude savings to the State across a portion of the projects in the portfolio will be \$61 million - \$65 million in the current and future years.

Leverage a Strategic Roadmap for the Enterprise Services Delivery Team (ESD) - Beginning in 2021, several GEAR focus area teams were reorganized into a single Enterprise Services Delivery Team. Representing 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 as part of the GEAR Program Portfolio. In 2022, the framework for evaluating the strategic impact of "enterprise level" projects was revamped with a focus on the impact of change saturation, return on investment, and risk management.

Support the Ready in Six Initiative (Ri6) – The GEAR Public/Private Partnership (P3) expanded its focus to include supporting the recommendations made by the Delaware Business Roundtable to accelerate business-related permitting processes at the State, county, and local government levels. In coordination with GEAR P3 leadership and the Office of the Governor, a survey was developed in 2022 and disseminated to over 1,500 industry focused partners to target specific areas for improvement in the permitting process. The results of this survey will be tabulated and analyzed by GEAR leadership in early 2023, with formal project chartering to be developed to address specific process issues identified by the survey.

Implement Career Pathways to Improve Employee Recruitment and Retention - Executive Order #4 noted that GEAR shall: “identify changes in the State personnel system that would foster a culture of continuous improvement and improve the recruitment, development and retention of State employees.” With few exceptions (i.e., Department of Technology and Information), State agencies do not possess job classifications to employ highly qualified and credentialed project managers and Lean business process analysts. GEAR will work with the Department of Human Resources to consider the need for new opportunities to leverage new classifications, as part of the maintenance review process, in order to better meet the agencies’ business process and project needs and minimize the costs of outsourcing.

Amend the Government Accountability Act (GAA) and First State Quality Improvement Fund - Executive Order #4 recommended that revisions to the Government Accountability Act be developed and implemented. While previous bills amending GAA have not passed both houses of the General Assembly, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Office of the Controller General, GEAR, and the Chairs of the Joint Finance Committee will be working together to institute and memorialize improved budgeting practices through the passage of a revised GAA in the upcoming legislative session.

Additionally, consistent with the recommendation made in the 2018 GEAR Annual Report, the First State Quality Improvement Fund (FSQIF) was reinstated in Fiscal Year 2020 after being suspended in 2009. To create lasting impact through the training of continuous improvement practitioners, it is recommended that the FSQIF be revised to increase the funding consistent with the DHR Fiscal Year 2024 budget request on a permanent basis. In addition, GEAR recommends that the language be modernized to reflect current best practices used in the field of operational excellence and GEAR’s role in the continuing joint venture.

Expand Enterprise Solutions for Project and Process Management (Planview and ARIS) – There are two recommendations to expand enterprise solutions for project and process management. First, there is a need to standardize a robust, modern, and intuitive project management tool to improve the State’s ability to define, track, and communicate projects. Without an enterprise application, agency leadership is unlikely to have transparency regarding budgeted resource allocation and risks on a consistent basis. There are approximately 120 GEAR Program Portfolio projects, and yet that number does not capture all existing projects. It will remain a highly manual, resource intensive process to track, update, and report on the growing body of projects without an enterprise solution, such as Planview, to be implemented across agencies. An ongoing enterprise investment of \$35,000 per year would equip all GFT members committed to building their skills in project management.

Second, Business Process Management (BPM) is an industry standard best practice focused on improving an organization’s processes by aligning them with its strategy and improving efficiency. An industry leading BPM tool named ARIS was introduced as a GEAR standard in July 2019, with the support of the GEAR Director and the State’s Chief Information Officer (CIO). An introduction to Lean process mapping is part of the CIP curriculum. Graduates can apply the fundamental skills learned with paper and pencil, but this approach, as well as approaches that leverage flowchart drawing tools, are not scalable across the State enterprise. To date, ARIS is being used to accomplish objectives by multiple organizations as GFT members better define current state processes, measure performance, identify and eliminate waste, and implement optimized future state solutions. During Fiscal Year 2023 it is anticipated that ARIS will be used for process analysis associated with the GEAR P3 Ready in 6 program, which is focused on optimizing the States’ permitting processes. BPM efforts are currently being funded by a distributed model across five State organizations. An enterprise investment of \$77,000 per year is recommended to equip and train any GFT members committed to extending their skills with BPM capabilities.

II. Enterprise Services Delivery (ESD)

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

Financials system (FSF), the Payroll Human Resource Statewide Technology System (PHRST) and certain other Department of Human Resources' tools. By the end of this decade, each of these systems will need to be completely replaced. To be successful at these endeavors, the State needs to begin planning now—especially, when there are State and federal funds available to address enterprise-wide infrastructure issues such as these. Current activities include bringing the sponsors together (Office of Management and Budget [OMB], Department of Finance [DOF], Department of Technology and Information [DTI] and the Department of Human Resources [DHR]) to discuss options, configuration, and costs. The software manufacturer is currently estimating the costs of moving FSF and PHRST into the Cloud and assessing readiness for conversion. DTI is reviewing contracts and engaging third-party experts to help the State look at all the options, configurations, and infrastructure.

Review Document Management (Electronic Signature) - To make document signing processes more efficient the ESD team reviewed various document management systems. Going to an electronic document management process is necessary given the high costs of paper, ink, and employees' time invested in scanning and sending documents. Electronic document management will transform the State's signing processes. DTI, with the support of GEAR, the GEAR Field Team, and ESD, is currently implementing electronic signature systems. To date, DTI's Innovation Team has onboarded more than 180 users from 15 agencies. Collectively across state agencies, there are more than 2,000 individual electronic document transactions, with a 200 percent increase in usage over the last 12 months. Agencies are working with their customer relations managers to pilot repetitive signature use cases, especially those that require signatory components in ERP systems.

Track COVID-19 Federal Funds - With the signing of the federal 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. ARPA allocations and spending are available online through the Governor's website and the State's online checkbook.

OFFICE OF THE STATE TREASURER (OST)

Implement Digital Government Payment System - In October 2020, the Office of the State Treasurer launched a Request for Proposals for comprehensive digital government services in partnership with 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 via the State's website. 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 (OMB/DFM)

Lower Lease Costs and Restructure Lease Program - The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB), Division of Facilities Management (DFM) Real Property Management Program covers 129 leases and approximately 1.8 million square feet of rented space occupied by various State of Delaware agencies, costing \$32.3 million annually. To date, OMB/DFM lease restructurings have resulted in more than \$34.7 million in hard dollar lease savings and more than \$8.6 million in soft dollar rent savings (e.g., paint, carpeting) over the life of the renegotiated and extended leases. On average, reconstructed leases have been extended 10 years with approximate hard dollar lease savings of \$3.2 million and soft dollar savings of \$1.1 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) 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, allowing cabinet-level leaders of State organizations to internally

approve after-the-fact waiver requests between \$10,000 and \$50,000 and providing 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 State's credit card program (Pcard) and the Single Use Account program for vendor payments in Calendar Year 2020 was \$162.9 million. This produced a rebate of \$3.1 million to the State to help fund the State's financial management systems. Calendar Year 2021 provided a record level of total Pcard spend of \$177.0 million with a rebate of \$3.4 million. Calendar Year 2022 to date remains consistent with 2021 and the expectation is to end the year with total spend and rebate equal to or slightly above Calendar Year 2021. In addition, an agreement is being finalized with a travel management company to streamline and reduce costs for the booking of transportation and lodging associated with State personnel travel.

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.

Implement 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 Division of Revenue'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) Business taxes,
- b) Personal income taxes, and
- c) Corporate income taxes, partnership, S-corporation, and fiduciary income tax returns.

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. The Office of State Planning and Coordination (OSPC) is coordinating through the 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.

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 centralization 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 transitioning to a new shared services cost model which underpins ITC. 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 Pandemic Response IT Initiatives - Delaware is rapidly moving toward a user-centric digital government strategy that delivers a consistent and intuitive user experience. Many government services are accessible online [and many others should be] allowing resident and visitor 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. DTI has also embarked on a larger initiative creating a resident and visitor solution branded as *MyDelaware*, for the public to use the State's various digital government services under authenticated identities. DTI has onboarded 56 applications and 63,000 unique users as adoption continues to grow.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES (DHR)

Modernize Human Resources Service Delivery - Human resources technology infrastructure has historically been slow to modernize, resulting in limited analytics and capabilities critical for delivering services to a hybrid workforce. When the COVID-19 pandemic initially disrupted the flow of services within the State, DHR's priority was to maintain the workforce and keep employees safe, engaged, and productive. Investing in technology enables DHR to transform human resources service delivery, which improves employee access and builds a strong, resilient, and equitable employee experience.

Centralize Policies and Procedures - Critical to centralizing the delivery of human resources, DHR is leveraging its staff's knowledge to standardize human resources policies and procedures across the employee life cycle. DHR continues to systematically revise and implement new policies to address statewide HR issues. To date, 30 policies have been revised, finalized, and issued to employees.

Standardize HR Processes – As part of the centralization of HR staff and the service level agreement negotiations, DHR agreed to create a Lean HR demonstration program. This effort focused on service delivery metrics related to classification and compensation requests, recruitment and hiring, and Step 3 grievances (employee complaints about the application of the Merit Rules or the Merit System law being appealed to the DHR Secretary). Over the past year, DHR expanded its efforts to streamline and standardize work processes to include the areas of recruitment and hiring, classification and compensation, employee and labor relations, and employee training. This effort led to mapping 72 work processes, identifying improvement opportunities, and developing 90-day deliverables that further the Department's centralization and modernization goals.

Drive Leadership Training Opportunities - In 2021, DHR launched the iLEAD Delaware Leadership Program to enhance the leadership skills of State employees and to further the goal of excellence in government. iLEAD Delaware Leadership training consists of two pathways: one for managers and senior leaders, and one for project/process leaders. DHR's vision is to expand iLEAD to include training for two separate programs in Organizational Leadership and Project and Process Leadership the latter of which would be a new joint initiative and collaboration with GEAR.

Expand Employee Recognition – In 2019, DHR in partnership with GEAR leadership expanded the Governor's Team Excellence Award Program to include the GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award to recognize teams of State employees that demonstrate innovation and efficiencies. The GEAR-P3 Trailblazer Award was created in 2020 to recognize individuals and small teams demonstrating innovation and efficiencies. The awards include a monetary incentive of \$10,000 to share among team members for the GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award and \$1,500 for individual GEAR P3 Trailblazer recipients. In 2022, the Governor recognized one team as the recipient of the GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award and one individual for the Trailblazer Award.

Reduce Healthcare Costs - As health care costs continue to climb, the DHR's Statewide Benefits Office (SBO), under the guidance of the State Employee Benefits Committee (SEBC), continues to develop strategies to engage Group Health Insurance Plan (GHIP) members to reduce health care costs to the State for employees, pensioners, and their dependents. To address a projected Fiscal Year 2023 deficit, the SEBC approved an 8.67 percent increase in State non-Medicare health plan premiums (rates) effective July 1, 2022. This health plan rate increase is the first since July 2016. Due to health care trends and other reasons, the State is projecting a \$113.5 million deficit in the Group Health Fund (GHF) for Fiscal Year 2024. The State must continue strategies to offer programs to manage health and chronic conditions and engage GHIP members through education and training, as health care costs cannot be addressed solely through funding. To help solve the longer-term projected deficit, the SEBC is reviewing possible non-Medicare rate increase scenarios for health plan premiums, which include a 14.3 percent rate increase effective July 1, 2023 (absent any additional program changes) or smoothing the rate increase over Fiscal Years 2024, 2025, and 2026 with an annual rate increase of approximately 9.8 percent.

Support COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Certification - DHR revised the COVID-19 vaccination and testing certification policy to address the Federal Centers for Medicaid & Medicare (CMS) Mandate. Employees who must comply with the CMS vaccination mandate continue to use the online process to attest that they are vaccinated against COVID-19 or have an approved exemption from submitting certifications electronically.

Implement Strategies to Support a Respectful Workplace – As Delaware's largest employer, the State of Delaware is committed to advancing a fair, diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment within State government. DHR continues to implement strategies to support respectful workplace environments. In 2022, DHR

implemented respectful workplace training for nearly 15,000 state employees, implemented an LGBTQ+ toolkit with associated policy, procedures, and training, and implemented a five-video trauma-awareness training series.

III. GEAR Field Team (GFT)

JUDICIAL BRANCH

CASCADE - The Delaware Judicial Branch continued its effort to modernize and streamline e-filing, case management and document management solutions across all Courts in 2022. Since early 2022, the project team has made significant progress in the civil discovery portion of the project, during which the prospective vendors evaluated current business processes and identified any system gaps that would require process change or system modification. This evaluation was captured in business process review documents to be evaluated and approved by the Courts. While civil discovery is slated to complete in Calendar Year 2022, the entire criminal discovery leg is set to kick off in 2023 and sets the stage for both a master agreement with the vendors and implementation.

Reduce Debt Burden for Ex-Offenders – The Judicial Branch is focusing on three main issues when it comes to fees and fine reform. First, the Judiciary wants to ensure a fair system for those who are unable to pay with the goal of helping people exit the criminal justice system and lead the most productive lives possible. However, a large amount of criminal justice debt only causes additional hardship. Second, the Courts are spending time and resources trying to collect on uncollectable receivables which is inefficient for staff and ineffective when receivables remain delinquent. 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. The Judiciary is making strides in each of these areas with the passage of House Bill 244 with House Amendment 2, along with the review of aged accounts and court collection policies.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES (DHSS)

Optimize DHSS Blocked Fleet Vehicles - The DHSS Planning Unit consistently reviews the number of assigned, or blocked State Fleet vehicles to determine if there is an optimal and more cost-effective number of reserved vehicles for the department. Based on utilization data, a project manager conducts a monthly analysis of the blocked Fleet vehicles assigned to DHSS. This analysis includes the identification of all blocked vehicles and a review of those vehicles considered underutilized. A calculation is performed to quantify the cost of those underutilized blocked vehicles. Every month, the results of the analysis are distributed to department and division leaders to determine if their complement of assigned vehicles may be reduced. Since January 2021, leaders in DHSS have reduced the number of blocked vehicles by thirty-four. That translates to a savings of \$192,474 annually, or a 7-year savings (the average life of a Fleet vehicle) of \$1,347,318.

Establish DHSS Dashboard – Comprised of ten divisions, DHSS is the largest department in the State with a wide range of services delivered, from psychiatric care to animal control. Historically, there has not been a single data source that leadership could leverage for data driven decision making. This project brought together, in a centralized dashboard, a range of key performance indicators for various divisions to focus on meaningful and measurable metrics. The dashboard tracks nearly every DHSS division monthly, pulls together the key data, and extracts it into easy-to-understand charts and graphs to guide decision making for senior leadership.

Reimagine State Service Centers - The Department of Health and Social Services operates various State Service Centers around the State. At a State Service Center, residents and visitors can apply for benefits such as food assistance, cash benefits, healthcare, and housing. The structure and operation of the centers has not been reviewed recently, and there are opportunities to improve the service delivery model. This project will examine the “current state” processes, identify future state objectives, and implement improvements consistent with project management methodology.

Train to Improve Dementia Care in Long Term Care (LTC) - Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill (DHCI) has developed a comprehensive dementia care training program focused on nonpharmacological approaches to care and treatment of long-term care residents with dementia and other neurocognitive conditions. This training program provides staff with education on dementia literacy, understanding behavioral communication, providing nonpharmacological supports, de-escalating behavioral crises, managing elements of physical and environmental safety, and team-based approaches to care. Over 120 staff have completed the 4-day training in the past three years.

DHCI was awarded grant funds to work with the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Mental Health to manualize the program for sustained use in the training and staff development unit. The manual is now complete and ready for use.

Improve Access to Long-Term Services & Supports Through Strategic Resource Usage - The Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD) is carrying out strategic efforts to ensure timely access to community-based long-term services and supports by improving efficiency and reducing the cost-of-service provision. Through consultation with national experts in the field of aging and disabilities, DSAAPD has developed a multi-tiered action plan to infuse person-centered practices in its work, ensuring services meet the goals and needs of older adults and persons with physical disabilities while also being provided from the most appropriate funding source. It is estimated that some of these changes could result in at least \$5 million in savings for the State. The anticipated quantifiable outcomes of this plan include reduced cost, enhanced value, and improved customer outcomes.

