



# 2025 Human Resources Symposium

*December 4, 2025*

# BENEFITS OF CENTRALIZATION

- **Empowered HR Teams:** Enhanced support and resources enabling HR professionals to focus on strategic initiatives.
- **Unified Collaboration:** Seamless cross-agency knowledge sharing and adoption of best practices.
- **Professional Development:** Enterprise-wide training and development opportunities strengthening HR capabilities across the enterprise.
- **Consistent Employee Experience:** Standardized HR practices and messaging ensuring equitable employee experiences across all agencies.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Centralized policies, procedures, and tools reducing administrative burden on agency HR and freeing capacity for high-impact strategic work.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Integrated HR systems and processes delivering reliable workforce data and real-time insights to support better organizational decisions.



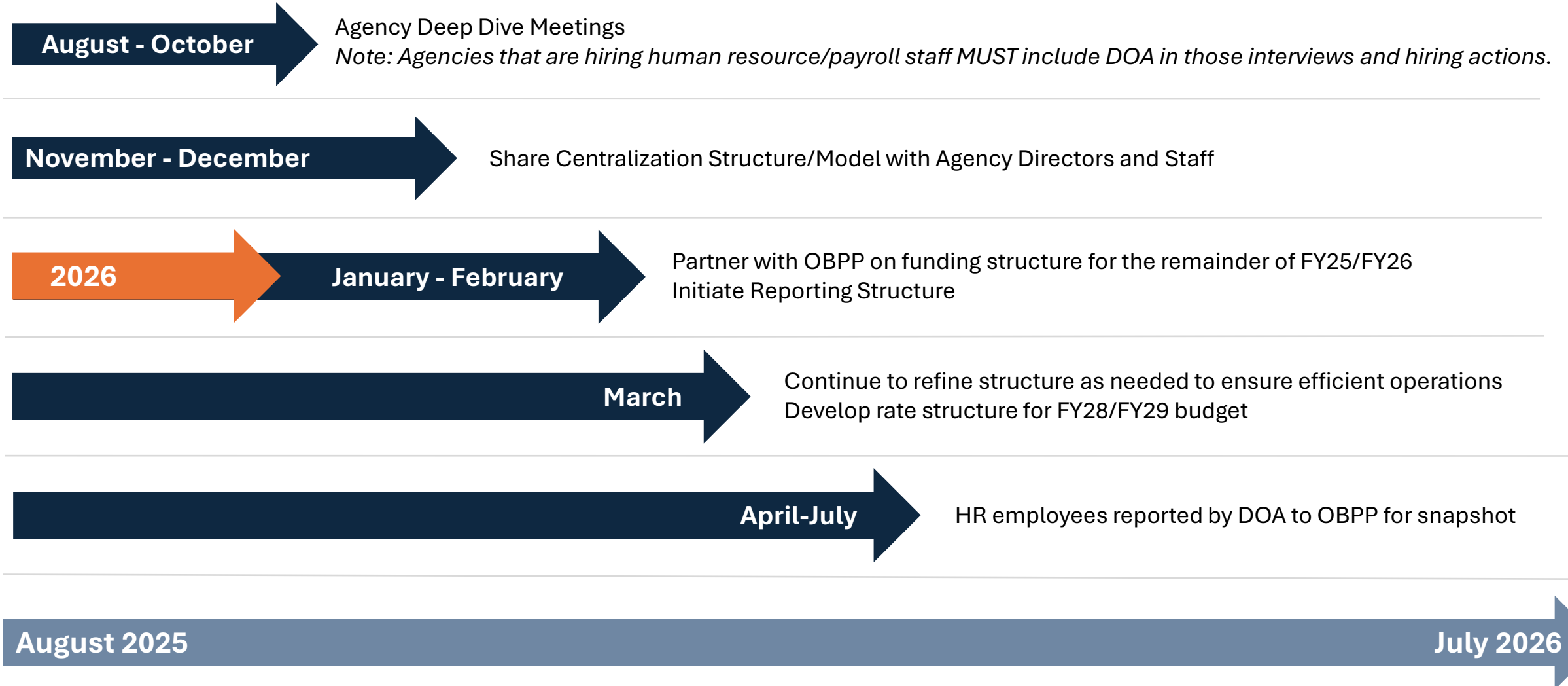
## Mont. Code Ann. § 2-18-101 et seq.

These statutes assign the Department of Administration statewide leadership and authority over key HR functions for state government.

