Business Service Center

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The role of the Business Service Centers (BSC) is to provide direct support services to the local offices. Several functions such as Human Resources, Accounting, Allocations, and Contracts & Purchasing will be managed by Central Office, but will be located in each BSC. The BSC will provide a more efficient structure to allow the counties to focus on delivering high level customer service and to enhance the delivery of services that are part of the department's core mission.

There is a total of six (6) BSC. The attached map identifies the configuration for each BSC. The locations are as follows:

BSC 1 is located in Chippewa County.

BSC 2 is located In Isabella County.

BSC 3 is located in Calhoun County/

BSC 4 is located in Lansing at W. Saginaw Hwy.

BSC 5 is located in Lansing at W. Saginaw Hwy.

BSC 6 is located in Detroit at Cadillac Place.

The following FAQs will answer many of your questions specific to Human Resources, Accounting, and Contracts & Purchasing activities. Additional questions and answers will be updated periodically to provide further clarification and information. It will also include additional subjects related to the implementation process.

Human Resources

1. Who will schedule trainings for staff (new hires, etc.)?
    - Managers of the pertinent work areas will be responsible for training.
2. Will local office staff be reassigned to other counties for other positions if they stay behind?
    - Reassignments will be handled case by case.
3. How will selections be made as to who moves to the business center and who stays with the local office?
    - We are taking into consideration commuting distances.
4. Will anyone be forced to change locations?
    - There will be situations where the only option offered is to move to the new location.
5. If staff is expected to move office locations, will reasonable accommodations or hardships be considered such as difficulty commuting in the dark due to poor night vision, medical conditions that limit driving, etc.?
    - The department has a Reasonable Accommodations process that employees may use for such considerations.
6. Will the job duties change once the BSC model is implemented? If so, when will staff receive notification of the new job duties?
    - Job duties can change. "Notification" will be communicated as soon as they are worked out.
7. Will a comparison chart be released showing the new changes as compared to the current method of operating?
    - Information will be provided regarding our new structures. Not sure yet if a comparison will be developed, but it will definitely be considered.
8. Will the HR website and links be made easier to find and use if workers have to contact HR themselves?
    - The HR website has just been improved. The Hover information is removed so that employees are connected right to the HR tab. We will also incorporate other suggestions and feedback. Our intent is to get good information out there in a user friendly manner.

9. Will there be a HR contact person in each local office?
    - There will be an 'ON- SITE' contact identified, but the HR role will be primarily the Business Service Center Liaison. We may need to use the on-site contact for such things as scheduling interviews on site, or collecting the copy of social security cards, drivers' licenses of candidates to send to HR. The intent is to limit the HR related function to those that are not technical in nature. The roles of the On Site Contact, and the Business Service Center Liaison and the Central HR Office will clearly be spelled out and shared.
10. Who will audit DCDS Payroll?
    - No change.
11. Will the BSC Director be able to approve hiring exceptions decisions or will they need to go to another higher level?
    - The Business Service Center will be involved in getting these processed to the appropriate approver.
12. Who will do employee orientation with new hires off the street and submit documentation to HR?
    - We have been working on a web based new employee orientation. We are getting to roll it out department wide.
13. Will local office first line managers and County Directors continue to have direct input in selecting candidates to fill vacancies?
    - Yes. The BSC will facilitate the hiring process and handle the paperwork related to hiring activities. The local office will be actively involved in making hiring decisions.

Accounting

1. Which, if any, fiscal responsibilities are going to be left with the local offices? PO's, local checks, bridge cards?
    - Controlled documents (BRIDGE cards, gift cards, Visa debit cards) will be maintained in the local offices. We are developing internal control procedure for these documents. PO's and checks will be only maintained in the Business Centers.
2. If we are not going to have a fiscal person, who will be responsible to send all documentation to Lansing for processing?
    - One person, and a backup in each local office, will be trained on document flow to the Business Centers.
3. Will interview selection processes be held to fill the accounting positions, or will the positions come from current staff?
    - We hope to have the current accounting assistants fill as many as possible. After that, contract language will be followed and interviews may take place.
4. Will counties lose the authority to spend from accounts as needed to fulfill obligations of policy, law and customer need?
    - No, individual counties will continue to make spending decisions, but the payments will be made out of the Business Centers.
5. With this new model, where will our customers pick up emergency payments, employee replacement warrants, court checks, witness fees, PO's, manual warrants for postage and bus tickets, etc.?
    - We are still in the development stages for all the processes noted above. Before BSC implementation, these written processes will be available.
6. Which portions/functions of Internal Controls will be taken over by the BSC?
    - All of them except for the controlled documents.
7. Will the fiscal unit expectations be consistent amongst all counties?
    - Yes. Consistency is a primary goal of the BSCs. We have noted different processes for the same problem and we need to find the most effective and efficient to do business, and then train each center staff.
8. Will a comparison chart be released showing the new changes as compared to the current method of operating?