Engage In Person-Centered Strategic Action Plan for DSAAPD Long-Term Services & Supports - DSAAPD is engaged in a strategic effort to recognize and respond to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the provision of long-term services and supports for older adults and adults with physical disabilities. The division has been awarded grant funding to develop processes and practices aimed at better engaging communities of color, focusing on diverse needs, targeting underserved populations, and being more trauma-informed in its work. DSAAPD is expanding, internally and in the community, its cultural humility because it recognizes the need to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in its work. The division anticipates that the result of these ongoing process improvement efforts will result in enhanced customer outcomes.

Reform Alignment and Intrinsic Staff Engagement in Training (RAISE-IT) - DSAAPD administration is committed to changing the culture across the agency in numerous ways. One avenue of change is through the DSAAPD Training Unit, which operates strategically to provide specialized professional education intended to produce measurable results. Using process improvement tools, the Quality Assurance and Improvement Unit is supporting change facilitated through the Training Unit, by encouraging increased communication and planning to integrate with the system and key performance indicators to facilitate crucial changes in the division. The focus of efforts in the upcoming year will be to establish a monitoring system, to accurately assess the effectiveness of the training. The change management plan is designed to increase awareness and desire for change while establishing a governance model.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL (DNREC)

Standardize Document Management across the Department – The DNREC Enterprise Content Management (ECM) implementation was completed in April 2022 using Hyland OnBase software. In addition to digitizing documents, the ECM project established a standard taxonomy across all DNREC divisions. Document tagging and indexing processes were also developed to make tracking, recovering and retention more consistent. At the end of September 2022, almost two million documents have been indexed and recorded in ECM. Further, with agency partners like the Department of Human Resources implementing these tools, document sharing, and version control are now easier with document duplication being reduced.

Modernize Online Services - DNREC is transforming 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 and automating workflows that support functions such as simultaneous reviews. Last, the new online system provides reporting metrics that identify areas for improvement and highlight successes.

Enhance Park Visitation Service – The Division of Parks and Recreation is funded by revenues generated by Delaware's State park system, which accounts for 65 percent of their overall budget. Their recent automated fee collection machines (Parkeon) initiative seeks to improve customer service using these machines in park locations throughout Delaware. With a major investment in this technology, the challenges seen over the past two years with staffing shortages, record visitations to State parks, and seasonal employees reluctant to return to work, operational barriers are now being minimized. In addition to providing a necessary enhancement of paying with debit/credit

card as opposed to cash in State parks, the new system is providing increased access to day use parking lots, reducing waiting lines on public highways, increasing daily entrance fee revenue, as well as decreasing staffing costs.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE (DOS)

Build Delaware Communities of Excellence (DECOE) – The Division of Libraries’ work with the Delaware Communities of Excellence is building a collaborative of State agencies and non-profits to produce a statewide literacy ecosystem. This ecosystem will provide literacy services that are easier to access, equitable, cost effective, with measurable, impactful results in improving literacy for Delawareans across their lifespans. Forty two percent of Delaware children read below grade level, and twenty percent of Delaware adults read below a third grade reading level. DECOE is committed to improving literacy levels for all through a two-pronged approach:

1. Bringing leaders together to collaboratively build systems and capacity, and
2. Aligning, linking, and expanding programs and services to replicate successes in communities throughout the state.

Install Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Infrastructure in Delaware Libraries – Book circulation (check-in and check-out) and inventories are time and resource intensive activities at Delaware’s libraries. In 2022, a Division of Libraries’ contractor began installing RFID tags in library collections and installing scanning/self-check equipment to reduce the time needed to check items in and out and perform inventories. The project goal is to create a system where libraries’ collection items are tagged, staff are trained and effectively using the scanning equipment, and self-checkout is available to the public. As a result, library staff can gain time to work on other priorities and increase their productivity.

DEPARTMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES (DSCYF)

Implement Continuous Quality Improvement through Administrative Case Review - The Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families is implementing an administrative case review process to support its continuous quality improvement efforts and data-driven decision-making. The scope of work has included the development of a comprehensive review tool to assess case management practices when children and families are involved with more than one division in its system of care. Use of the newly developed tool is in the pilot stage and results of the pilot review will inform changes to the review process and provide valuable information about strengths, needs, and gaps that will inform system improvement efforts.

Develop Trauma-Informed Workforce and Organization Culture - The Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families Trauma-Informed Care Committee (TICC) developed a strategic framework that included key action steps for 2022. The overall goal was to increase staff knowledge of trauma-informed and healing centered practices through training and resource sharing. This work involves significant change management as DSCYF works to change the way staff think, feel, and act when interacting with families involved with its services and each other. This project occurred over the span of twelve months and accomplished its planned objectives for the year.

IV. Education GEAR (EdGEAR)

Improve Support Services within Public Education - In 2021, the EdGEAR team put forth several recommendations for improvements in supports provided to the public education system through OMB/Government Support Services (GSS), including actions that would lead to efficiencies and cost savings in procurement, surplus property, and fleet purchases. GEAR leadership has facilitated this conversation with GSS to prioritize several key areas that would generate efficiencies in the coming year for the school system in Delaware.

Review Capital Project Processes - With public school districts expressing needs for major facility investments and market pressure costs surpassing existing capital project allocations, the EdGEAR team has begun a comprehensive review of the capital project processes within public education. Although in the early stages of this work, the EdGEAR team intends to review all the component parts of this process. The EdGEAR team is holding monthly meetings and anticipates completing this work by August 2023.



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FROM THE GEAR BOARD
DECEMBER 1, 2022

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 and 2020 (COVID-19). Over the last several years the total balance of the Budget Stabilization Fund has grown and is now \$402 million as of July 1, 2022.

GEAR complements these efforts over the long term by supporting operational excellence initiatives that reduce or temper State government spending growth, thus freeing up resources for other needs. Since its formation, the GEAR Board has met thirty-two 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 2022 report contains recommendations that may be included in the Governor's Recommended Budget and policy priorities for Fiscal Year 2024. This report is available online on GEAR's website.

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

- GEAR Program Management Team
- GEAR Public/Private Partnership (P3) Task Force
- Enterprise Services Delivery team
- GEAR Field Team
- EdGEAR

GEAR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT TEAM

GEAR was established to be the catalyst 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.

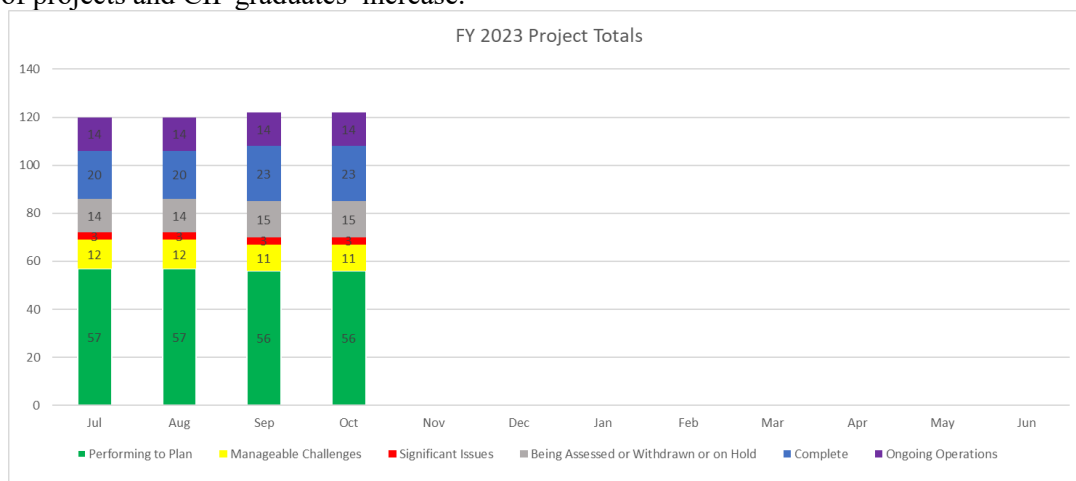
Drive Continuous Improvement Training and Development

Consistent with the recommendation made in the 2018 GEAR Annual Report, the First State Quality Improvement Fund (FSQIF) was reinstated in Fiscal Year 2020 as a line item in the Department of Human Resources (DHR) budget and funded at \$150,000 per year. DHR Training and HR Solutions and GEAR developed the Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CIP) as a joint venture to build project management, Lean process improvement, and change management skills of State employees. In 2020, DHR Training and HR Solutions developed the curriculum, with input from GEAR and worked with the training vendors to ensure their capability to deliver training virtually. GEAR solicits nominations for participation in the program from State Leadership and the GEAR Management Team serves on the panel to select participants. The CIP training program graduated its first 21 certified practitioners in the second quarter of 2021.

CIP continues to evolve, and the training program has graduated 52 practitioners to date with an additional cohort of 18 presently in training. Graduates receive 135 hours of training. All CIP graduates subsequently join the GEAR Field Team. DHR has submitted the Fiscal Year 2024 budget request for an additional \$200,000 endorsed by GEAR, to provide two annual cohorts, support the expansion of CIP, and implement a project and process leadership training as a joint initiative with GEAR. Given the GEAR Board's accountability for the reinstatement of the FSQIF and its shared oversight of the strategic direction of the CIP Program we seek the Governor's support for this requested additional funding.

Grow the GEAR Field Team (GFT)

Established in 2020, the GFT is a community comprised of continuous improvement practitioners and GEAR CIP graduates. With approximately 60 members representing fourteen State organizations, and the Judicial Branch, the team is delivering value through the execution of more than 70 projects. Trained practitioners are contributing greatly across the State. The application of CIP skills toward the delivery of quantifiable outcomes, including the return on investment of projects that demonstrate a cost savings has been an area of focus for the team in 2022. Although many of the outcomes associated with State services are qualitative and difficult to quantify, and the skills to measure actual return on investment are still being developed, a rough order of magnitude savings estimate representing 35 percent of the total GEAR Program Portfolio has been developed and is \$61 million to \$65 million. The team will continue to consider other qualitative measures that are as important as, and should be balanced with, quantitative measures. The GFT will continue to leverage industry best practices as the number of projects and CIP graduates' increase.



A Strategic Path for the Enterprise Services Delivery Team

Seven GEAR Board focus area teams were organized by agency affiliation until 2020. Beginning in 2021, several of these teams with statewide responsibilities were reorganized 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. In 2022, the framework for evaluating the strategic impact of "enterprise level" projects was revamped with a focus on the impact of change saturation, return on investment, and risk management.

Career Pathways to Improve Employee Recruitment and Retention

Executive Order #4 noted that GEAR shall, "identify changes in the State personnel system that would foster a culture of continuous improvement and improve the recruitment, development and retention of State employees." With few exceptions (i.e., Department of Technology and Information), State agencies do not possess job classifications to employ highly qualified and credentialed project managers and Lean business process analysts. The demand for these functions continues to grow in government, as evidenced by the degree of outsourcing that occurs for these resources, in addition to a competing demand for this talent being driven by the private sector. We are attempting to train these professionals internally through the CIP program, offering them opportunities to practice these functions and advance in their careers within State government. GEAR will work with the Department of Human Resources to consider the need for new opportunities to leverage new classifications, as part of the maintenance review process, in order to better meet the agencies' business process and project needs and minimize the costs of outsourcing.

Support the Ready in Six Initiative

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 scope of the task force 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. In coordination with GEAR P3 leadership and the Office of the Governor, a survey was developed in 2022 and disseminated to over 1,500 industry focused partners to target specific areas for improvement in the permitting process. The results of this survey will be tabulated and analyzed by GEAR leadership in early 2023 with formal project chartering to be developed to address specific process issues identified by the survey.

Policy Development Surrounding the Government Accountability Act (GAA) and First State Quality Improvement Fund (FSQIF)

First, as outlined in Executive Order #4, it was recommended that revisions to the Government Accountability Act be developed and implemented. As noted in the Order, "changes to the Delaware Government Accountability Act 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." While previous bills amending GAA have not succeeded in completing the legislative process, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Office of the Controller General, GEAR, and the Chairs of the Joint Finance Committee will be working together to institute and memorialize improved budgeting practices through the passage of a revised GAA in the upcoming session.

Second, consistent with the recommendation made in the 2018 GEAR Annual Report, the First State Quality Improvement Fund was reinstated in Fiscal Year 2020 after being suspended since 2009. To create lasting impact through the training of continuous improvement practitioners, it is recommended that the FSQIF be revised to enhance the funding consistent with the DHR Fiscal Year 2024 budget request item on a permanent basis. In addition, GEAR recommends that the language be modernized to reflect current best practices used in the field of operational excellence and GEAR's role in the continuing joint venture.

Enterprise Solutions for Project and Process Management (Planview and ARIS)

First, while the Department of Technology and Information (DTI) leverages a project management solution, known as Planview, there is not an enterprise-wide project management solution that is used to efficiently coordinate the overall

umbrella of business projects across the State. There is a need to standardize on a robust, modern, and intuitive project management tool to improve the State's ability to define, track, and manage projects. In addition, without an enterprise application, leadership is unlikely to have transparency surrounding resource allocation and risks on a consistent basis. The GEAR Field Team and Enterprise Services Delivery Team coordinates a portfolio of ~120 projects. It will remain a manual, resource intensive process to track, update and report on the growing body of projects without an enterprise solution such as Planview available across agencies.

Second, Business Process Management (BPM) is an industry standard best practice focused on improving an organization's processes by aligning them with its strategy and with the goal of improving efficiency. Rather than a point in time analysis, BPM is defined by a commitment to govern, optimize, and improve on an on-going basis. Operational bottlenecks are detected and reduced, development of new services is accelerated, regulatory compliance is assured, and processes can be understood from the perspective of the customer. An industry leading BPM tool named ARIS was introduced as a GEAR standard in July of 2019 with the support of the GEAR Director and the State's Chief Information Officer. Lean process mapping is part of the CIP curriculum. Graduates can apply these fundamental skills with paper and pencil, but this approach, as well as approaches that leverage flowchart drawing tools are not scalable or as effective. To date, ARIS is being demonstrated by multiple organizations as GFT members better define current state processes, measure performance, identify and eliminate waste, and implement optimized future state solutions. During Fiscal Year 2023 it is anticipated that ARIS will be used for process analysis associated with the GEAR P3 Ready in 6 program which is focused on optimizing the States' permitting processes with a focus on issues identified in a recent customer survey. BPM efforts are currently being funded by a distributed model across five organizations. There are currently fourteen ARIS designer licenses, one architect license, and forty viewer licenses deployed throughout the State. An enterprise investment of \$77,000 that will equip and train any GFT team members committed to joining those extending their skills with BPM capabilities is proposed.

GEAR PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (P3)

Strengthen and Grow the GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency and P3 Trailblazer Awards

In 2018, the State and Delaware business community – the latter represented by the GEAR P3 task force – partnered with GEAR and DHR to establish an award to recognize and directly incentivize Delaware State employees who successfully implement 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 task force coordinates with the Delaware Business Roundtable and the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce, as well as other partner organizations that are 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 Awards, the GEAR P3 team's scope has expanded to include analyzing and acting on recommendations 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.

The task force is seeking strong private-sector support to help the providers of these public services (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 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 for improvement 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.

Work to implement these recommendations was negatively impacted by the pandemic, as were the program's momentum and funding. Throughout 2022 the GEAR P3 task force worked to re-establish the Ready in 6 program funding and launch a survey that is open to approximately 1,500 private sector participants across the State. The results of the survey will be available at the end of this year in order to guide implementation plans. The GEAR P3 task force is a catalyst to create momentum state-wide, as the State emerges from the pandemic. The task force is uniquely qualified to add value to the Ri6 initiative.

Identify New Public-Private Partnership 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 (ESD)

Advanced Planning for Replacement of Enterprise-Wide Computer Applications

Many of the financial projects are well underway or moving to completion and new items that are coming to GEAR's attention are enterprise-wide in scope - they affect multiple agencies and branches of State government. Given Delaware's revenue volatility, there is still a need for GEAR to address efficiency through process and productivity improvements. To lead GEAR's efforts, the GEAR focus area teams of Financial Services Delivery, Human Resources Delivery and Information Technology Centralization were consolidated into the Enterprise Services Delivery Team. The implementation of enterprise-wide solutions often requires long implementation timelines, and this team is being 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 operate more efficiently, to collaborate among State entities 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 enterprise-wide computer system applications. Changes to these systems often require long-term projects on the scale of 5 to 10 years.