- Lead development of effective personnel administration practices for all state agencies and make HR expertise and resources available to them.
- Apply and carry out the personnel statutes under Mont. Code Ann. Title 2, ch. 18, pts. 1–3, including any actions needed to fulfill their purposes.
- Develop and issue statewide personnel policies.
- Develop and foster programs for recruitment, selection, training, safety, health, counseling, discipline, grievance handling, performance evaluation, and retention of employees.
- Develop model rules of conduct for all state employees based on the state ethics laws (Mont. Code Ann. Title 2, ch. 2).
- Investigate how personnel statutes and policies are working in practice and report findings and recommendations to the governor.



# HR CENTRALIZATION / TIMELINE





**DISCOVERY**

# DISCOVERY DETAILS



**100 DATA POINTS**



**15 AGENCY  
DISCOVERY  
SESSIONS**



**5 SHRD FOCUS  
GROUPS**



**3 STATES**



# HR CENTRALIZATION: CURRENT STATE SUMMARY



## PEOPLE

- Current HR agency staff primarily operate in siloes, which has led to limited knowledge sharing and limited standardization in HR operations.
- HR Staff are developed through a mix of in-house training, peer support, and external resources, but agencies noted inconsistencies with access to professional development opportunities.
- Agencies described ongoing staffing challenges, including seasonal fluctuations and high turnover, which currently places additional pressure on HR teams – particularly those with smaller staffs.



## PROCESS / POLICY

- Limited process standardization exists across the agencies – HR staff follow the precedence established in their individual agencies, and limited sharing of best practices occurs across the agencies.
- Many agencies follow more manual processes for key HR functions, which highlights the need for greater consistency and automation.
- Policies are not always standard from agency to agency, as policy governance is difficult to enforce with the current org structure and SHRD team bandwidth.



## TECHNOLOGY

- Agencies use a variety of HR tools (including “homegrown” solutions), as to-date, they have been acting autonomously in their technology selection. Integration across tools and platforms remains a challenge
- Agencies are in various states of migrating to digital record-keeping, but few use digital solutions that are more sophisticated than a centralized shared drive.
- Concerns exist about maintaining data integrity and consistency, particularly as agencies juggle multiple platforms and legacy systems.



Met with the following states to learn more about their human resources centralization journey:

✓ Alaska ✓ Michigan ✓ Wisconsin

## THEMES FROM THESE DISCUSSIONS:

- Define and communicate clear roles and reporting relationships, so HR staff and agency personnel know when centralized protocols apply and when there's room for agency-specific flexibility.
- Use service-level agreements or MOUs to set expectations regarding decision-making authority and escalation expectations.
- Change management is key. Focus on transparent communication and providing feedback channels.
- Allowed for specialization across HR functions. Dedicated teams enabled the development of subject matter expertise and scalable learning/development programs, improving overall service quality.
- Enabled better compliance with employment law, more consistent application of benefits, and improved workforce planning across agencies.
- Standardization should start with transactional processes, followed by a broad transformational plan tailored to the state's specific needs.



