

# Report on Department Policy

**Department: Arkansas Department of Human Services**

**Secretary: Cindy Gillespie**

The primary purpose of this report is to review existing policies and prompt an analysis of the opportunities for the integration of division policies within your department for standardization. An analysis of *policies* should consider all relevant factors including outdated processes, duplication across divisions, unique requirements, and opportunities for standardization. This analysis should take a holistic approach for developing action plans to deliver efficiency and effectiveness improvements while maintaining standardization across the Department.

## **Policy Integration Project**

- 1.1. Provide a brief description of integration opportunities across divisions for policy standardization at the department level where practicable. What is the action plan for integrating policies? What are the benefits?**

After realizing the complexity and confusion of DHS policies, procedures, and forms, the Secretary initiated a complete review of existing personnel-related policies to create efficiencies within the Department and streamline operations. The Office of Human Resources began reviewing all personnel-related policies in January 2019, reviewing more than 200 policies, procedures, and forms. Every document was reviewed and revised by an internal policy workgroup made up of subject-matter experts. Every document, together with all changes proposed by the workgroup, was then reviewed by the Department's full Executive Team. Once the Executive Team reached consensus on proposed changes, every document was reviewed and approved by the Secretary. This effort resulted in the revision of 92% of personnel-related policies, 100% of personnel-related procedures, and 74% of personnel-related forms. The number of pages of personnel-related policies was reduced by 50%, showing how overly complicated many of the Department's policies were.

In addition, on July 1, 2019, the Civilian Student Training Program (CSTP) moved from the Department of the Military to DHS per Act 910 of 2019. A workgroup including representatives of CSTP, the Division of Youth Services, and the Office of Chief Counsel reviewed and revised all CSTP policies to conform to Department-wide policies. These revisions contributed to policy consistency and clarity by ensuring that all DHS employees, including CSTP employees, are subject to the same Department-wide policies.

- 1.2. What steps will you take to gather the necessary information to determine whether division policies can be integrated? Address any key division requirements preventing policy integration if applicable.**

For personnel policies, the Office of Human Resources reviewed every DHS personnel policy in conjunction with all associated procedures and forms. Policies on related subjects were reviewed together, to ensure that any changes were applied consistently. For CSTP, the Department workgroup reviewed all existing CSTP policies with CSTP representation in the workgroup to ensure that all necessary information was considered. The Department encountered no obstacles preventing policy integration.

- 1.3. Are there any anticipated costs associated with revising and standardizing policies? Does your current budget have sufficient funds to cover all anticipated costs?**

The Department encountered no additional costs associated with revising and standardizing policies.

- 1.4. What is the implementation timeline and key action steps for this policy roll-out? How will you communicate this timeline and policy roll-out to division stakeholders?**

The Department initiated its review of personnel-related policies in January 2019 and completed the project in October 2019. The Department conducted regular trainings, available in-person and by live stream, to train staff on the revised personnel policies. Recordings of these trainings remain available to all employees. The revised policies are posted to the DHS intranet for review by any staff member at any time.

The Department began its review of CSTP policies in November 2019 and completed the project in December 2019. The Division of Youth Services conducted trainings for all CSTP employees on the new policies during the week of January 6, 2020.

**1.5. How could the Department of Transformation and Shared Services provide support to your Department?**

DHS would appreciate continued collaboration with the Office of Personnel Management regarding ongoing changes to state personnel policy.

**Additional thoughts/comments:**