The State's enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems – First State Financials (FSF), Payroll Human Resources Statewide Technology (PHRST), and Pensions will reach end-of-life in 2030. The current solutions are technically outdated and offer minimal enhancements for a mobile workforce. In addition, the current systems are highly complex due to customization, requiring a specialized workforce to support these systems. To ensure the continuity of State operations, the ERP Project Sponsor Group conducted extensive research on existing and potential applications. This included a high-level analysis by Oracle, the current ERP provider, on a path for moving to Oracle's Cloud and an in-depth review by Info-Tech on the State's current business processes and readiness to move the systems from the current on-premises applications to Cloud or hybrid solutions. 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").

The ERP Executive Sponsors Group (Office of Management and Budget, Department of Finance, Department of Technology and Information and Department of Human Resources) reviewed and approved the ERP Project Sponsor Group plan and timeline to complete a state-wide fit gap analysis and requirements review for modernization of the current systems. Per this plan and timeline, the first two years are dedicated to completing this fit gap analysis and requirements review, along with working to standardize business practices which will reduce the need for customizing future systems. Utilizing funding obtained in the Fiscal Year 2023 Capital Budget, CAI (Computer Associates, Inc.) was contracted to provide resources and develop a project plan. CAI together with State functional and technical system experts are currently documenting system and business processes and the related system customizations. Along with this work, the State experts and ERP Project Sponsor Group established the overall project goals and the goals of modernization for each system.

Next steps:

1. After completing the documentation of current business processes and customizations, establish the requirements for modernization of the systems. This includes outreach to the executive agencies, schools and educational institutions and other critical end users for their input on these requirements.
2. Evaluate the options, including costs, available for modernizing the system, including software and hardware analysis, cost analysis and the advantages and disadvantages of the following options – Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), Platform as a Service (PaaS) and Software as a Service (SaaS).

3. Incorporating the requirements and options, develop a Request for Proposal for ERP Modernization. The full migration to a new system is expected to take an additional three to five years after the award of contract(s). It will require considerable State resources, both internal staff and contractual staff, along with support from all levels of government – Executive, Legislative and Judicial - to adopt business process changes that will eliminate expensive system customizations and result in streamlined system processes and a more efficient workforce.

Document Management

Currently, two electronic document signing options, Adobe Sign and DocuSign, are being used by State agencies. DTI is implementing DelSign (powered by AdobeSign) 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 have been several pilot projects which include early adopters from Department of Health and Social Services, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Office of Pensions and Office of the State Treasurer. 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 and will work with DTI to identify documents and signing processes, and subsequently apply continuous improvement methods to determine what documents require being signed, catalogued, prioritized, improved, or removed. To date, DTI's Innovation Team has onboarded over 180+ users from 15 agencies. Collectively, usage across the state for new users is over 2,000 individual transactions with a 200 percent increase in usage over the last 12 months.

Users have experienced efficiencies around document approval management, benefits of “staying digital” (no need to download, print, sign, scan, upload, and email) and cost savings for employee time and paper. DNREC Human Resources (HR) team was the first user of AdobeSign as part of this project and is expected to exceed 2,000 transactions for their New Employee hiring process. It is estimated that the DNREC HR team has saved over 40,000 pieces of paper and over \$15,000 worth of staff hours. Other agency users have provided positive feedback noting an improved end user experience, enhanced document management visibility and streamlined workflows including final document storage.

The secondary benefits go beyond onboarding new agencies and modernizing manual workflows. Some agencies have been motivated to revise processes, workflows, and review authorization requirements. Additionally, there has been statewide Adobe product contract reviews and “linked agreements” set up with non-DTI centralized agencies. This linked agreement resulted in an immediate \$5,000 savings for DHSS and ongoing 10-15 percent savings across all Adobe products. Additional R&D work has gone into Microsoft Office 365 Integration (Email, Word, and Teams) and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) using Power Automate to initiate various forms. These efforts are looking at streamlining processes and continuing to modernize workflows.

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 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 (\$30.0 million), Delaware Relief Grants (\$200.0 million), Child Care Relief Fund (\$100.0 million), Health Care Relief Fund (\$100.0 million), support for non-profit and higher education organizations (\$60.0 million), testing and contact tracing (\$100.0 million), broadband infrastructure (\$25.0 million), and Workforce Development (\$15.0 million). These funds were expended by the December 31, 2021, deadline. The State has also expended an additional \$760.0 million in funding through various COVID-19 grants awarded to the State for education, health and social services, unemployment services and workforce development. 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 supports a searchable way of tracking the allocations to, and payments made by, Delaware's state and local governments. The Office of the Governor's website for public information presents COVID spending from the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund paid directly to vendors. All other COVID funds expended can be viewed in the Delaware Open Checkbook on the Department of Finance website, a Socrata reporting tool applied to the State's accounting system's data. However, the Open Checkbook website requires the public to obtain additional information about State funds and appropriations to sort through all transactions for specific COVID expenditures.

President Biden signed the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and another \$900.0 million was allocated to Delaware as of March 11, 2021. The State is using these funds over the next several years to meet pandemic response needs, build a stronger, more equitable economy in communities impacted by COVID-19, provide immediate economic stabilization for impacted households and businesses, and address public health, public safety, and economic challenges. Currently, ARPA funds have been allocated to broadband infrastructure (\$43.0 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), support for libraries (\$40.0 million), higher education (\$107.0 million) and housing in Wilmington (\$26.0 million). Delaware has received more than \$860.0 million in additional funds through ARPA for the School Emergency Relief Fund (\$423.0 million), capital projects (\$112.8 million), childcare funds (\$108.5 million), local government support (\$87.9 million) and support for health, social services and tourism (\$128.0 million).

For all funds expended under ARPA, a separate Open Checkbook file has been developed and is tracking the \$1.76 billion received by Delaware. Updated monthly, the site contains a dashboard providing an overview of the budget and expenses by major program areas with access to the budget and expense detail. In addition, data can be exported to Excel for further review and analysis.

Improving the State's Banking Architecture

Over the last several years the Office of the State Treasurer (OST), in coordination with the Department of Finance's (DOF) Division of Accounting (DOA) and numerous State agencies, conducted a comprehensive overhaul of the State's banking architecture, which was broken out into five unique components: general banking (electronic collection and disbursement), lockbox services, purchasing card, stored value card, local banking (physical over-the counter deposit services), and check printing.

As the General Banking, Lockbox, and Stored Value Card 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 Division of Accounting. Finally, though difficult to measure, the new service providers offer best-in-class customer service, including expanded user training and educational opportunities.

Local Banking Consolidation

The local banking Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued in March of 2019, and in August 2019, the State's Cash Management Policy Board approved a primary award for over-the-counter collections to M&T Bank, and complementary awards 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. This project streamlines brick and mortar banking services from fourteen banks to three banks, simplifying reconciliation processes, and account management processes. Currently, 66 percent of the accounts have transitioned to a new local banking provider, with the final 33 percent expected to transition by December 31, 2022.

The Evolution of Digital Government

With the general and local banking services being fully modernized 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 Automated Clearing House (ACH) transactions occurring between the State of Delaware's residents, visitors, and state agencies.

OST is an integral partner in the Governor's Digital Government initiative to establish a public facing portal as an improved method for residents and visitors to interact with the State of Delaware. This effort includes a single sign on interface, and a robust, centralized, and secure payment platform. 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.

The initial phase of this project consisted of a comprehensive, four component digital government services RFP in partnership with DTI and the GIC. The components of the digital government RFP included 1) payment gateway products, 2) payment processing services, 3) reconciliation software, and 4) a single sign-on interface in which residents and visitors will transact and interact with the State of Delaware through a centralized portal. In August 2021, the State recommended that three of the four components for payment and reconciliation systems be awarded to Fiserv as the new vendor. Currently, the provider for the fourth component, a single sign-on portal, remains under negotiation but is anticipated to be completed in 2022.

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.

Merchant Services Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS) Compliance

In a collaborative effort with DTI and a contracted Qualified Security Assessor, CampusGuard, OST is working with State agencies to ensure that payments are being handled in a manner that is compliant with Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI-DSS) as well as similarly defined security procedures from NACHA (National Automated Clearing House Association) for ACH transactions. The deadline for OST to attest to compliance on behalf of all State agency merchants is March 31, 2023.

The consequences of failing PCI compliance include the State's loss of credibility as a reputable vendor, fines, and no longer being able to accept credit card payments. By analyzing agencies' current business processes involving how payments are handled, OST's merchant services team makes recommendations for improvements that can reduce an agency's PCI scope. OST's primary strategy for ensuring all agency merchants are PCI DSS compliant is to reduce the scope of agencies' payment environments by providing Point-to-Point Encrypted (P2PE) payment devices for in person payments, and vendor hosted online payment pages with secure checkout environments. In addition, OST assists State agencies with updating policies and procedures for securely handling payment transactions and provides guidance and assistance for remediating payment security vulnerabilities. These efforts ensure that payment best practices are being implemented, the PCI-DSS burden is minimized and that the State's data systems are secure.

Check-Printing Services Modernization

OST currently prints approximately 11,000 checks per month for vendors, payroll systems, and the Department of Services for Children Youth and their Families (DSCYF) using a twenty-year-old on-premises application. The primary goals of modernizing OST's check printing solution are to: improve workflow and increase efficiency by reducing the number of checks printed in-house, increase customer support by providing alternate check-printing services to other State agencies, and establish a disaster recovery backup system. OST is migrating check-printing services with its existing vendor, Bottomline Technologies' SaaS solution, with implementation to begin in November 2022.

Bank Account Reconciliation Software Modernization

OST is modernizing their processes through updated bank account reconciliation software. OST currently uses an on-premises hosted application that has reached end of life and is no longer receiving updates from the vendor. As part of the Digital Government RFP, Fiserv was awarded the contract for their SaaS solution. In addition to the opportunity for

modernization of the technology, there are business processes that are currently handled manually, outside of the existing system, that will be improved and streamlined by automation through this more robust platform.

Account Fee Analysis Software Modernization

OST is modernizing their processes through updated bank fee analysis software. OST currently uses an on-premises hosted application that has reached end of life and is no longer receiving updates from the vendor. As part of the Digital Government RFP, Fiserv was awarded the contract for their SaaS solution. OST is replacing their legacy solution to reduce manual effort and time, streamline workflows, and promote faster and more frequent analysis and recovery of banking fees.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

On June 1, 2021, OST received the first tranche of ~\$43.9 million in funding for fifty-five municipalities throughout the State of Delaware under ARPA. The first round of funding calculations and distributions were completed to the municipalities by June 26, 2021, as required by the U.S. Treasury. In June of 2022, OST received a second tranche of ~\$43.9 million under ARPA and distributed the additional funds to the 55 municipalities by the required deadline.

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, 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.

For the 2021 distribution, 100 percent of the funds were distributed prior to the deadline, with 7 percent of the checks made via paper check, 93 percent of the payments made via ACH. For the 2022 distributions, 100 percent of the funds were distributed prior to the deadline and 100 percent of the payments were made via ACH.

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 related 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, in June 2022 OST launched a ticketing solution through the ServiceNow platform allowing 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 profile information that will be leveraged across divisions at OST.

For Phase 1, OST identified ten service areas to automate. Additional service areas will be identified and built iteratively. Twenty percent of the service requests identified have forms available in the ServiceNow production environment, seventy percent of the service request forms are in the test environment, and ten percent of the service request forms are in the sandbox environment.

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 129 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 \$32.3 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 expenditures, failure to leverage collective locations, lack of common property ownership and minimal knowledge

sharing of the state of the local real estate market and associated factors such as borrowing rates, economic development interest and general business conditions.

After the execution of a professional services procurement, a contractual partnership was formed with the team of DSM Commercial 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 for improvement was further defined as the seventy-eight leases that would expire in an upcoming five-year period. Over time, the confines of this target group of leases have broadened due to market awareness and economic opportunity. Since the program began in 2018, fifty-two of the seventy-eight leases have been renewed or the State tenants were relocated. In addition, twelve of the seventy-eight leases have been terminated. As a result of the progress made during the initial four years contracting with DSM Commercial and Delaware Financial Group, the contract was renewed for an additional three years with opportunities to further extend the contract.

This GEAR project continues to achieve the targeted goal while at the same time evolves toward 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 integrating 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. Lastly, as the opportunity arises, the State is acquiring properties that it currently leases as well as properties where it has a need for additional space. These acquisitions will reduce the State's lease inventory in addition to providing cost savings that will be realized over time.

Thus far, the project has resulted in more than \$34.7 million in hard dollar rent savings and more than \$8.6 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 improvements.

OMB is requesting additional money in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget to perform a statewide space utilization review. The space utilization review will show how much space is being used versus how much is sitting idle, with recommendations forecasting a more effective utilization of space. This information will also assist with planning for future growth and reducing overall space costs.

As departments decide how to move forward with hybrid work schedules, OMB/DFM will continue to take advantage of spaces that have been vacated or downsized because of State employees telecommuting to work. To date, one agency will be reducing their real estate footprint as a result of employees utilizing a hybrid schedule. This will result in a savings of \$136,348 annually once they relocate to a smaller building in May 2023.

Financial Services Delivery 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. 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, 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. Three of the seven persons (42 percent) - reviewing and approving these waiver request applications are cabinet secretary level leaders. All after-the-fact waiver requests were historically reviewed and approved by the Director of the Office of Management (OMB) and Budget and the Secretary of Finance.

On March 1, 2021, the Financial Advisory Committee subcommittee 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 Director of the Office of Management and Budget and Secretary of Finance approval only for those waiver requests over \$50,000. Based on the Fiscal Year 2020, after-the-fact waiver workload reductions for Budget and Finance cabinet secretaries and staff was estimated to be just over 75 percent.

The changes have been successful in reducing the approval workload for the cabinet secretaries and their staff. To date, for Fiscal Year 2023, nineteen waiver applications have been submitted for OMB and DOF approval.

July 1st to June 30th

	Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021	Fiscal Year 2022	Fiscal Year 2023
OMB/DOF Approval Totals	105	76	18	19

Procurement Card (PCard) Program

Calendar Year 2021 spending rebounded from the decrease noted during the first nine months of the pandemic with a record level of combined spend for the State's credit card and the Single Use Account (SUA) program of more than \$176 million. This resulted in an increased rebate rate of 2 percent providing a total rebate amount to the State of \$3.4 million. The SUA program accounted for nearly 60 percent of the spend and rebate with spending topping \$100 million. Although no formal campaign to recruit vendors to the SUA program, there has been 10 percent growth over the prior year in the number of vendors utilizing the program. This growth occurs by encouraging new State vendors to sign up for the program as well as vendors who are active in the State's general collection and disbursement bank's program with other cardholders to change their payment method with the State. Calendar Year 2022 to date remains consistent with 2021 and the expectation is to end the year with total spend and rebate equal to or slightly above Calendar Year 2021.

Financial Advisory Committee (FAC)

The FAC continued quarterly meetings and the Grants and Training subcommittees were active throughout the period accomplishing several of their goals. The Travel subcommittee completed travel policy changes, some of which remain on hold until Office of Management and Budget/Government Support Services (OMB/GSS) can implement services with the travel management company. Travel for business and conferences resumed late in Fiscal Year 2022 and is expected to increase during Fiscal Year 2023.

The FAC training subcommittee completed the basic payroll training course for payroll staff and offered a pilot training that was well received. Additional trainings will be scheduled during Fiscal Year 2023. The basic accounting training is still in progress but nearing completion. The course is expected to be finalized with a pilot training offered by the end of Calendar Year 2022. These trainings provide fundamentals of payroll and accounting not currently included in the courses for users of the State's Payroll and Human Resources Statewide Technology (PHRST) and the State's financial management accounting system, First State Financials (FSF). The courses will be scheduled periodically or by agency request.

The Grants subcommittee resumed with the OMB Clearinghouse and Division of Accounting FSF Grants team, coordinating with agency participants to align policies and support best practices. To support this effort, the Delaware State Clearinghouse Committee conducted training to assist agencies through the grant application process using updated job aids for additional reference. The FSF team responded to requests for assistance with budgeting processes and developed a mass budget update template to create efficiencies for agencies by reducing manual entry.

