



Shared Services Program

www.sharedservices.illinois.gov

“Coordinating resources, streamlining processes and investing in new technologies to create a more efficient state government.”

A&R Center – Frequently Asked Questions

May 23, 2007

Introduction

The Shared Services Team’s announcement to transition certain fiscal/HR employees to the A&R Center in FY08 has spurred many questions from employees about how their worklives will be affected. Below are responses to some of the questions/concerns that have been voiced. Employees should feel free to add questions by emailing the program leadership directly: sharedservicesprogram@illinois.gov.

Question 1: Which department will I be working for? How should I refer to myself in terms of work assignment?

Answer: You will be an employee of the Department of Revenue, working at the Administrative & Regulatory Shared Services Center (or, “A&R Center” for short). You should feel comfortable referring to yourself as an “Employee of the A&R Center at the Department of Revenue.”

Question 2: Where will I be physically located?

Answer: Most HR staff will be located at the Willard Ice Building (WIB), located at 101 West Jefferson, Springfield, IL 62702. Certain employees may report to the A&R Center, but work at agency locations.

Question 3: What will my role be in the A&R Center?

Answer: The Shared Services Team and the A&R Center Leadership are currently working with multiple stakeholders, including CMS-Bureau of Personnel and agency leadership, on the reorganization activity. This work will provide the Shared Services Team with a more complete understanding of the roles and responsibilities in the new center.

Question 4: As a CMS/DOR/DFPR employee, I think that I perform some tasks that do not seem to be considered “in-scope” for the Shared Services Program. How will these tasks be performed in the future?

Answer: The Shared Services Team wants to avoid creating these type of “orphan tasks” (tasks left at an agency without personnel to perform them) by making sure all tasks are fully accounted for throughout the transition. As agency employees moving to the A&R Center, you should make sure to communicate these issues to your current agency supervisor, as well as your future supervisor at the A&R Center. The Shared Services Team will work with you to make sure that necessary functions are accounted for one way or another.

Question 5: Where will I park?

Answer: Revenue has a parking policy in place and parking is assigned in accordance with this policy. Employees that will become part of the A&R Center will be provided with additional parking information.

Question 6: Will any background checks be required? What are the consequences of “failing” any such background check?

Answer: All A&R Center employees, as employees of the Department of Revenue, will be required to undergo and pass the Department of Revenue’s standard employee background check, which includes having either paid all owed state taxes or being enrolled in a DOR payment plan. Employees must pass this background check in order to begin work as A&R Center employees. The consequences of failing the initial background check will be handled on a case-by-case basis. The Shared Services Team is committed to making this transition as smooth as possible for all employees. The most important thing for A&R employees to do is to provide full and complete information on the background survey, since presenting false information on a State background check can be grounds for termination.

Question 7: Will my phone number transfer or will I be issued a new phone number?

Answer: The A&R Center is working on the phone set up plan and will keep the HR staff updated on the progress.

Question 8: Will I still be able to access my emails that I’ve had access to at my current agency assignment? Likewise, will I be able to have the same electronic calendar and contacts?

Answer: The A&R Center Leadership is working with CMS-BCCS and DOR on setting up the email accounts (and calendars and contact lists) for employees moving to the center. To what extent this will include transitioning employees from Groupwise email accounts to Outlook email accounts (or vice-versa) is still being evaluated, as is the issue of transferring old emails/contact lists/calendars.

Question 9: Will I be able to have access to the same systems and software in order to perform services?

Answer: The A&R Center Leadership recognizes that having access to various IT applications, files and networks will be crucial to performing services and has been collecting this information from staff so that they can set employees up with the necessary access rights to systems and software needs.

Question 10: How will I answer the phone?

Answer: You will become an employee of the Administrative & Regulatory Shared Services Center (or “A&R Center,” for short) and will answer the phone as such. Your direct supervisor will provide more direction depending on the particular area in which you are located.

Question 11: Will I have voice mail?

Answer: The A&R Center Leadership is working on the phone set up and will determine a plan for all HR staff.

Question 12: Currently at DFPR and CMS, employees walk into our HR offices all the time needing assistance. How do we address employees if they are in another building?

Answer: The vision for Shared Services is for many fiscal/HR services to be more technology-based for greater efficiency. This will include more Employee Self Service Options to empower employees to perform many functions (such as filling out forms) for themselves at their convenience. It will also mean that more services will be conducted on the phone and over e-mail. It will be a change, and there will not be as much face-to-face interaction. However, the Shared Services Team is confident that this is a transition that can be managed smoothly, particularly through effective communications with your “client” agencies (DOR, CMS and DFPR).

Question 13: This seems like a lot of work to do and adjustments to be made. What is the point of this transition? What is the State hoping to achieve?

Answer: The Shared Services Team realizes that this transition will require hard-work, sacrifice and patience on the part of many Shared Services employees and agency employees alike. However, we believe that this effort will provide three major benefits.

