

Consolidation of state agencies takes shape

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Gov. Chris Gregoire today moved ahead with a plan to consolidate five state agencies into three agencies and appointed a transition team to oversee the process. The consolidation represents the most significant transformation of state government in the past 20 years.

Over the next 11 weeks, functions of the Department of General Administration, Department of Personnel, State Printer and Department of Information Services will be merged into the new Department of Enterprise Services or new Consolidated Technology Services. Those four agencies then will be shuttered. In addition, some functions of the Office of Financial Management will be transferred to the Department of Enterprise Services, and portions of Personnel and Information Services will be merged with OFM. A transition team will oversee the consolidation.

Joyce Turner, General Administration director, will lead the team and serve as the transition director for the Department of Enterprise Services. Mike Ricchio, Information Services director, will serve as transition director for Consolidated Technology Services. Marty Brown will continue to serve as OFM director and oversee changes at that agency. Eva Santos, Personnel director, will also serve on the transition team.

Turner, Ricchio, Brown and Santos begin their transition assignments immediately. Effective Oct. 1, when the two new agencies open, Turner will become director of the Department of Enterprise Services and Ricchio will become director of Consolidated Technology Services, while Santos will serve as director of human resource policy at OFM.

“This team will help guide state government through its most significant overhaul in 20 years,” Gregoire said. “We saw Joyce’s skill at overseeing major transitions when she helped form the Department of Early Learning. She has worked in nearly every agency affected by these moves and served as my deputy chief of staff. Joyce’s experience will be valuable as we blend workplaces and cultures. Mike’s previous experience with the Department of Information Services and extensive knowledge of state government make him a perfect fit for the state’s new information technology agency, Consolidated Technology Services.”

In December 2010, the governor announced the agency consolidation plan, estimated to save \$18.3 million in the 2011–13 biennium. With this plan in place, the Department of Enterprise Services will centralize many services that state agencies require, including facilities and lease management, accounting, human resources, risk management, contracting and printing. OFM will continue to oversee budget, policy, forecasting and labor relations, and add human resource policy and state IT policy, planning and oversight to its portfolio.

“This is an important transition for state government services,” Turner said. “I am committed to the goal of getting the department up and running in a cost-effective and efficient manner while continuing to provide high-quality services to our partners and the dedicated employees of all

state agencies.”

“This organizational change will bring together the policy, planning and oversight of the state’s finances, employees and technology in a way that will serve the state and taxpayers well for decades to come,” Brown said.

Several weeks after her initial announcement, Gregoire unveiled details about a new central IT agency, Consolidated Technology Services, which will consolidate and further standardize the basic technology that all state agencies use, including email, IT security and telecommunications. Its guiding principle is to contract for services it can’t provide cost effectively, as is done in the private sector. To achieve this goal, the agency will have greater flexibility to hire staff and procure materials and services outside of state government. This innovative approach is projected to save taxpayers \$10 million over the next four years.

“I’m excited to lead one of the state’s most ambitious efforts to date to transform government,” Ricchio said. “The unique flexibility of Consolidated Technology Services and its mission of providing or procuring the state government’s technology services mean our staff will be breaking new ground and innovating every day they are on the job.”

With Turner’s new assignment, Gregoire appointed Jane Rushford, General Administration’s deputy director, as the agency’s acting director.

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