Reintroduce Strategic Planning and Performance Budgeting Processes

Per Executive Order #4, GEAR is 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). Both bills had limited success in the legislature in prior legislative sessions. SB 263 was passed by the Senate and HB 133 was passed by the House, though neither Bill passed the other chamber in the same session. Both Bills will need to be reintroduced for consideration in the 152nd General Assembly.

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 is composed of 1) strategic planning, 2) performance measurement/evaluation and 3) performance budgeting. The Governor and the Legislature, particularly the 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 take several years. It would begin with agencies presenting budget requests for an upcoming fiscal year that would 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.

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 Division of Revenue) 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 (late 2022) – Personal income and estate taxes
- Release 3 (mid 2023)– 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 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.

Improve Data Integration and Mapping

Leverage FirstMap for Data Sharing

FirstMap is the State's enterprise Geographic Information System (GIS), but it is not used uniformly by State agencies. Over the past year DTI's FirstMap team has worked diligently to restructure this repository and has all but completed the "FirstMap 2" delivery. The goal of this repository is to provide the mechanism for all State agencies to use a single, authoritative source of geospatial data. This will be economically advantageous for the State to provide one uniform data 'source of truth' for all agencies to use, and ensure all agencies have access to necessary information. Leveraging this data will provide essential information for long-range planning of school sites, demographic trends, transportation, state service centers, natural resources, and other applications.

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. Fully evaluating the State's realty assets and generating a centralized, spatial, land inventory database will afford stakeholders the ability to identify assets, evaluate use, maintenance, funding and ultimately manage these assets in a more streamlined and efficient manner. In response to past discovery workshops and recommendations OSPC has initiated a business case with DTI and is currently awaiting a kickoff meeting with the recently assigned project manager. The next steps for this effort will include further evaluation from DTI and OSPC staff to better outline the most effective and efficient solution and associated data structure. It is possible there will need to be an Executive Order or Memorandum of Understanding to solidify collaboration among all involved agencies, so a more efficient and unified tracking of real property occurs within a centralized database. Finally, a funding source has not been identified and will need to be established for the full implementation of this solution.

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 better allocate 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.

In the 2020-2022 legislative session, the Legislature passed SB 327. The Bill obligates Department of Education (DOE), OSPC, the school districts and county governments to work together to integrate an educational element into the county comprehensive plans. In order to support this effort, the school district enrollment projection data is necessary. This year OMB has contracted with University of Delaware's Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research (CADSR) to update the enrollment projections. The project will be managed by OSPC and DOE, and in future years, a sustainable funding strategy is needed to ensure that enrollment projections are kept up to date.

Information Technology Efficiency

Delaware has adopted a standardized Information Technology (IT) services delivery model with shared services either delivered or brokered by 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. 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 also funds future investments in IT innovation.

The following sections highlight the move toward a shared services cost model that establishes an annual rate per user for Secure End User Services (SEUS). This model streamlines the delivery of core IT commodities, pursues increased visibility and enhanced controls for risk prevention and mitigation, and provides employees with equitable access, support, equipment, software, and security to be able to do their work in an evolving IT-driven environment.

DTI is working with OMB to define the implementation strategy around a chargeback methodology to the State agencies being supported with IT services. Simultaneously, DTI is reviewing and updating the Service Catalog to define core IT services, in addition to leveraging automation through request and fulfillment workflows in a ServiceNow platform. This will streamline support, improve inventory management, and position Delaware to project future needs in these key areas.

IT Centralization

In 2021, DTI pivoted from an agency-by-agency ITC effort to focus on how best to deliver a highly secure, equitably provisioned computing environment. The comprehensive SEUS centralization strategy and associated cost model provides stable technology and predictable billing to State agencies based on actual usage. In April 2022, the IT Centralization program moved SEUS forward with the centralization of the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Human Resources. With its pilot agencies, DTI established a repeatable process, standard templates for data gathering and communication, including lessons learned, and applied for the continuance of the program. Centralization planning is now underway for the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) with their completion of centralization targeted for the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2023.

Development and implementation of the shared services cost model, in collaboration with OMB, reflecting the total cost of ownership of IT services is essential 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.

Again, the pilot centralization of OMB and DHR offers DTI the opportunity to obtain constructive feedback for the cost model implementation strategy with focus on the required business model and funding needed to support both service delivery and chargeback. Considerations were made to the product, service and personnel costs driving the fixed annual rate for the consumption of Secure End User Services and the fiscal impact to agency consumers. At the time of this report, analysis and planning for an enterprise implementation of a shared service cost model in Fiscal Year 2024 remains in-progress.

Secure End User Services (SEUS)

Secure End User Services is the first IT service offering to transition to the new shared services cost model with the following benefits and features:

- Maximizes security compliance
- Stabilizes procurement of technology equipment, assuring support needs uniformly, including 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 mice, keyboards, and monitors 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 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.

Pandemic Response Initiatives

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

Enterprise Digital Government: Single Sign-On for State Workers, Residents and Visitors

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 implementing a user-centric digital government strategy that delivers a consistent and intuitive user experience. Many government services are accessible online — and many others should be — allowing residents and visitors access anytime, from anywhere, on any device. The State has migrated services to the Internet but without an enterprise strategy, instead, services must be sought out online from various agencies. Opening government to individuals and businesses, and breaking down the traditional barriers, encourages innovation and increases efficiency and productivity for everyone.

Digital accessibility is an important part of our digital government strategy. Removing barriers for persons with disabilities to ensure access to digital content is imperative and the State is moving forward with digital accessibility efforts through an investment of American Rescue Plan Act funding. In coordination with the Office of the Governor and Department of State Government Information Center (GIC), DTI has developed a multi-year plan to improve inclusiveness and access to digital government services. DTI has identified a Digital Accessibility Coordinator who will lead Delaware’s efforts to assess digital content (websites, forms, etc.) and recommend steps for remediation. During the first phase of these efforts, Delaware will be partnering with a vendor (Level Access) to:

- Build a statewide accessibility strategy and program
- Automate testing across our digital portfolio
- Assess priority websites to fast-track remediation
- Develop third party contracting policies
- Launch a statewide accessibility education program to raise awareness and train developers/designers on how to spot issues/maintain compliance

Delaware also 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 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, DTI is embarking on the larger initiative making the resident and visitor solution *My Delaware* available for the public to consume State digital government services under authenticated identities. DTI has onboarded 56 applications and 63,000 unique users to date and adoption continues to grow.

DTI and Department of State’s Government Information Center 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. This includes several technology projects that support the digital government platform: an underlying customer relationship management application, single sign-on authentication and identity proofing (State worker phase completed; now, resident and visitor platform in implementation phase), email marketing application, data management and analytics tool, and centralized online payment tool. 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

resident and visitor 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 digital government experiences that meet current and future customer expectations. DTI continues to partner with Department of State, Department of Finance, Department of Human Resources, and the Office of the State Treasurer to further the digital government strategy, with support from the Office of the Governor.

Expansion of Broadband Access Across Delaware

Expanding access to high-speed internet across Delaware is a priority. The State's Broadband Strategic Plan and GIS Hub have identified more than 12,000 homes and businesses lacking access to broadband services. Given the additional funding made available through several federal programs specifically targeting broadband efforts, Delaware has revised its original investment plan of ARPA dollars to maximize the potential of all available resources as follows:

- \$33 million in ARPA funding to support wired broadband infrastructure expansion to be continued through the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program. This work began in the Summer of 2022 and will continue over 18 months.
- \$100+ million in BEAD funding to plan and implement broadband expansion in 2024-2028. This program can be used to connect unserved homes and to upgrade connections to homes with a lower-speed connection.
- \$12 million in federal Digital Equity funds to support activities that promote digital inclusion and advance equity for all. \$516,000 has been awarded through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to plan for implementation.
- \$13 million awarded by the FCC to the federal Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) to connect homes to broadband in designated geographic rural areas. RDOF funds were awarded directly to Talkie, Inc. and cannot be combined with BEAD. Talkie, Inc. was chosen by the FCC to deliver broadband to certain areas in Delaware and has until 2028 to make the connections.

Centralize and Modernize Human Resources Delivery

DHR was created in 2017 to centralize human resources (HR) services delivery to State employees. DHR completed the project's initial phase on June 23, 2019, which included defining the reporting structure, transferring agency HR Staff, and executing Service Level Agreements with 15 agencies. Since 2019, DHR staff have focused on mapping work processes, restructuring the organization for optimal service delivery, and developing metrics and requirements for key operations.

Modernizing Using HR Technology

Human Resources technology infrastructure has historically been slow to modernize, resulting in limited analytics and capabilities critical for delivering services to a hybrid workforce. When the COVID-19 pandemic initially disrupted the flow of services within the State, the DHR's priority was to maintain the workforce and keep employees safe, engaged, and productive. Investing in technology enables DHR to transform human resource service delivery, which improves employee access and builds a strong, resilient, and equitable employee experience.

Redefine the Employee Experience- Employee Success Center

The Employee Success Center serves as the 'front door' for employees' questions, inquiries, case management, workflow, and data analytics across DHR. Currently, employees must navigate multiple websites or seek out an HR representative to find information or obtain answers to common questions. The Employee Success Center is one source for employees seeking information and resources, including submitting requests electronically, live and virtual agent, and request tracking capability. This technology supports employee relations, labor relations, employee complaint processes, and agency HR service delivery, such as general employee inquiries. The solution will enable DHR to streamline access to information, quickly respond to questions, document inquiries, and route requests to the proper DHR staff. With data analytics and reporting, leadership can quickly work to resolve process bottlenecks, improve transparency, and increase efficiency and capacity.

The Employee Success Center will enable DHR to modernize the delivery of HR services in a more efficient and effective manner. Currently, DHR is requesting funding to modernize the delivery of human resources services as part of the annual budget process.

Delaware Learning Center Support Portal

Before July 28, 2022, the Department of Human Resources manually managed and tracked over 10,000 requests annually for the Delaware Learning Center (DLC). Most of the requests were multi-faceted, with numerous interactions and exchanges of supporting documentation. The DHR/Division of Training and HR Solutions team provides Tier I and Tier II support to all system users and agency training programs. System utilization has exponentially increased since the initial DLC implementation in 2015 to 42,000 users, over 377,000 training registrations, and 90 State agency training programs, all while staffing remained constant.

After a five-month implementation, DHR standardized and automated process workflow with a single point of information, communication, and case management using ServiceNow Customer Service Management software. Additionally, this implementation enabled DHR to store supporting documents and materials in a single location and provide a mechanism to gather metrics to support process improvement efforts.

This implementation is a model of collaboration between DHR as the business owner, DTI as the State's technical experts and system owner, and Cask as the outside implementer. DHR is creating a Memorandum of Understanding with DTI for post-go-live support to set the standard for future statewide projects. This project also enabled full integration with the State's identity and access management solution (Okta) to enhance security for internal and external users of the DLC.

Classification/Compensation Workflow Tracking System

DHR staff manually reviews and analyzes classification and compensation requests by poring over paper documents stored in filing cabinets and network servers. A homegrown system requires manual entry of dates to track requests as they move along the approval process. The need for modernization is critical to these human resources processes. DHR seeks an automated solution to integrate electronic forms, approval workflow tracking, store support documentation, provide email notification, and escalation capabilities of classification and compensation requests.

This project has three phases. Phase 1 consisted of drafting requirements, forms, and workflows, which was completed in April 2022. Phase 2 began in August 2022 and includes solution recommendations from DTI along with obtaining vendor quotes for recommended solutions. Phase 2 remains in progress with vendor responses currently pending. Phase 3 will consist of solution implementation.

ePersonnel Files Project

DHR is expanding a pilot electronic personnel file system across the department to digitize paper documents stored in filing cabinets and boxes across the state. Managing employee files with a centralized digital solution improves security and compliance with record retention schedules, improves consistency and accessibility, and frees up valuable office space. Implementing an electronic content management solution supports HR centralization with consistency and security.

The successful completion of the DHR-DNREC Electronic Content Management for HR (Personnel Files Project) led DHR to seek funding for implementation across the department. DTI approved the business case and project planning began on July 13, 2022. The project has two major components: 1) expansion of OnBase software across DHR and 2) third-party scanning of historical paper documents. It is estimated that the OnBase solution will be ready for implementation in seven months (May 2023).

Once employee personnel files are scanned and indexed into the OnBase system, work will begin to configure the system for employee and labor relation files.

Labor Relations Salesforce System Review

Currently, requests related to grievances and appeals are submitted via email and manually entered into a system. DHR seeks to further automate the system with the ability for employees to submit complaints, grievances, and appeals electronically and enable automated notifications and enhanced tracking of requests from receipt to case closure. DHR and DTI reviewed the existing system and identified several opportunities to be addressed through a phased approach.

DTI completed Phase 1 enhancements in October 2021, including adding drop-down menus, standardizing department codes, and training on reporting. Currently, Phase 2 includes documenting requirements for web request forms for Step 3 Grievances, Merit Rule 12.9 appeals, mapping Step 1 and Step 2 grievances, and documenting the workflow for employee complaints. Work is underway to identify the fields needed to expand case types in the system to track Respectful Workplace complaints and Merit Rule 12.9 appeals.

Centralize Policies and Procedures

Critical to centralizing the delivery of human resources, DHR is leveraging agency staff's knowledge to standardize human resources policies and procedures across the employee life-cycle. To date, DHR has finalized and issued 29 policies. DHR continues to systematically revise and implement new policies to address the most critical issues.

DHR issued several new policies and procedures to support a diverse workforce focusing on respectful and equitable workplaces, including Standards of Conduct, Gender Identity, Alternative Workplace Arrangement, and Workplace Wellness policies and procedures. Policies and procedures requiring acknowledgment are managed through the Delaware Learning Center to provide consistency and ensure employee awareness.

Centralize Recruitment, Hiring, Onboarding, and Offboarding

DHR must provide services to a hybrid workforce, including recruitment, hiring, and onboarding high-demand talent, while fostering an inclusive experience. Recruitment and retention were already at high risk before the pandemic due to employee skill gaps, retirement eligibility, and the changing nature of public-sector work. Responding to the pandemic with limited personnel resources forced agencies to consider hiring and training new or under-skilled employees.

An automated and integrated recruitment, hiring, and onboarding system will facilitate a consistent and user-friendly experience for all applicants and new hires while centralized offboarding will provide a consistent approach for employees retiring and separating from State service. Since 2018, DHR has taken steps to establish a workgroup, create system requirements, conduct gap analyses, view demonstrations of existing system capabilities, and conduct a request for information. In 2022, with funding secured, DHR issued a Request for Proposal for an integrated solution to enable DHR to standardize the recruitment, hiring, and onboarding processes. Vendor selection and contract negotiations are underway. Discovery and system configuration is expected to begin in early 2023 with implementation expected in June 2023 upon expiration of the existing contract.

Standardize Human Resources Processes

As part of the centralization of HR staff and service level agreement negotiations, DHR agreed to create a Lean HR Demonstration. This effort focused on service delivery metrics related to classification and compensation requests, recruitment and hiring, and Step 3 grievances. Over the past year, DHR expanded its focus on streamlining the work process by standardizing human resource processes across the department in recruitment and hiring, classification, compensation, employee and labor relations, and employee development. In 2022, DHR staff mapped 72 work processes and identified numerous opportunities for improvement.

In June 2022, the DHR Cabinet Secretary leveraged workgroups to develop 90-day deliverables focusing on opportunities to improve in the areas of centralizing recruitment and hiring (talent acquisition), classification and compensation, employee and labor relations, and onboarding new hires.

The classification and compensation workgroup identified opportunities to streamline the position establishment and the leave of absence request processes and identify steps in centralizing service delivery. The deliverables included: streamlining the position establishment process effective July 1, 2022, reducing the number of steps in the Leave of Absence Request process, and training on the changes in mid-October 2022.

The vision of centralizing service delivery within classification, compensation, and talent acquisition services began with a staff assessment and filling centralized positions. The next steps included identifying positions to deliver centralized shared services. The workgroup identified a hiring manager module within the Delaware Employment Link (DEL) to directly involve hiring managers in the process. DHR leadership identified over 1,000 managers, directors, and human resources staff for training. The training was developed and provided in November 2022.

As part of restructuring the department, the Division of Labor Relations and Employment Practices (LREP) was renamed Employee and Labor Relations (ELR). The team scheduled quarterly meetings, identified training needs, developed guidelines for conducting investigations, and delineated roles between employee and labor relations.

