



# Media Release

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**DHS Re-Structuring Core Business Structure; Launching Review of Programs**  
*Re-org strengthens IT, procurement and other functions shared by all divisions*

The new Director of the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) has completed a 60-day review of the agency's core business structures and is announcing a re-organization of those functions as a result of what she learned.

"It was clear from the moment I arrived that DHS has hard-working, dedicated employees," said DHS Director Cindy Gillespie. "But it was not clear whether the business structure itself was set up so that DHS could do the work it needed to do as efficiently as was expected. It's smart business to look at how we're operating to see if mission changes, market forces, technology advancements or other factors mean we need to change the way we do business to be more effective."

Gillespie and her senior team reviewed procurement, information technology, contracting, finance, human resource functions, communications and more. The review showed:

- Each of the 10 divisions in DHS have independent finance, HR, IT and procurement operations.
- The nine additional executive-level support offices provide only limited support to divisions.
- Staff has ad hoc and inconsistent interactions with key external entities (legislators, community engagement).
- Very limited centralized (at the Director's office level) reporting or oversight.
- Limited data collection for the purpose of establishing and tracking measurable goals.
- The DHS Director has inconsistent visibility into the core business functions of the agency, such as contracts, and no clarity on accountability and responsibility.
- A lack of a strategic or effective focus on engaging external stakeholders.

Change and restructuring is needed to transform the four main functions that are critical to the success of DHS: Procurement, finance, IT and human resources, Gillespie said. The agency also must undertake efforts to engage external stakeholders in a way that better supports the broader mission of the agency and provides the public with needed information, connections and transparency.

"I applaud Cindy and her team for completing this re-structuring of DHS. This new approach not only makes the agency stronger, but it allows for more accountability when issues arise," Governor Asa Hutchinson said. "I look forward to the next phases of the review and the continued progress being made at DHS."

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Effective July 1, DHS will have a new structure that will include centralized offices to support DHS-wide business operations. These offices will support the work of divisions by providing “shared services” and will be headed by Chiefs who will report to the DHS Director. The offices are:

- **Office of Finance**, which will be headed by Mark Story. This office will be responsible for the agency’s finances. This office will include a new office of long-term planning, a strengthened payment and program integrity unit and the agency’s audit functions
- **Office of Procurement**, which will be headed by Misty Bowen-Eubanks. This office will be responsible for procurement as a “shared service” for all DHS divisions and support offices.
- **Office of Human Resources**, which will provide human resource activities as a shared service for all divisions and support offices and will implement an agency-wide strategy to attract and retain the talent necessary to carry out the work of DHS. We are searching for a person with extensive private-sector HR experience to lead this office.
- **Office of Information Technology**, which will be headed by Jeff Dean. This office will provide agency-wide IT strategy, standards and will ensure systems are in place for staff to do their jobs.
- **Office of Communications and Community Engagement**, which will be headed by Amy Webb. This office combines the current Office of Communications and the Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support, reducing the number of DHS Divisions from 10 to 9. It will be responsible for agency-wide internal and external communications. A new assistant director for Community Engagement and Faith-Based Partnership will provide a focus for maximizing the involvement of outside organizations in supporting the DHS mission.
- **Office of Legislative and Inter-Governmental Affairs**, which will serve as a central point for ensuring that legislative communications are effective. Kelley Linck, who resigned his elected position effective June 12, will head this office.
- **Office of Chief Counsel**, which will continue to be headed by David Sterling. This office will continue to provide legal services and support to the agency and will also take on some of the work of the current Office of Quality Assurance.

Centralizing many of the core business functions will allow the divisions to focus on the programs and client services they provide to Arkansans all across the state. The goal is for this to be a budget-neutral re-organization. There is no planned reduction-in-force, though some positions or job duties will change, be consolidated or lost through attrition or due to vacancy.

“The changes will make this agency stronger and more nimble,” Gillespie said. “They also will improve our ability to find efficiencies and be a strong steward of the public funds and resources that we are given.”

The next phase of the review will focus on programs from the perspective of clients with a goal of making the agency a more client-centered department. We also will focus on how we can attract and retain high-quality employees. This phase of the review is expected to last at least through the fall.