- Crosswalks will be provided where possible.

9. How would the assignment of DSS/ES funds be generated and requested for APW staff for transportation issues such as vehicle repairs, car purchases, clothing issues for employment? What would be the turnaround time if these services were centralized?
    - DSS will continue to operate as it does now. The only difference is payments will be made in the BSC on behalf of each local office.
10. How would the people that walk in at 4:15pm on a Friday needing a SER processed so they do not get evicted and their landlord want confirmation the payment went through be handled?
    - Before the BSC are fully implemented, these types of processes will be documented for each local office to follow.
11. Will there be a delay in issuing emergency checks for stopping shut offs or preventing homelessness as we can get those checks the same day needed now?
    - Please refer to response in # 10.
12. We use our fiscal for processing 1291's for various types of financial requests (i.e.: gas cards, Wal-Mart cards, emergencies). How will these accounts be handled?
    - The accounts will be handled the same as they are now, except processing will take place in the business centers instead of the local offices.
13. How would APW staff be aware of available and accurate balances for DSS/ES funds?
    - Each business center will have Accounting Assistants who are assigned to track these balances.
14. How would the people that walk in at 4:15pm on a Friday needing a SER processed so they do not get evicted and their landlord want confirmation the payment went through be handled?
    - Before the BSC are fully implemented, these types of processes will be documented for each local office to follow.

15. Will there be a delay in issuing emergency checks for stopping shut offs or preventing homelessness as we can get those checks the same day needed now?
    - Please refer to #14.
16. We use our fiscal for processing 1291's for various types of financial requests (i.e.: gas cards, Wal-Mart cards, emergencies). How will these accounts be handled?
    - The accounts will be handled the same as they are now, except processing will take place in the business centers instead of the local offices.
17. 93's are handled in SWSS now but we send all of our 93's to our local accounting for reconciling. Will that continue?
    - Instead of sending to the local accounting unit, these will be sent to the Business Center through the document flow process.
18. How will Child Care Fund be handled re: paying our Parent Aides?
    - There are still discussions pending as to how these payments will be handled.
19. Will the BSC transfer funds from one PCA to another or between tri-counties when the local offices need it?
    - Yes.
20. Will the BSC handle all contractor payments and advise us of remaining dollars monthly?
    - Payments will be made through the BSC. If there currently is a process in place for the contract administrators knowing the remaining balances, then that will also continue in the BSC.
21. Will counties continue to have separate allocation for contracts, travel and CSS&M?
    - The current process in place for allocations will continue under the BSC.

Contracts& Purchasing

1. Will the Business Service Center handle all contract bids?
    - Direct Human Service contract bids will be handled by either the Business Service Center (BSC) staff or Office of Logistics and Rate Setting (OLRS) staff
    - Administrative contract bids will be handled by OLRS staff
2. Will the bids be submitted directly to the Business Service Center?
    - Requests to purchase goods or services will be forwarded to the BSC.
3. Will the BSC rate the bidders or will that remain in the local office?
    - The BSC staff will be responsible for selecting and training members of the rating committees. These members may be from the local offices.
4. How will the BSC handle no-bid contracts?
    - All goods and services between $2,500 and $10,000 require a minimum of two quotes. The BSC will be responsible for obtaining price quotes.
5. Who will answer bidder questions?
    - Reponses to questions arising from a bid process will be coordinated by the BSC and/or OLRS staff with input from program and local offices when needed.
6. Will we lose procurement cards and the ability to order our own office supplies?
    - Procurement cardholders and Office Max ordering will remain in the local office.
7. Will the BSC actually execute, track and monitor contracts for the local office, or will the local office be required to do more reporting on these functions than what we currently do?

- OLRS will coordinate issuance and execution of contracts. The BSC will maintain a database of contracts available in the geographic area.
- Contract monitoring will be administered by the Office of Monitoring and Internal Controls

8. Will counties still decide what services to purchase?
    - The local offices identify and communicate their needs to BSC staff, which coordinate the procurement process.
9. Will the local office still be able to purchase "Just in Time" supplies directly from Office Max?
    - Yes
10. Are there plans to include individual units/staffs to participate in the planning of the BSC model for DHS contracting? If so, when?
    - The BSC implementation team will take this under consideration.
11. Will the BSC familiarize themselves with the individual county needs?
    - Yes

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