The onboarding workgroup identified multiple action items as part of their 90-day deliverables, which included: identifying policies required to be acknowledged, training required for all new hires, standardization of the pre-boarding process that includes offer letters, conditional hire letters, employee information forms, and documentation from new hires as part of the employment verification process, and selecting a vendor to automate the management of pre-boarding and onboarding for new hires. The workgroup identified 29 required policies and notices and over 17 training courses for employees and supervisors. The team redesigned the Employee Information Form to include the necessary information for new hires, legal name changes, and requests for a preferred first name.

Expand iLEAD Delaware Leadership Program

To build future leaders, in 2021, DHR launched the iLEAD Delaware Leadership Program to provide the knowledge and skills employees need to lead organizational efforts that achieve excellence in government. DHR's vision for the iLEAD program consists of five leadership development curricula: Leadership Essentials, Frontline Leadership, Project and Process Leadership, Continuous Improvement Practitioner, and Organizational Leadership. iLEAD training consists of a pathway for people leaders and a pathway for project/process improvement leaders.

Leadership Essentials kicked off in March 2021 to provide State employees with access to self-paced online training. The program features 44 courses ranging from 10 to 115 minutes and includes in-depth training on building and leading teams, coaching and developing employees, communication, creating clarity and focus, driving performance, understanding others, and the importance of a positive work environment. This program is a pre-requisite for the new Frontline Leadership certificate program. To date, 361 employees completed the program, and 581 are in progress. The topics covered in the program provide a strong foundation for a successful supervisor or project leader.

Frontline Leadership, designed as the next step in the iLEAD series within the pathway for people leaders, went live in June 2021 to replace an outdated Supervisory Development Certificate program. This rigorous new leadership certificate program includes 15 required instructor-led and online training courses, course assessments, a case study exercise, a final report, and participation in a symposium. During the two-day symposium, participants demonstrate their ability to present information to a group and facilitate small group discussions. Participants discuss and evaluate each participant's presentation and facilitation skills as part of the graduation requirements. Seven state employees have completed the requirements for graduation, and 121 are actively enrolled in the program. To enable participants to weave the program requirements into their work schedule and apply learned skills, participants have three years to complete the program.



The Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CIP) program, a training series developed in partnership with GEAR, provides for a development track toward project and process improvement leadership. The development of the CIP program is discussed in greater detail in the following section of this report.

Planning is underway for two additional programs to build leaders who can lead people through process improvement and achieve excellence in state government. DHR's Fiscal Year 2024 budget contains a funding request to support the implementation of these two phases of iLEAD, Project and Process Leadership, this will be a new partner endeavor with GEAR, and Organizational Leadership program.

Sustain and Expand the Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CIP) Program

Delaware's private sector and citizens expect state agencies to implement projects that lead to more effective and efficient State government. The Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CIP) Certificate Program is building the State's bench strength of employees with the skills necessary to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government processes and programs. GEAR and DHR successfully developed this program to train up to 36 employees annually. Graduates receive 135 hours of project management, Lean process improvement, and change management training before subsequently joining the GEAR Field Team.

Program participants gain the knowledge and skills to lead continuous improvement efforts through partnerships with the University of Delaware, Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and the private sector. Individuals who complete the program join the GEAR Field Team to apply and further develop skills learned in the CIP Program building continuous improvement capacity across the State. The training also fosters relationship-building and information sharing to establish a diverse community of improvement practitioners that leverage and learn from the experience of their colleagues.

Over the past year and a half, 52 employees successfully graduated from the CIP Program, building the State's capacity to implement continuous improvement projects. Currently, 18 employees are enrolled in the program and scheduled for completion in February 2023. Planning is underway for a spring 2023 cohort.

Sustaining a continuous improvement environment includes expanding the CIP program and developing Project, Process and Organizational Development leaders with the critical skills necessary for the successful delivery of services. The First

State Quality Improvement Fund (FSQIF) enabled the creation of the CIP Program, which develops State employees' project management, change management, and Lean process improvement skills. The FSQIF is currently funded for \$150,000 annually, however, additional funding for Fiscal Year 2024 is necessary to sustain the program. Due to being unable to offer the program in 2020, carryover funds from previous fiscal years enabled DHR to offer two cohorts annually, however, those funds will be exhausted in Fiscal Year 2023. DHR requested additional funding in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget request to continue and expand to meet the demand for this valuable leadership training program.

At the end of Fiscal Year 2023, up to 88 trained continuous improvement practitioners are expected to deliver improvements to State government, representing all State agencies and the courts. One measure of success is the impact of the training on participants. One participant shared that the training program "has given me new skills and a robust toolkit to transform our organization through persistent and incremental process optimization, knowledge sharing, employee involvement, and more. It feels amazing knowing I'm making a difference working alongside a group of folks who embrace continuous improvement!". A graduate's supervisor also noted, "the CIP program provided foundation skills for my staff to move improvements forward successfully".

Expand Recognition of State Employees

Strengthen and Grow the GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award

Created in 2018, the GEAR P3 Innovation and Efficiency Award recognizes and incentivizes outstanding teams of State employees that use continuous improvement methodologies and disciplined project management techniques. The awards, presented annually to teams of six to twenty employees, encourage teamwork by recognizing State employees' efforts to use continuous improvement tools to excel in leadership, team dynamics, and communications to produce superior customer service and tangible results. The award is part of the Governor's Team Excellence Award Program. The projects demonstrate innovative, sustainable, and efficient business processes and services.

Through a partnership between GEAR, DHR, and the Delaware business community, the GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award provides recipients with a financial incentive of up to \$10,000 shared among a team of award recipients. The financial commitment to support the awards includes \$25,000 from the private sector with a matching State contribution of \$25,000 on an annual basis. GEAR P3 remains essential to ensuring the participation of the private sector in this important award.

This year the recipient of the GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award is the "Delaware Overdose and Policy Diversion Program" representing a cross-functional team from the Department of Safety and Homeland Security/Delaware State Police, Department of Health and Social Services, and Department of Justice.

In addition, the Governor's Team Excellence Award Program also includes a Champions Award and Commitment Award. The Champions Award is for teams that demonstrate superior use of continuous quality improvement tools to achieve exceptional process efficiency, customer service, and cost savings. The Commitment Award is for teams that demonstrate commitment to developing and applying continuous improvement tools and techniques to achieve quality results in their organization. In 2022, two teams were honored with the Champions Award and four with the Commitment Award.

As the State's capacity to manage process improvement expands, nominations for the GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award are expected to increase. For the State to support ongoing private sector contributions of \$25,000 per year, increased funding of \$50,000 is requested by DHR for the State's share of award funds in order to expand monetary awards for State employees.

Expand the Trailblazer Award

In 2020, the State established the GEAR P3 Trailblazer Award to recognize and incentivize individuals that use continuous improvement methodologies to deliver innovative, impactful, sustainable, and efficient processes and services. Recipients of the GEAR P3 Trailblazer Award receive a financial incentive of \$1,500, and it is available to individuals and small groups of five or fewer employees. Holly Reynolds from the Department of Finance, Division of Revenue, was selected as this year's GEAR P3 Trailblazer Award recipient.

The process for identification of candidates for the GEAR P3 Trailblazer Award comes from applications submitted for the Delaware Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service or the employee of the year award. As a result, the number of candidates eligible for the GEAR P3 Trailblazer Award is limited by guidelines established in the Delaware Award for Excellence. DHR seeks to create a separate GEAR P3 Trailblazer Award process that enables agencies to submit multiple nominations for the Award, resulting in the ability to recognize more employees who deliver innovative, impactful, sustainable, and efficient business processes and services.

Incentivize the Delaware Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service Award

The Delaware Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service Award, better known as the “Employee of the Year” Award, has been in place since 1990. Recipients of the award received a monetary incentive of \$3,000 until the recession of 2009.

Individuals nominated for this award compete against others nominated as Employees of the Quarter in their respective agencies. This year’s recipients included: Amber Clendaniel, DHR Administrative Specialist, who took a leadership role in implementing Microsoft Teams and OneDrive, enabling the department’s early adoption of these collaborative tools which were critical during the pandemic; Cynthia Coleman, a Judicial Operations Manager who established a case filing system during the pandemic to assist in the filing of writs, Casey Kim, Telecommunications Technologist who automated the creation of mailbox migration batches, and a team of Anne Fenimore, Gloria Henry, and Vertie Lee, from the State Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs who restored the names of free and enslaved people previously lost in history. All these recipients demonstrated innovation in their approach to solving a problem, demonstrated leadership, and the ability to communicate to achieve tangible results.

As the State looks for ways to retain its top performers, it is recommended to restore the monetary incentive for the Delaware Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service.

Reduce Healthcare Costs

As health care costs continue to climb, the DHR Statewide Benefits Office (SBO), under the guidance of the State Employee Benefits Committee (SEBC), continues to develop strategies to engage Group Health Insurance Plan (GHIP) members to reduce health care costs for State employees, pensioners, and their dependents. To address a projected Fiscal Year 2023 deficit, the SEBC approved an 8.67 percent increase in State non-Medicare health plan premiums (rates) effective July 1, 2022. This health plan rate increase was the first since July 2016.

Due to health care trends, the State is projecting a \$113.5 million deficit in the Group Health Fund for Fiscal Year 2024. To help solve the longer-term projected deficit, the SEBC is reviewing non-Medicare rate increase scenarios for health plan premiums, which include a 14.3 percent rate increase effective July 1, 2023 (absent any additional program changes) or smoothing the rate increase over Fiscal Years 2024, 2025, and 2026 with an annual rate increase of approximately 9.8 percent. The State must continue its strategies to offer programs to manage health and chronic conditions and engage GHIP members through education and training, as health care costs cannot be addressed solely through rate increases.

The workplace is an important setting for supporting health and wellness. In May 2022, DHR/SBO received a "Health Benefits Innovation Award" from the Greater Philadelphia Business Coalition on Health for promoting hospital quality and safety within the State workforce. The State also experienced another successful Benefits Open Enrollment period, with 83.4 percent of benefit-eligible State employees actively participating in the Open Enrollment process. As the State's largest public employer, the State of Delaware has a responsibility to lead by example by promoting a culture of health. The factors associated with the State’s culture of health include reducing health care costs, unplanned absences, and disability and workers' compensation claims, improving health-related productivity, and enhancing morale and staff retention. In June 2022, in celebration of "National Employee Wellness Month," DHR announced the Workplace Wellness Policy and Procedures with guidance to Executive Branch agencies to establish and maintain workplace wellness initiatives. This policy stems from the recommendations outlined in Governor Carney's 'Action Plan for Delaware' and the Healthy Lifestyles Subcommittee’s final report. Workplace wellness initiatives focus on promoting a healthy lifestyle, including exercise, healthy eating, tobacco cessation, and preventive care, as well as supporting employees' social and emotional wellness,

including stress management, and mental health. The policy includes a Workplace Wellness Toolkit, which offers best practices, tips, tools, and resources related to workplace wellness. Forms included in the Toolkit include: the Liability Waiver for Participation in Workplace Fitness Activities (provides a standardized form across Executive Branch agencies for employees who participate in workplace physical fitness activities), and the Media Release Form (a standardized, approved form for use across Executive Branch agencies who wish to use employee information [e.g., wellness testimonials] in print and electronic communications).

In June 2022, DHR/SBO also provided a 2022 scorecard to the leadership of each Executive Branch agency. The annual scorecards contain aggregate data on utilization, screening rates, site of care usage, and condition prevalence for an agency's employees enrolled in a State health plan. The scorecards include benchmark comparisons against other State agencies and the State overall. Agencies are encouraged to act on the areas of opportunity in the scorecard by incorporating them into their wellness plans, activities, and communications.

As a result of the competitive Request for Proposal process for the State's Medical Plan Third-Party Administrators, the SEBC re-awarded contracts to Highmark Delaware and Aetna for Fiscal Year 2023. The new contracts include program enhancements around disease/care management to support members' overall health and conditions like diabetes. At the July 25, 2022, SEBC meeting, the SEBC voted to leverage the State's relationship with SurgeryPlus by approving Hinge Health and a bariatric surgery carve-out for an effective date of no earlier than January 1, 2023. Hinge Health is a musculoskeletal program that offers a virtual at-home physical therapy experience by providing wearable digital sensors and technology. The bariatric surgery carve-out mandates the use of SurgeryPlus for GHIP members seeking weight-loss surgery. This service provides higher-quality outcomes, enhanced member experiences, and cost savings to GHIP members and the State.

For several years now, the SEBC has worked alongside the General Assembly and other committees to identify options that assure that retired State employees retain access to high-quality and affordable health care while also making progress toward reducing the State's \$10 billion unfunded liability for retiree healthcare that threatens the long-term sustainability of these important benefits. At the February 28, 2022, SEBC meeting, the SEBC approved a State Medicare Advantage plan effective January 1, 2023, that replaces the current Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) Special Medicfill Medicare Supplement plan. The SEBC worked with Highmark Delaware to customize the new plan called Highmark BCBS Delaware's Freedom Blue PPO Medicare Advantage Plan, to mirror the design of the current Special Medicfill Supplement plan. This plan includes the same Medicare Part D prescription plan offered through Silverscript administered by CVS Caremark, available today. A new focus on preventive and managed care delivers a coordinated approach to care, resulting in lower monthly premiums and higher quality outcomes for Medicare-eligible members. In response to litigation filed to stop implementation of the Medicare Advantage plan, on October 24, 2022, to comply with Judge Calvin Scott's interim ruling, the SEBC voted to extend the Medicfill contract for State pensioners for 12 months pursuant to the Emergency Procedures and Critical Need for Professional Services provision of the procurement code, 29 *Del. C.* §6907. Pending the resolution of the litigation, the SEBC will consider its options for Calendar Year 2024, which include renegotiation of the Highmark BCBS Delaware Medicare Advantage PPO plan contract and rebidding of the State Medicare health plan.

DHR/SBO developed and implemented training and communication strategies to engage GHIP members, including educating enrolled members about benefit plans, preventive care, and wellness/care management programs. Communication strategies included: education using online and virtual training, monthly benefits bulletins, targeted emails, and new webpages with resources on heart health and hearing loss.

Support COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Certification

In 2022, the federal Centers for Medicare Medicaid Service (CMS) issued an interim final rule requiring COVID-19 vaccination of health care staff working in long-term care facilities. DHR revised the COVID-19 vaccination and testing certification policy to facilitate the implementation of this ruling. DHR provides an online tool to track the vaccination status of employees required by the CMS mandate to attest they are vaccinated against COVID-19 or to submit certifications electronically for those granted a qualified exemption. As of October 3, 2022, 932 State employees working in CMS vaccination-mandated facilities under the Department of State and the Department of Health and Social Services' facilities are required to provide attestation.

Implementing Strategies to Support a Respectful Workplace

As Delaware's largest employer, the State of Delaware is committed to advancing a fair, diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment within State government. DHR continues to implement strategies to support respectful workplace environments. In 2022, DHR required respectful workplace training for nearly fifteen thousand employees, implemented an LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and Others) toolkit with associated policy, procedures, and training, and implemented a five-video Trauma-Awareness training series.

The State of Delaware strives to create and maintain a work environment where employees are treated with dignity, decency, and respect. The work environment needs to be characterized by mutual trust and the absence of intimidation, oppression, and exploitation. Employees must be able to work and learn in a safe, respectful, and stimulating atmosphere. The "Respectful Workplace" training was updated to include standards of conduct. It was assigned to 14,900 learners in the Delaware Learning Center on September 6th, 2022, and to all new employees upon hire. This training meets the requirements for training all employees every two years per Delaware's Sexual Harassment Prevention law and the Respectful Workplace and Anti-Discrimination Policy.

In January 2021, the Department of Human Resources created a workgroup tasked with evaluating State policies and procedures related to LGBTQ+ populations. Members of the Workgroup represent several DHR Divisions, including the Office of Women's Advancement and Advocacy, Diversity and Inclusion, Talent Management, Training and HR Solutions, and Statewide Benefits. In 2022, this work continued as the Workgroup finalized an LGBTQ+ toolkit to assist human resources, supervisors, and employees in navigating processes for transitioning employees. The DHR Policies and Procedures workgroup issued a Gender Identity Policy and related training was provided to employees. The Talent Acquisition Team added pronouns and preferred first name fields to the job application forms in the State's job application system, Delaware Employment Link. A 'preferred first name field' was added to PHRST (the State's HR and Payroll system), and an associated operating procedure with instructions was created for HR staff. Lastly, the Employee Information Form was revised to enable its use for employees to request the use of a preferred first name, legal name changes, and to collect new employee information.