First, there are several “leading practices” (in terms of processes and system usage among the agencies), which, if the A&R Center can facilitate expansion across all A&R agencies, could provide incremental process efficiencies and service enhancements. Second, this transition allows the Shared Services Team to identify and resolve various transition challenges and issues (such as potential changes to work conditions and reporting structures), which will allow the team to have “all hands on deck” when the transition to ISIS (the state’s “to-be” HR/fiscal IT system) begins in the next few years. Lastly, this transition will begin to build the Shared Services Team.

This last point, while the most intangible, is perhaps the most important element. The Shared Services Program will require fiscal/HR employees to work together and depend on each other to provide services to multiple agencies. Additionally, it will require agency employees to learn to depend and trust a new organization (the A&R Center) to provide them with services. Simply put, it will be a team effort that will require coordination, cooperation and teamwork across the board. The sooner we can begin this team building, the better for everyone.

Question 14: Will we receive an employee handbook?

Answer: A&R Center employees will be issued a DOR Employee Handbook. Any questions about the material in this handbook can be directed to Christy Shewmaker, HR Director for the A&R Center.

Question 15: Will I have a new badge issued?

Answer: Yes. As an employee of the Department of Revenue, all A&R Center employees will be issued a DOR badge upon transfer.

Question 16: When do I take break/lunch?

Answer: Please refer to the DOR employee handbook. The exact times of breaks/lunches will be worked out with the employee’s direct supervisor. Employees should know that the WIB houses a full MCL cafeteria, located on the 4th floor.

Question 17: How will I account for my hours worked? Will there be some sort of sign-in/sign-out process?

Answer: You will be notified on all policies and procedures for the A&R Center employees.

Question 18: When will I get paid?

Answer: The Shared Services Team is currently working with the agencies and the Comptroller’s Office on developing an Interagency Agreement that will allow transferred employees to the A&R Center to remain on their prior agencies pay schedule for a period of time.

Question 19: Will A&R Center employees need to complete the state’s on-line Ethics Training Program (facilitated by the Executive Office of the Inspector General) prior to transferring to the A&R Center?

Answer: All state employees are required to complete the Ethics Training Program by the deadline.

Question 20: Which standards will be used for assessing work and awarding bonuses?

Answer: The A&R Center will follow the statewide established guidelines for bonuses, as established by CMS.

Question 21: To what extent can employees apply for new positions in the new A&R Center? Or will employees simply be reassigned? How will these opportunities be communicated?

Answer: Current HR staff from the agencies will be transferred into positions within the A&R Center. An interim organizational structure is being developed that takes into consideration the employees current duties and expertise. The A&R Center is working with CMS BOP on developing the interim organizational structure and job descriptions.

Question 22: Will my direct deposit, SECA, DCAP, MCAP transfer?

Answer: As a state employee, you will still have these benefits. However, some additional paperwork will need to be filled out upon your transfer to the A&R Center. You will be provided with the proper forms to complete so that this information will transfer.

Question 23: Will there be any issues in complying with ADA considerations for employees?

Answer: The WIB is compliant with accessibility accommodations for many common disabilities, and the A&R Center will make all possible efforts to ensure that employees are provided an environment in which they can work effectively and comfortably, regardless of disabilities. If any employees have concerns about ADA accessibility related to the A&R Center employment, please contact A&R Administration Director Shelly Martin.

Question 24: If employees are currently in progressive discipline program, how will this discipline program affect potential transfer or carry over to the new A&R Center?

Answer: For employees transferring into the Center, the discipline track will continue if necessary after the transfer. It will not affect placement in the new organizational structure of the center.

Question 25: Who do I call if I need to take the day off (or time-off)?

Answer: You will be assigned to a supervisor within the A&R Center and this will be the person you contact to take time-off.

Question 26: Will my time-off that has already been approved by my agency supervisor need to be re-approved by the A&R Center?

Answer: No, but this information will need to be provided to your new supervisor in order to minimize work disruption.

Question 27: Will I be able to play the Lottery as an A&R Center employee?

Answer: No. Per DOR employee policy, neither A&R Center employees nor their family members living in their households will be able to play the Illinois Lottery games. Sorry!

Question 28: Will A&R Center staff need to follow the disclosures for DFPR (i.e. do they have a loan from a state credit union)?

Answer: No, A&R Center staff will be employees of DOR and will be required to comply with DOR's guidelines and disclosures. They will not be required to make disclosures related to certain DFPR programmatic functions.

Question 29: Will daycare be available at the new A&R Center?

Answer: A licensed day care facility located within the Willard Ice Building is available for preschool-age children (from 15 months to six years of age) of state employees, with first preference given to children of Department of Revenue employees. Maximum enrollment is 53 children. Call (217) 785-7499 for information about placing your child in this facility.

Question 30: Who should CMS/DFPR/DOR HR employees contact with further questions?

Answer: Employees should feel free to reach out to any member of the A&R Center leadership or email the Shared Services Program leadership directly at shareservicesprogram@illinois.gov. The Shared Services Team looks forward to maintaining an open dialogue as we move forward on this transition.