In April 2022, 11,300 employees completed Trauma-Awareness training created by DHR Training and HR Solutions in partnership with the DHR Trauma Informed Care Workgroup. New employees are also required to complete the five-video training series upon hire. Feedback from participants is overwhelmingly positive, including a State employee that shared, "thank you so very much for that training video. It was the most thought-out, well-presented video the State has ever offered in my 12 years here. So many people suffer from traumatic events that affect them every day. And as the video so brilliantly pointed out, punishment is usually the solution to a situation. Which only causes more trauma. I was so grateful and moved by the presentation that I just had to thank someone for providing it to us." This training series is aligned with the Delaware Developmental Framework for Trauma-Informed Care and supports the work of the Family Services Cabinet Council and Trauma-Informed Care workgroup.

GEAR FIELD TEAM (GFT)

Judicial Branch

Overview of Current Initiatives

CASCADE (Formerly E-Filing, Case Management, Document Management)

CASCADE is the largest and most ambitious IT initiative in Judicial Branch history, with a transition from multiple disparate e-filing and case management solutions to a streamlined single solution for all Courts and jurisdictions. The Judicial Branch is currently working with two industry leading solution providers, Thomson Reuters and File ServeXpress, to obtain the solutions sought in Delaware. This year, work began with the vendors and court staff as the project was branded, the governance structure was established, the project manager was hired, and the Civil Discovery phase of the project kicked off.

Because of the size and scope of our e-filing, case management and document management effort, branding was established for the project that would make communications clearer and provide everyone with an easy way to reference the initiative. Branding was developed in spring of 2022 and announced to the Judicial Branch in July.



CASCADE: n. something arranged or occurring in a series or in a succession of stages so that each stage derives from or acts upon the product of the preceding.

Aside from representing the importance of proper staging for this project, each letter of CASCADE as an acronym also represents the core concepts the Delaware Judicial Branch will embrace with this project.

CENTRALIZED

This project will centralize multiple, disparate case management and e-filing systems to a single case management system and a single e-filing system for all Courts in both civil and criminal jurisdictions. By centralizing our data, we will have improved reporting and statistics.

ACCESSIBLE

Applications will be easily accessible for staff to operate in person or remotely so that the Delaware Judicial Branch can operate efficiently under a variety of circumstances. Access to data for the public will be improved with a streamlined offering of solutions.

SECURE

We will leverage state of the art government cloud hosting solutions, supplementing the Judicial Information Center with top-tier vendor management and support.

CONFIGURABLE

Implementation of highly configurable tools instead of customized solutions that are costly and impair core system updates on a regular basis.

AGILE

Allows the Judicial Information Center to respond quickly to Court needs, legislative changes, and other critical efforts. Partnering with vendors who understand Court operations and can advise how to get the most out of their systems.

DIGITAL

Elimination of paper processes and electronic filing for all.

EVOLUTIONARY

The future of the Delaware Judicial Branch starts now with modern solutions and processes.

To properly manage and guide such a large project, it was critical to establish a strong governance structure to define responsibilities and individuals involved in the decision-making process. This was established in the spring of 2022 with the final project charter distributed in May.

Aside from creating a clear escalation path for critical decisions, this charter also established the Core Judicial Systems Steering Committee (CJSSC) which is comprised of Court leadership and a multi-disciplinary team of subject matter experts who meet at least monthly during the project to review, discuss, and make decisions on the path forward. The CJSSC has met several times and has already had a positive impact on the decision making for this project.

Additionally, the Delaware Judicial Branch was able to secure a contractual Project Manager to manage the effort under the direction of the Judicial Branch CIO.

The Civil Discovery process started in the spring of 2022. The goal of Civil Discovery was multifaceted:

- Review and understand the current civil business processes followed by each of the six Courts.
- Using this understanding, evaluate what functionality is inherently available in the new system we plan to implement, and which functionality would require an additional effort such as advanced configuration or customization.
- Evaluate and document the integrations that exist between the current civil case management systems and other applications, including partner agencies.
- Evaluate the data that is stored in the current civil case management systems and establish a plan to migrate the data from the various disparate systems to a single case management system.
- Establish a plan for the needed infrastructure to support the proposed solution which included evaluation of needed cloud hosting and training opportunities for the Judicial Information Center to develop skills needed to support the system.

This phase began in the spring of 2022 and thus far has achieved the following:

- A business process review with all six Courts has taken place.
- The documents generated by this process have been reviewed by the Judicial Information Center and are in the process of being deployed to the Courts for their review and approval.
- All integrations have been defined and efforts are underway to conduct a proof of concept with data moving bi-directionally between the cloud and the mainframe.
- The infrastructure track of this effort is complete.
- The Data Migration track is approximately 75 percent complete. Additional meetings are being conducted between JIC and the vendors to explain the complexity of our custom-built mainframe applications.

By conducting this discovery process, there has been significant progress without entering into a master agreement with the prospective vendors, giving the Courts an option to step away if the solutions do not align with the Courts needs and preserving the funding allocated to support this effort through ARPA. The Courts are pushing aggressively to have the Civil Discovery process completed before the end of 2022 in hopes that Criminal Discovery will kick off in January of 2023.

CASCADE will improve services to the public as well as provide the Courts with a modern and highly configurable solution that can be used for many years to come. Here are some of the long-term benefits of this project:

- By introducing a highly configurable solution, the Courts will have greater flexibility to accommodate changes in legislation and other operational mandates without engaging vendors to conduct costly customizations.
- By having all data under a single platform, it will improve the Courts' ability to develop reports and generate additional meaningful metrics.
- All electronic filing will occur under a single system, eliminating confusion for those who file with multiple jurisdictions. This also means that support for electronic filing will come from a single vendor, making user support more streamlined.
- The Judicial Branch will eliminate its dependence on the mainframe which is becoming progressively harder to maintain and afford.
- By embracing a hosted and managed solution, the Courts will benefit from a larger technical support team while simultaneously reducing the physical footprint of equipment in the State's data centers.
- By driving the Courts towards common platforms and processes, this will open opportunities for resources to assist across Courts in certain situations.
- There will be improved and streamlined public access solutions both online and at terminals within Court facilities.

Hi-Tech Courtrooms

On the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Judicial Information Center conducted a needs assessment on courtroom technology. During the recent pandemic, the Judicial Branch adopted several temporary processes and solutions to keep the Courts running. The needs assessment looked at these temporary solutions and evaluated what it would take to turn these into long term solutions. During this assessment, it was determined that a significant need existed for additional hi-tech courtrooms that would be capable of facilitating remote and hybrid hearings.

The following items are features of a hi-tech courtroom which Delaware sought to make available in approximately 30 courtrooms statewide:

- Improved audio quality for both recording and amplification within the rooms with new microphones, speakers, amplifiers, and signal processing.
- Integrated video including monitors on counsel tables, witness stands, podiums, judge's benches, and jury boxes.
- Low profile monitors that will not impede line of sight for participants in the courtroom
- Connectivity for counsel to use laptops and other devices to display visuals during events.
- Annotation functionality for images to be marked up and captured as part of the record.
- Multi-angle video feed from within the courtroom summed to a single video output for online meetings via Zoom. This includes a clear view of the judge, witness, podium and counsel tables.
- Integrated Zoom functionality allowing the hosting and controlling of virtual meetings from the courtroom system.

The Delaware Courts have partnered for many years with a company called For The Record (FTR) which specializes in court recording. FTR was able to evaluate various needs and propose solutions that integrated and compliment the FTR software that is already in use across 100+ courtrooms statewide. Preliminary discussions around this engagement started in September of 2021. Since that time several site visits were conducted to evaluate effort, cost, and scope, and in May of 2022 work began on the first hi-tech courtroom deployment.

Since May of 2022, there have been five successful hi-tech courtroom upgrades, including three in Kent County Courthouse and two in the Leonard L. Williams Justice Center. During that timeframe, several things were learned about the implementation process, and are now being applied to future planning.

The first significant delay was due to supply chain issues. Because a courtroom cannot be disabled to conduct an upgrade until all components are in hand, some activities were delayed as equipment awaited to be delivered. Currently, most of the supply chain issues have subsided and there is now ample equipment on hand to proceed with additional installations.

The second delay identified was due to sub-contracted work that was being executed poorly. This was quickly caught by project management, and ultimately addressed by removing the sub-contractor from the project, but this created delays in

the cabling of the courtrooms. The project ultimately benefitted with the introduction of the new cabling sub-contractor. Installations which originally took three weeks are now being completed within ten business days. Additionally, this vendor has capacity to work evenings and uses an approach that avoids disabling a courtroom during the upgrade process. The vendor is also able to allocate enough resources whereby multiple rooms can be in progress simultaneously.

This new approach will allow the team to complete an additional eight installations before the end of calendar year 2022. This leaves eighteen courtrooms remaining to be completed by May 2023.

Reducing the Debt Burden for Ex-Offenders

Reducing the debt burden for ex-offenders, in combination with more efficient and centralized fee collection processes, has been a major focus of the Judicial Branch for several years, with significant progress made during the past year.

Fees and Fines Reform

After years of studying the issue of Fees and Fines Reform with the Department of Justice, the Office of Defense Services, members of the Legislature, and reform advocates, HB 244 with House Amendment 2 was introduced in the General Assembly, passed on June 30, 2022, and signed by the Governor on October 3, 2022. This was compromise legislation that seeks to help those struggling with the negative impacts of criminal justice fees.

Many statutory fees have been added over the years to fund state and local services with the Courts imposing and collecting these fees. Revenues support many critical state and local services such as ambulance companies, court security, transportation, and law enforcement. These fees can quickly add up for those who find themselves in the criminal justice system. People who are of modest means or indigent often face the unrealistic requirement to pay off overwhelming fees while struggling to pay for housing, food, care for children, or other necessities of life.

In Delaware, a simple misdemeanor charge with a \$100 punitive fine, frequently results in over \$500 total fines and fees. If payments are missed over time, additional penalties may be added, and the defendant could eventually lose their driver's license. The impact of the fees and fines are significant, with a 2019 Federal Reserve survey which found that 40 percent of American adults cannot afford an unexpected expense of \$400.

This Act includes the following solutions related to criminal fees and fines:

- Eliminates criminal fees and fines in Family Court for juveniles.
- Eliminates fees for late payments or capiases due to nonpayment of fees and fines. Also eliminates convenience fees for payments of criminal fees online or at a kiosk.
- Eliminates the supervision fee for Probation & Parole.
- Eliminates the public defender fee.
- Eliminates the suspension of licenses for non-payment of criminal justice fines and fees.
- Restitution may not be ordered to an insurance provider on behalf of a victim to recover the provider's losses due to a crime. Insurance providers may seek a civil judgment to recover losses.
- Updates reporting requirements by the Administrative Office of the Courts and the Delaware Criminal Justice Information System.
- Establishes The Criminal Legal System Imposed Debt Study Group ("Study Group"). The HB 244 Study Group will submit a report with further recommendations to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Director and Librarian of the Division of the Research of Legislative Council, and the Delaware Public Archives on September 1, 2023.

Efficiencies Related to Uncollectable Receivables

The Judicial Branch has written off the debt obligations of non-restitution cases that are over ten-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 ten-years old involving restitution, everything has been written-off except for restitution.

The Office of State Court Collections Enforcement, Administrative Office of the Courts, reviewed aged restitution cases for collection viability due to defendant death, victim death and business closures for case clean-up. Since September 2021, they found 433 cases in which the defendant is deceased, 1,589 cases in which the victims were deceased, and 894 business closures.

Improved Policies for Court Collections

The Delaware Judicial Branch continues to work on a plan that would give discretion to the Court to adjust assessments based on a defendant's ability to pay. This will likely be a topic in an upcoming Study Group and would require additional legislation.

The Judicial Branch has been reviewing and documenting the Court collections policies to develop consistent and uniform collections and payment policies and processes throughout the Branch. A uniform policy is critical as the Judicial Branch develops a new case management system.

Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS)

Fleet Optimization of DHSS Blocked Vehicles

Vehicles are assigned to State agencies either as "pooled" or "blocked" designations. A pooled vehicle is shared among units and is billed a small daily rate only when it is used. A blocked vehicle is not shared, is assigned to one person, unit, or section for its exclusive use, and is billed for an entire month regardless of how often it is used. It is more cost efficient to use a pooled vehicle if the need for a vehicle is irregular, or not constant. Conversely, it is more cost efficient to use a blocked vehicle when there is a steady, recurring need for a vehicle.

After reviewing vehicle usage data, it was determined that DHSS had a large number of blocked vehicles, many of which were seldom used. An idle blocked vehicle is an avoidable expense. Utilization data also revealed that some units had blocked vehicles that were idle for consecutive months. Based on the trend, underutilized vehicles were identified, their costs were calculated, and the data was provided to department leadership. Once leadership understood the excess supply of blocked vehicles, they began taking action to reduce their numbers. As a result of the constant monitoring and reporting, cost calculation, and oversight, the department is realizing \$192,474 in savings every year. Because a vehicle that is acquired as a blocked vehicle is a 7-year cost commitment, by reducing the blocked vehicle complement there is a long-term savings potential of \$1,347,318.

Delaware Psychiatric Center (DPC) Security Improvement

Using project management methodology, a review of DPC's security services was conducted to improve service delivery. The project team was comprised of staff from DPC, Security, Planning, and the Department of Justice. A careful review of existing security services was undertaken to identify the gaps that needed to be addressed. Those gaps were documented and added to the business requirements as part of the project charter for the initiative. In addition, a search was conducted for potential security providers, with the opportunity for these businesses to view the physical layout of DPC prior to bidding.

The project team met and reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of each potential service provider. Ultimately, one provider was identified as offering the greatest value to DPC. A contract was assembled using the new business requirements and awarded. By following project management methodology, the project management team was able to deliver a new contract for security services that addressed the gaps in service that were previously noted.

Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) Contracting Process Mapping Using ARIS

DSAMH recently set forth a goal to improve the efficacy of their policies and procedures using business process mapping. The way that process maps were created previously was to use Microsoft Visio. The limitation with using Visio is that Visio creates a static two-dimensional image. The image is not dynamic and lacks the capability to understand the connectivity of processes at multiple levels across an organization. While Visio documented processes that served DHSS well, the functionality is not adaptive to the changing needs of a complex, hybrid work environment. It was determined that a better solution was needed for business process mapping.

ARIS, a Software AG product, was chosen to be the application to augment and replace Visio. With ARIS, the user can create dynamic, layered three-dimensional process maps. Model makers can “drill down” in a process to go lower when seeking greater detail. ARIS allows the linking of people, processes, systems, objects, forms, and agencies. DSAMH contracting staff continue to update business process maps based on existing procedures regularly with the assistance of a project manager.

DHSS Dashboard

When DHSS is at full complement, the department has over 4,000 staff. DHSS is involved in many different service delivery modes with a wide array of essential services being provided. Historically, leadership did not have a single data source that brought together key metrics across the department. A department-wide dashboard was developed recently, beginning with two divisions, and now gathers key performance indicators from nearly every DHSS division.

The value of the dashboard is not in the collection of data and distribution of reports, but rather in the conversations about how to use the data to take appropriate action. Each dashboard shows data trend lines, which can be easily interpreted. Knowing how things are going is important to keeping the enterprise running smoothly, reaching the neediest, and providing staff with the tools to perform their jobs well. Each dashboard is a barometer for how trends are moving in the department. Each dashboard takes the pulse of the organization on a consistent basis and reports how effectively the organization is performing.

State Service Centers Reimagined

The department is seeking fundamental and systemic changes to modernize the infrastructure and delivery of health and social services to help Delawareans through the network of State Service Centers throughout Delaware. This transition supports a shift towards a client care model that necessitates cross-divisional cohesion to reverse the lack of systems, training, and staffing integration.

The project work is being divided into external/client facing interactions (performed by a contracted vendor), and internal/staff member interactions (performed by DHSS staff). DHSS’s vendor’s approach includes reviewing the service delivery model, conducting client interviews, creating value stream maps, producing feedback that will support changes to the service delivery model, and performing facility reviews. They will focus on five key areas: client service delivery, employees, technology, facilities, and meeting evolving client needs. The vendor will produce immediate, short term, and long-term deliverables that will be addressed by the DHSS project team. The DHSS team will produce current state business process maps of the operations at the State Service Centers, and then once the solutions are implemented will produce future state business process maps. By comparing the future state process maps to the current state process maps, the department will be able to calculate measurable process improvement in the service delivery model across Delaware’s State Service Centers.

Vaccinate Vulnerable Citizens

The Delaware Department of Health and Social Services continued its commitment to assuring all Delawareans had access to the COVID-19 vaccine in the last year. DSAAPD launched an outreach campaign in the last year around access to the vaccine for vulnerable citizens. This campaign focused on the questions and concerns older Delawareans and persons with disabilities have regarding the vaccine. This campaign featured real Delawareans telling their stories of hesitancy and access to the vaccine.

DSAAPD's partnership with the University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies has yielded an exciting body of research around access and vaccine hesitancy among persons with disabilities. This report and findings are currently being disseminated among health care professionals to share the incredible role physicians and trusted medical partners have in addressing hesitancy among persons with disabilities. The findings of this research have also been translated into a user-friendly website that offers individuals and health care professionals the opportunity to conduct a self-assessment on their accessibility, and easy to understand resources that providers can use to improve their compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Finally, DSAAPD implemented a vaccination delivery program for Delawareans that are unable to leave their home. This program is funded by ARPA through December 2024. In the ten months since its launch in late December 2021, this program has scheduled 823 home vaccinations. The call-in line is staffed by Calls Plus, a vendor that helps to support the Aging and Disabilities Resource Center. This connection has proven very beneficial, as the Calls Plus staff are knowledgeable about DSAAPD services and make referrals when there is an indication the caller could also use in home supports. Volunteer pharmacies around the state support this program by receiving referrals from Calls Plus for individuals in their geographic region. The pharmacies then deliver the COVID-19 vaccine to the home of the individual. The state pharmacy contractor, Cardinal Health pharmacy services, has been an integral part of fulfilling statewide coverage when there is a service gap, or a pharmacy does not have the resources to make the home visit. This program has faced challenges related to the staffing shortages seen in pharmacies that have resulted in some wait times and service area shortages. DSAAPD has been retooling the supports given to pharmacies to continue to support this effort. An analysis of this program will be done towards the end of state Fiscal Year 2023 to determine if additional funding will be needed to support the continuation of this program. Cost considerations will be federal support of the COVID-19 vaccines and potential additional costs to the program if federal support declines. Additionally, the capacity of the pharmacies to take on this work remains limited.

Learning the Language of Dementia- Comprehensive Dementia Care Training Program

Care and treatment for individuals with dementia is a significant area of attention in healthcare due to the increasing frequency and severity of symptoms. Long term care (LTC) facilities are federally mandated to provide nonpharmacological care, which means avoiding psychotropic medication use as much as possible, due to the dangerous nature of the medications when used in this population. The goal of nonpharmacological care is to maximize the individual's quality of life. This necessitates a heavy investment from staff to identify person-centered approaches to everyday care. LTC staff are also confronted with highly challenging situations and behavioral crises and need to be equipped to respond therapeutically. Training is required by federal regulations through the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS).

Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill (DHCI) is home to residents with highly complex behavioral support needs. Because of this, "out-of-the-box" training programs did not meet the educational needs of our staff. Through the joint effort of multiple departments, DHCI developed *Learning the Language of Dementia*, which is a comprehensive, 4-day training program. Staff are educated on the condition of dementia, as well as prevention, de-escalation, and intervention techniques. Staff are trained to provide nonpharmacological supports, chosen specifically for that person, based on who they are and where they are in the disease process.

Over 120 DHCI staff have completed the training to date. In 2019 DHCI was awarded a grant which funded a partnership with the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Mental Health. Using a strong project management approach, the course was manualized so that the training and staff development unit can continue offering the training. Multiple versions of the program have been developed for different target audiences (i.e., clinical staff, security, housekeeping, etc.). The program has received high ratings from attendees, who report feeling more confident in doing their job, as well as increased compassion and understanding toward residents with dementia.

Grant-Funded Nonpharmacological Services in Long Term Care (LTC)

Quality of life and behavioral health are important areas of emphasis in LTC. Addressing these closely related areas of well-being may include psychotropic medication, but ideally, DHSS wants to minimize or avoid the use of medication when possible. To accomplish this goal, DHSS prioritizes 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.

The grant funding facilitated the opportunity for residents to participate in yoga therapy, pet visitation, guided therapeutic storytelling sessions, and a variety of relaxation-oriented interventions and supports. These services and supports received overwhelming positive reactions from all involved (residents, staff, and providers of the therapies):

- 100 percent of respondents indicated that the alternative therapies increased the quality of life for residents
- 75-96 percent reported that the activity made them feel happy
- 92-100 percent reported that the residents and the facilitator of the therapies had an excellent relationship

In addition, 100 percent of participants in all therapies requested that the activities continue at DHCI, reporting that it brought joy, enrichment, and positive results to all involved.

A further goal of the project was to assess the feasibility of incorporating these services ongoing. DHCI partnered with the grant project management team to evaluate the most appropriate use of resources, including budgeting for the services, use of staffing, efficiency of the process, and flow of the services. The analysis provided in the Delaware Person-Centered Care Evaluation Final Report will allow the division to move forward with a judicious implementation process.

Validation of Innovative Approach to Psych Med Management in Long Term Care (LTC)

The use of psychotropic medication in LTC residents is complex and heavily regulated. Optimizing appropriate and effective medication use while still maintaining regulatory compliance is a challenge faced by facilities nationwide. In addition, our country faces a critical shortage of psychiatrists. Employing a psychiatrist is cost-prohibitive and impractical for LTC facilities, which results in reliance on consultant psychiatrists, very few of whom are versed in practicing under LTC guidelines. Furthermore, the consultation-liaison model of practice creates distance between the consultant and the process of carrying out recommendations. All these barriers combined have made effective psychotropic medication management exceedingly difficult.

In response to this unmet need, an interdisciplinary team at Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill developed the Psychotropic Medication Advisory Committee (PMAC). This is an interdisciplinary model developed to address regulatory, clinical, and systemic needs and has been in use for four years. Within the first two years, the facility achieved and sustained a 42-percentage point reduction in antipsychotic use, and an 89 percent success rate in maintaining medication reductions across all categories of psychotropic drugs. Following a year of continuous improvement efforts toward refining the process and reducing complexity, there was an 80 percent reduction in lead and cycle time, and an average of 67 percent increase in the number of completed reviews. After refining the process, the committee then analyzed the consistency of its recommendations with that of a consultant psychiatrist. The result was a 94 percent compatibility rate in recommendations between the two entities, with the 6 percent variance mainly related to regulatory limitations.

This model has resulted in financial cost savings (less money spent on medications), improved resource management (strategic use of specialists already on staff; utilizing staff differently to improve quality of life without medication), and increased efficiency (fewer medications to pass means less time spent passing medications, using Agile approach to operate, etc.). This model has been very successful in augmenting sparse psychiatric supports available to the facility due to the shortage of psychiatrists in the state and the prohibitive cost of contract psychiatric supports. The clinical data supports the effectiveness of the PMAC model as a viable option for psychotropic medication management support in LTC. PMAC is embedded within a comprehensive Neurobehavioral Health program, designed to support its success by strengthening nonpharmacological supports, and reducing the need for psych medications. The Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities will continue to refine PMAC and plans to share these findings and the model of practice for use in the LTC sector nationwide.

Implementing Person Centered Care in Long Term Care

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, Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill was awarded grant funds to support efforts to shift toward PCC using customized training and consultation with experts in the field. The goal was 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 use a new language when supporting residents and discussing care.

Two phases of training were completed. In 2019, 532 staff participated in introductory training, and 83.9 percent found it applicable to their job. In 2021, 226 clinical/direct staff received advanced training, and 96.7 percent found it applicable to their job. Overall, 80 percent of staff respondents from both time points rated the training highly. Views of PCC implementation and uptake increased among staff between 2019 and the conclusion of the grant project in 2022. It is worth acknowledging that COVID-19 occurred in the middle of the project. In addition to the immense and unique disruptions experienced in the LTC sector, the pandemic had an understandable effect on the implementation of the plan and momentum toward change. Despite these major impediments, the division has made and sustained significant gains toward integrating PCC into the foundation of its operations and will continue to make concerted efforts toward culture change.

Improving Access to Long-Term Services & Supports Through Strategic Resource Usage

DSAAPD is carrying out a strategic effort to ensure timely access to community-based long-term services and supports by improving efficiency and reducing the cost of service provision. Through consultation with national experts in the field of aging and disabilities, DSAAPD has developed a multi-tiered action plan to infuse person-centered practices in its work, ensuring services meet the goals and needs of older adults and persons with physical disabilities while also being provided from the most appropriate funding source.

The division will optimize the use of available resources through the implementation of a robust cost-sharing program, as well as facilitating access to other resources in the community. For example, the division has determined that between 30-50 percent of current and waitlisted service recipients are likely eligible to receive in-home services covered by the Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance (DMMA) through the Diamond State Health Plan Plus (DSHP+) Home and Community Based Services waiver program. This program includes a 50 percent federal match, resulting in a lower cost to the State. Based on DSAAPD's waiting list cost estimates, this equates to at least \$5 million in savings.

Implementing this strategic plan will optimize the use of State General Funds and Older Americans Act dollars; enable the division to serve more people; potentially eliminate wait lists; and respond to emergency needs promptly. The action plan is being carried out with technical assistance from multiple grants and expert advice regarding national best practices. The anticipated quantifiable outcomes of this plan include reduced cost, enhanced value, and improved customer outcomes.

Person-Centered Strategic Action Plan for DSAAPD Long-Term Services & Supports

DSAAPD is taking deliberate steps to prioritize the department's recognition and response to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the provision of long-term services and supports. These efforts are a progression of a multi-year, strategic effort to strengthen and implement person-centered approaches as the foundation of all services provided to older adults and adults with physical disabilities in the State of Delaware.

A top priority for implementation of this plan is to shift the thinking away from a medical model that authorizes what is deemed necessary for the person toward a person-centered model that ensures people choose what is most important to them to live their best lives. This person-centered model focuses on asking participants what they want, who they want to provide their care, and how they want their care delivered. Through this initiative, the division has begun to streamline and modernize its assessment process to one that is more person-centered, equitable, and cost-efficient.

DSAAPD is utilizing a technical assistance grant from the National Center for Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS) to achieve these goals. This grant and another from the National Academy for State Health Policy will

lead DSAAPD to better engage communities of color, focus on diverse needs, target underserved populations, and be more trauma-informed in our work. DSAAPD is expanding, internally and in the community, its cultural humility because we recognize the need to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in our work. The division anticipates that the result of these ongoing process improvement efforts will result in enhanced customer outcomes.

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 DSAAPD has found that certain training opportunities are underutilized, particularly the trainings labeled “voluntary” (about 43 percent) versus those considered “mandatory” (about 50 percent). Of the 134 in-person trainings offered in the year 2019, prior to the transition to electronic learning due to COVID-19, the average attendance rate across both categories was about 50 percent (range = 27 percent to 67 percent); however, this is a combination of both mandatory and voluntary, which inflates the number of attendees in voluntary offerings. Training numbers were dramatically impacted by COVID-19 which did not allow for in person trainings for a majority of 2020 and 2021. During this time, trainings were adapted to be either fully automated through the Delaware Learning Center (DLC), or offered in person, but conducted virtually. The root cause analysis performed on the 2019 data has not been updated due to the impact of COVID. It is understood at this time that what the team determined regarding event attendance not meeting target metrics due to an incongruent conceptualization of the purpose of training was only exacerbated by the COVID restrictions. In the coming year data will be pulled from 2022 and balanced with 2023 trainings to determine if this root cause remains static. DSAAPD administration continues to be committed to changing the culture across the agency in numerous ways, which assisted greatly with the change management portion of the project and continues to reinforce the initiative.

The first goal was to enhance interdepartmental partnerships and commitment to utilize training events. During this past year, the primary focus was on the Quality Assurance and Improvement Unit. These team members supported and encouraged increased communication and planning to integrate with the system and key performance indicators to facilitate crucial changes in the Community Support Program, Adult Protective Services and Community Nursing areas. The focus this year will be to establish a monitoring system, 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 Change Triangle (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.

Quality Service Reviews Interpretive Guidelines

To ensure providers understand the expectations of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS) regarding the operation of each Home and Community Based Service (HCBS), including the desired experience of the recipients they support, providers are reviewed, monitored, and held accountable for compliance against DDDS Provider Standards for HCBS services and waiver performance measures.

DDDS Program Evaluators and Nurse Evaluators assess compliance for each provider of HCBS services on an annual basis, when a provider request to open a new site or facility and when there is reported or documented cause for concern of a service recipient’s health or safety.

To achieve compliance on their Quality Service Review (QSR), a provider must receive a score of 86 percent or higher. The following data is used to determine compliance. Numerator: number of standards determined to be out of compliance (number of citations)/denominator: total number of standards reviewed.

HCBS services that are monitored and reviewed are residential, supported living, day habilitation, prevocational, supported employment, community participation, nurse consultation, and behavioral consultation.

The DDDS Service Integrity and Enhancement Unit is focusing on assisting HCBS providers with obtaining and maintaining a compliance score of 86 percent or greater, which is consistent with the requirements established by CMS. Multiple components were implemented and utilized to determine compliance with the HCBS Waiver, noted as follows:

1. The development of checklists that define which standards are used for each review/service type,
2. Development of interpretive guidelines, for the standards, that are in alignment with the HCBS Waiver, State Regulations, Community Rule, THERAP, DDDS Policies & Procedures, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service (CMS), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), The Delaware Background Check Center (BCC), HIPAA, LLAM Manual/Delaware Board of Nursing etc.,
3. To bring uniformity statewide on how evaluators conduct reviews and determine compliance, and,
4. Conducting Training of internal and external staff on the tools for consistency and encourage providers to use the tools to conduct internal audits for continued compliance.

Project Process Improvement Objectives:

Objective:	Status:
Develop Annual Neighborhood Home (NH) and Community Living Arrangements (CLA) checklists for Residential Standards	Completed: Checklists have been created for the annual NH and CLA reviews. In addition, checklists have been created for opening a new NH, CLA, and day facility. Also, annual review checklists have been created for supported living, day habilitation (facility and non-facility), prevocational, supported employment, community participation, and lead reviews.
Develop interpretive guidelines for standards identified on each checklist	Completed: Interpretive guidelines have been created for the annual NH and CLA standards. In addition, interpretive guidelines have been created for opening a new NH, CLA, and day facility. Also, interpretive guidelines have been created for supported living, day habilitation (facility and non-facility), prevocational, supported employment, community participation, and lead standards.
Internal stakeholders' review/pilot and provide feedback	Progress: Program and nurse evaluators are piloting the checklist and providing feedback. In 2020, DDDS released checklists for opening a new NH and CLA along with an attestation form to providers so they could conduct their own environmental review during COVID.
Consult external stakeholders for review and feedback	Progress: DDDS is in an ongoing conversation with providers to identify standards that need clarification. DDDS also pulls a quarterly report that identifies the top fifteen standards cited. DDDS uses this report to develop training and process improvement tools to assist providers in achieving compliance.
95 percent of the providers/site reviews will perform with an initial compliance score of 86 percent or higher during their fiscal year 2024 annual review.	Progress/Ongoing: DDDS is tracking provider compliance through annual compliance reports based on fiscal year (FY). DDDS will compare FY 2023 annual report to FY 2024 annual report to determine project impact. Moving forward DDDS will continue to compare the current FY annual report with the previous FY report. (i.e., FY 2025 will be compared to FY 2024).

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic skewed the success metrics of this project. A full Quality Service Review was not conducted from mid-March of 2020 until the end of February of 2022. During that timeframe Program Evaluators were restricted from going into sites and facilities to verify environmental standard compliance to limit staff and service recipients' exposure to COVID-19.

Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)

Enterprise Content Management (ECM) Project

DNREC's information technology vision identified in its IT strategic plan is "to make environmental information available to 'anyone, from anywhere at any time on any device'." To achieve this vision, ECM at DNREC was implemented, resulting in a paperless office with content available electronically. DNREC's existing ECM solution was migrated to Hyland OnBase information platform as the new solution. The objective of the ECM project was 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 are subsequently indexed and stored for later retrieval. Similarly, all outgoing paper documents are scanned and stored on servers after indexing.

Another goal of the project was to provide every DNREC employee an information platform that enhances their efficiency at work. Software and supporting servers were installed and a department wide taxonomy was defined to consistently store and notate all electronic documents while maintaining specific program needs for storing, archiving, and searching. Employees had the opportunity to recommend names for the new OnBase ECM system and DNREctory was chosen. All business-line applications that provided documentation were converted from legacy systems to DNREctory, which included the transfer of 1,720,084 legacy documents. The system was tested, and implementation was successfully completed. All divisions went live on DNREctory in 2022.

The completion of this project provides an agency-wide solution for DNREC to store all documents as required by the applicable retention schedules. DNREctory also integrates directly with many divisions' program specific applications. DNREctory provides a document repository that allows all DNREC employees to easily access, store, and share documents based on permissions and authority. Confidential and important documents are appropriately protected in the system according to departmental requirements. ECM has streamlined and consolidated document management processes across the entire department, enabled Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to be easily gathered, and improved search functions across divisions. Last, this initiative has reduced DNREC's carbon footprint by eliminating the need to print paper except as necessary.

Modernization of Online Services

ePermitting

The ePermitting portal is being expanded through the addition of online permits and improved functionality. The portal is essential to advance processing and compliance for thousands of licenses, permits and registrations DNREC administers each year. In addition to processing applications online, the electronic solution allows for better data collection and management, improves multi-stream processing and provides new opportunities for communication with customers.

From January through September over 400,000 transactions were completed in the DNREC ePermitting portal. The website averages over 600 visitors per day with 58 percent coming from mobile devices. Currently, available services for individuals include recreation and commercial fishing licenses, aqua culture leasing, hunting and trapping licenses and exemptions, conservation access passes and deer damage program assistance. Additionally, while the process for water and septic permits is being optimized, online forms for numerous water submissions including groundwater and surface water discharges, wetlands and waterway, and water supply are available through the portal.

Earlier this year, enterprise accounts were added to the portal. Businesses can now create an account and authorize specific staff to submit and track applications. Services available for enterprise accounts currently include non-hazardous waste hauler permits and air quality approvals or permits like open burning and water tower sandblasting.

In addition to expanding the availability of online services, the ePermitting team is working closely with Delaware's Digital Government initiative to collaborate on standardized payment solutions and improve accessibility. To further support public inquiries, DNREC also issued and awarded a call center contract this year. The contract allows DNREC and other State organizations to work with the awarded vendors to provide direct support to customers having difficulty using electronic services. Challenges with tasks like updating internet browsers, resetting passwords, and checking email can impede the

ability to access online government services. After hours support for the public through phone, live chat discussions or by artificial intelligence to provide prompts to reduce confusion will begin to eliminate obstacles for some customers.

EQuIS

DNREC continues to expand use of Earth Soft's EQuIS tool to collect environmental data, deliver analysis and reporting, and provide decision support.

Over the past year the EQuIS system was upgraded to the latest version. The enhanced functionality can be used to automate the transfer of data within EQuIS tools or from laboratory facilities and partner organizations. Field forms previously handled on paper are digitized through the EQuIS Collect tool are being developed for data submission. A recent example is the documentation required for an emergency response action. The EQuIS form has been customized to capture the necessary information for reporting and to track inventory used in an emergency response.

While the upgrade work delayed expansion of the EQuIS Governance Committee, the committee work has been reprioritized. Ensuring an established process for governance is an integral part of aligning program requirements while building efficiencies through standardization. For example, common formats for electronic data deliverables (EDDs) and collective naming conventions for facilities and sample data, are an essential step toward automating data submission through field sensors or through applications like ePermitting. Similarly, collaboration through the committee is putting EQuIS data to work in new ways through cross-program dashboards in tools like Microsoft Power BI.

In the coming year standard data collection and data management workflows will be tested, finalized and documented. Additionally, integration between EQuIS and established applications like the Environmental Navigator and ePermitting will be completed.

DNREC Environmental Justice (EJ) Project

Environmental justice is defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (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’s commitment to increasing efforts to ensure environmental justice for all communities is the foundation for this project. This project focuses on improving the incorporation of environmental justice into the work the DNREC does every day. The project’s workgroup of division representatives has been focused on creating 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, and,
- Establishes department-wide policies and practices that implement environmental justice statewide

The environmental justice initiative has equipped staff with resources and education on environmental and social justice creating a foundational level of understanding and methods to better integrate this line of thinking into DNREC’s work. Eleven educational events with a total of five hundred fifty-nine participants have been conducted to date. Four additional education events are planned for this year.

As part of this initiative, the environmental justice spatial mapping tool for use in decision making and evaluating areas of concern is currently under development. Over 90 individual data sets are currently being evaluated for incorporation into the tool. A base map is expected to be available for testing by the end of the year. The DNREC external environmental justice webpage, developed as a resource for the community, will be launched before the year end.

Park Visitation Service Enhancement

The Division of Parks and Recreation (Parks) welcomes millions of visitors annually, which increased dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Parks had 7,980,538 visitors in 2022. Historically, the Parks have employed seasonal fee collectors to manage fee payment and entrance into state park day use areas. This often resulted in long lines for entrance into the most popular day use parking areas (i.e., Fenwick Island, Delaware Seashore, Cape Henlopen). The Parks initiated an automated park fee collection project. The purpose of this initiative was to provide better customer service by reducing visitor wait times, to maintain accessibility, improve the collection of entrance fees when staffing of fee collectors is limited, and to reduce theft by replacing the old “iron ranger” collection boxes. This initiative is ongoing and has completed its second full year of implementation in 2022.

In 2019, Parks began with a pilot program implementing two automated kiosks/fee machines through a new system under the vendor Parkeon. In Phase I, starting in early 2020 twenty machines were added, and in Phase II in 2021, twenty-three additional machines were added. 2021 was the first full year automated fee collection machines were in use. The Parks now have a total of forty-five Parkeon machines across various locations. Six machines were added at the Delaware Seashore State Park (Southeast day use area) in 2022 with a designated entrance lane for credit card customers. Prior to the implementation of these six machines, the line of customers waiting for entrance would begin at the fee booth and extend to Route 1. This implementation has successfully decreased waiting times by allowing customers to enter, park and visit the conveniently placed automated fee collection kiosks to process their transaction rather than queuing in line behind other visitors who may be paying with cash.

The Parkeon machine implementation in satellite parking locations has also supported the success of this initiative. Satellite locations are parking areas that provide recreational access to trails and beaches, but typically don’t have bathhouses or food services. With the inception of Parkeon satellite locations throughout the state, locations that previously had fee collectors are now completely automated. This resulted in a \$65,000 savings in salary costs. Fee collectors are seasonal employees and are often retired individuals with salary costs set at approximately \$6,500 a year, which equates to roughly the cost to purchase one machine. With the challenges seen over the past two years with staffing limitations, record visitations, and seasonal employees reluctant to return to work, the purchase of Parkeon machines were an enhancement that also allowed for a short-term return on investment. The parks are now collecting one-third of their total revenue from daily entrance fees through Parkeon which is roughly \$1 million dollars annually.

By Memorial Day 2023, the division is planning to add additional automated fee machines at Towers Ocean at Delaware Seashore while eliminating the fee collection contact station as part of a major parking lot renovation. This will be the largest parking lot location without a fee collection station. Parks continues to evaluate all satellite locations that have historically had fee collectors assigned to determine if the automated fee collection machines are appropriate for those locations. Parks will also be evaluating an enhancement that would allow Natural Resources Police officers (Park Rangers) to utilize a tag reader for payment compliance.

Department of State (DOS)

Delaware Communities of Excellence (DECOE) – Year 2

Literacy is the ability to functionally read, write, and speak in English, as well as compute and solve problems, on the job, interpersonally, and in society. Forty two percent of Delaware children read below grade level, and twenty percent of Delaware adults read below a third grade reading level. Children with lower literacy skills struggle in school and to graduate. 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.

Delaware Communities of Excellence’s (DECOE) goal is *Equity Through Literacy*. DECOE is building a collaborative of State agencies and non-profits to produce a statewide literacy ecosystem. This ecosystem will provide literacy services that are easier to access, equitable, cost effective, and create measurable, impactful results to improve literacy in Delaware across the lifespan. The DECOE employs a collective impact approach within the Baldrige Framework, because large-scale social change requires broad, cross-sector coordination. DECOE is committed to improving literacy levels for all through a two-pronged approach:

1. Bringing leaders together to collaboratively build systems and capacity, and,
2. Aligning, linking and expanding programs and services to replicate successes in communities throughout the State.

DECOE collaboratively builds systems and capacity by:

- Creating equitable literacy systems with the goal of replicating successful systems in other communities throughout the State,
- Identifying literacy services across geographic areas, as well as gaps and duplications,
- Aligning, integrating and expanding these services into scalable systems, and,
- Creating a literacy dashboard of services across the lifespan of Delawareans among all partners and identifying appropriate performance measures and indicators.

The DECOE Advisory Council is chaired by the Division of Libraries and Literacy Delaware. Members involved in this initiative to date include:

- ChristianaCare
- Delaware Association of Nonprofit Agencies
- Delaware Community Foundation
- Delaware Department of Education
- Delaware Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control
- Delaware Readiness Teams
- Delaware State University
- Energize Delaware
- First State Educate
- Highmark
- Laffey McHugh Foundation
- Philanthropy Delaware
- Read Aloud Delaware
- Reading Assist
- United Way of Delaware
- University of Delaware

Examples of recent system solutions with statewide impact include:

- Program for birth to five years old: Delaware Libraries provide free books to every Delaware child under five through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. As of September 2022, over 24,000 children are enrolled and more than 7,000 have graduated.
- Programs for kindergarten through grade twelve:
 - Free year-round access to eBooks for children is available jointly through Delaware Libraries' Overdrive and DEDOE Sora student mobile device app.
 - Funding is now allocated to connect school libraries and public libraries to complete the "last mile" to ensure every child has equitable access even if they are not taken to their public library.
- Program for adults: The Northstar Digital Literacy program provides free digital literacy training to all Delaware residents with assistance from Literacy Delaware.

Building Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Infrastructure in Delaware Public Libraries

Checking books in and out and performing inventories at Delaware's libraries are time and resource intensive activities. In 2022, the Division of Libraries' contractor began installing RFID tags in library collections. The contractor is also installing scanning and self-check-out equipment. Both efforts are expected to reduce the time staff use to check items in and perform inventories, as well as for staff and the public to check items out.

Reducing the time required by these activities can free up library staff to work on other priorities, such as assisting the public and will increase overall productivity. The project goal is to create a system where public libraries' collection items are RFID-tagged, staff is trained and effectively using the scanning equipment, and self-checkout is available to the public. The completion of this project is anticipated to occur in late 2023.

Department of Services for Children Youth and Their Families (DSCYF)

Continuous Quality Improvement through Administrative Case Review

The Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families (DSCYF) is in the final stages of implementing a new department-wide administrative case review process to support continuous quality improvement efforts. The goal of this project is to develop a process to assess the extent to which case management practices are consistent with the values and principles of a trauma-informed system of care approach to service delivery and family engagement. The comprehensive review will include quantitative and qualitative data collection to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improvement. Review results will be shared with division and department leadership, and the Continuous Quality Improvement Collaborative to be used to guide improvement efforts.

Accomplishments to date:

- Developed protocol for review sampling, timeframes, and expectations, including how cases for repeat review will be identified
- Developed a review tool that assesses case management practices and service delivery quality using indicators consistent with best practices within child and family service systems
- Developed a reference guidebook that includes review methodology, instructions, and important considerations to ensure inter-rater reliability
- Selected Microsoft Forms as the software for data collection
- Trained administrative case review staff in the use of the tool and completed inter-rater reliability activities

The pilot review is in progress and will run through the end of the 2022 calendar year. The pilot review period serves as an opportunity to assess the process and tool to inform process improvements and to provide baseline data regarding case management practices. Aggregate results will identify agency strengths and opportunities for improvement that will guide goal establishment. The review results will also provide information about gaps surrounding the service array, training needs, and system issues that need to be addressed (policy, practice, etc.) Moving forward, the ongoing review process will provide valuable information regarding the impact of system improvement efforts and what additional needs exist.

Review results will be shared with case managers and their teams to reinforce strengths and provide helpful information on individual worker and team needs related to coaching and training.

Develop Trauma-Informed Workforce and Organization Culture

The Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families Trauma-Informed Care Committee (TICC) implemented strategies outlined in their Fiscal Year 2022 strategic framework to advance implementation of trauma-informed care principles and practices into daily work, moving the department closer to being a fully trauma-informed organization.

The TICC strategic framework prioritized key actions aligned with long-range goals. There were 19 action items, 17 of which were completed. One item was withdrawn as the need changed and one item was deferred and included in the fiscal year 2023 plan.

Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2022 include:

- 27 training sessions (7 course topics) were facilitated by TICC members – 25 sessions for DSCYF staff and 2 for provider agency partners

- 326 DSCYF staff completed at least 1 TIC course – this includes 314 staff who attended one or more facilitated training sessions and 35 staff who completed one or more TIC Quick Course in the Delaware Learning Center (DLC)
- 3 new training courses were added to the course rotation – including a session for all DSCYF staff on a trauma-informed workplace, a course on reframing written communication, and a short course on developing an intentional self-care plan
- 6 TIC quick courses were developed for on-demand learning based on *Mental Health - America's Tools to Thrive*
- The TIC page on the DSCYF website was updated to include information on adverse childhood experiences and links to resources
- 5 TICC newsletters were issued that included information to support self-care, work with families, diversity and inclusion, workforce issues, and learning opportunities
- 1 guide to trauma-informed supervision and management was developed and finalized
- 2 community agency train-the-trainer sessions were held to promote trauma-informed and healing-centered practices with community-based partners (technical assistance and implementation support as provided to interested partners as needed)
- 7 school districts and 7 police agencies became *Take Care Delaware* partners resulting in 754 incidents generating 1,039 notices to schools to promote compassionate responses to children who may have experienced a trauma in their home or community
- Trauma-informed interview questions were reviewed and updated based on feedback from hiring managers and a rubric was developed to help hiring managers identify candidates with competencies that support a trauma-informed system of care approach
- Two documents were developed with guidelines for creating trauma-informed workspaces: one for employees to use for their workspace and one for facilities and building administration staff to use to promote a trauma-informed environment for all employees and visitors

In addition to the accomplishments directly connected to the project goals, the TICC more than doubled its training facilitation team. Having a robust training team promotes the sustainability of the TICC training plan, creates a cadre of champions, and develops employee skills in this area.

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 project improvements. 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) to develop efficiencies. In 2022, EdGEAR began focusing on efficiencies in the capital project processes across school districts.

Improve Support Services Within Public Education

In 2021 the EdGEAR team 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. To date those recommendations were reviewed directly with GSS, and GEAR leadership has prioritized several key areas that could be developed in partnership with EdGEAR to ensure future progress, which include:

- Developing training for school districts on how to appropriately leverage existing contractual opportunities (“piggyback”)
- Developing enhancements to statewide surplus property use and disposal between GSS and the school districts
- Working collaboratively to enhance technology acquisition, use and disposal through the Partners in Technology process as specified in 29 Del. C. § 7002

Comprehensive Review of Capital Project Processes

With public school districts expressing needs for major facility investments and existing market pressures surpassing capital project allocations, the EdGEAR team began a comprehensive review of the capital projects processes within public education. Although in the early stages of this work, the EdGEAR team intends to review all the component parts of the capital projects processes including, but not limited to:

- Certificate of Necessity,
- Formula Funding,
- Referendum,
- Procurement/Request for Proposals (RFPs),
- Voluntary School Assessment/Capitation Tax,
- Training/Communication, and,
- Americans with Disabilities Act

This effort is expected to lead to recommendations that will (1) increase the efficiency and transparency of capital project processes within public education while reducing unnecessary burdens on the school districts, (2) provide appropriate levels of capital funding for public education projects through all funding sources, and (3) develop a strong review and approval process for capital project requests.

The EdGEAR team is holding monthly meetings and anticipate completing this review by August 2023.