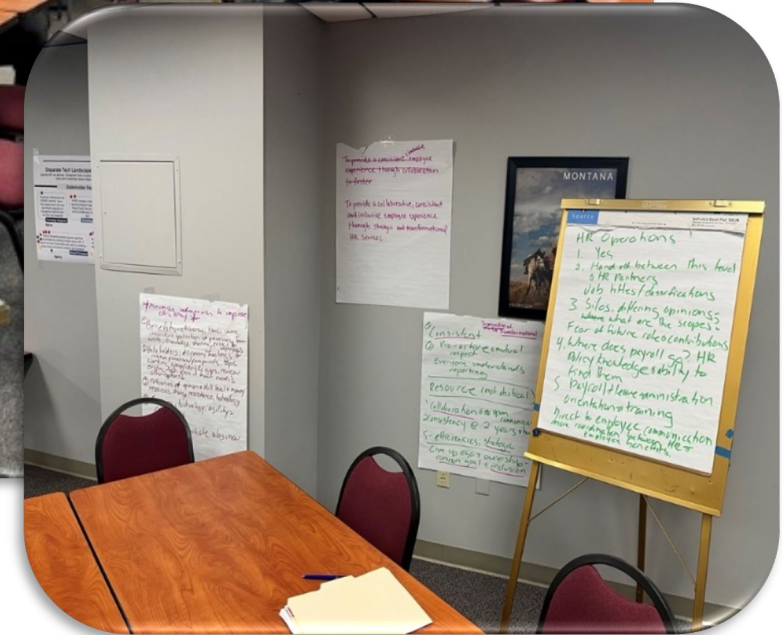
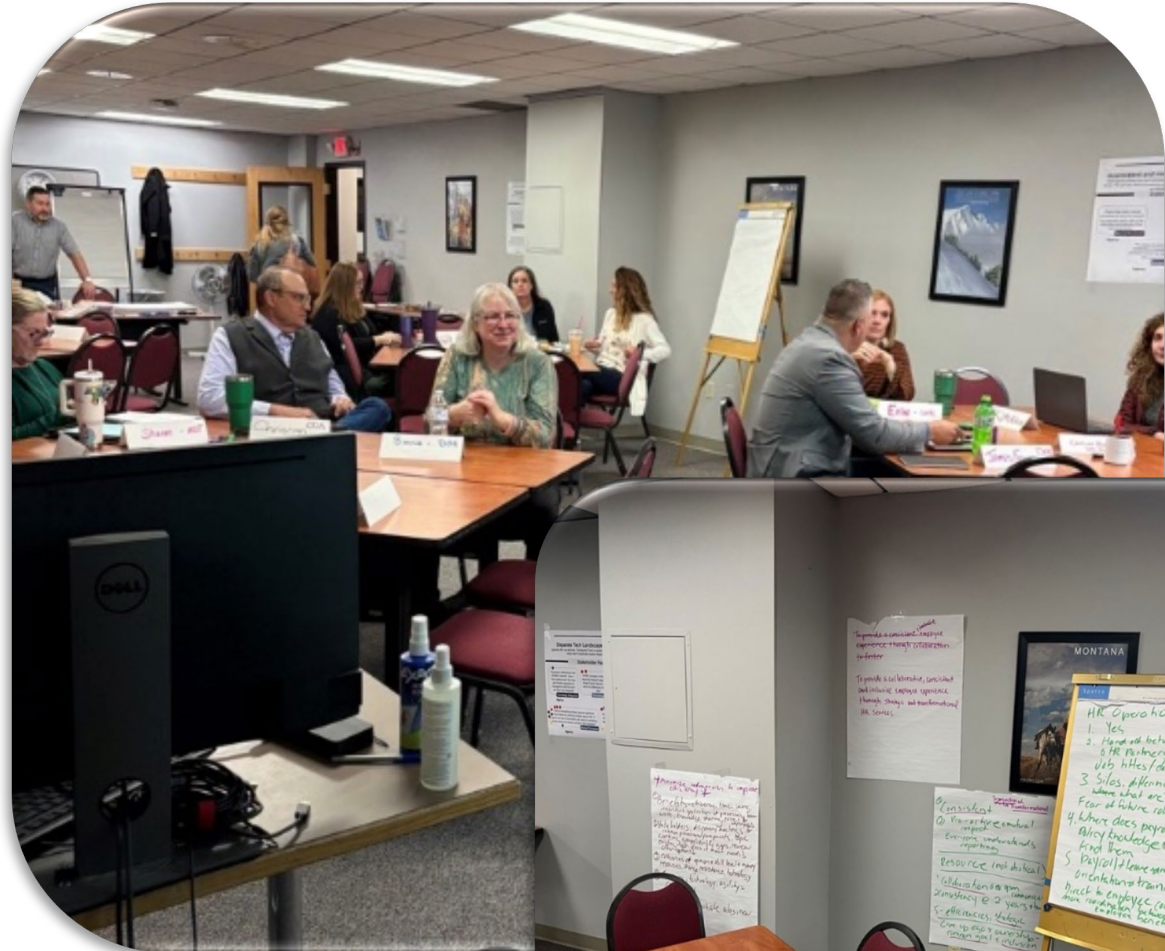


# FUTURE VISIONING

# FUTURE STATE HR VISIONING LAB

To collaboratively design the future-state HR Operating Model, SHRD staff and agency stakeholders participated in an active Visioning Lab.

During this lab, participants ideated on the components of the future-state HR operating model, documented challenges and opportunities, and shared their aspirations for HR Centralization.



# HR CENTRALIZATION: FUTURE VISIONING LAB



Participants expressed split views on **centralized versus shared governance**, highlighting the need to balance enterprise-wide consistency with agency-level autonomy.



**Standardizing HR processes** and retiring outdated agency-specific policies will improve efficiency, reduce redundancy, and promote consistency across the enterprise.



Investing in **training and modernized tools** will strengthen strategic HR capabilities, reduce legal risk, and empower professionals to deliver high-quality services.



Participants emphasized **empowering HR professionals** to act independently while remaining aligned with enterprise goals, with a strong preference for personalized services tailored to agency needs.



Promoting **collaboration and shared expertise** will help break down siloes, foster innovation, and support common goals across agencies.

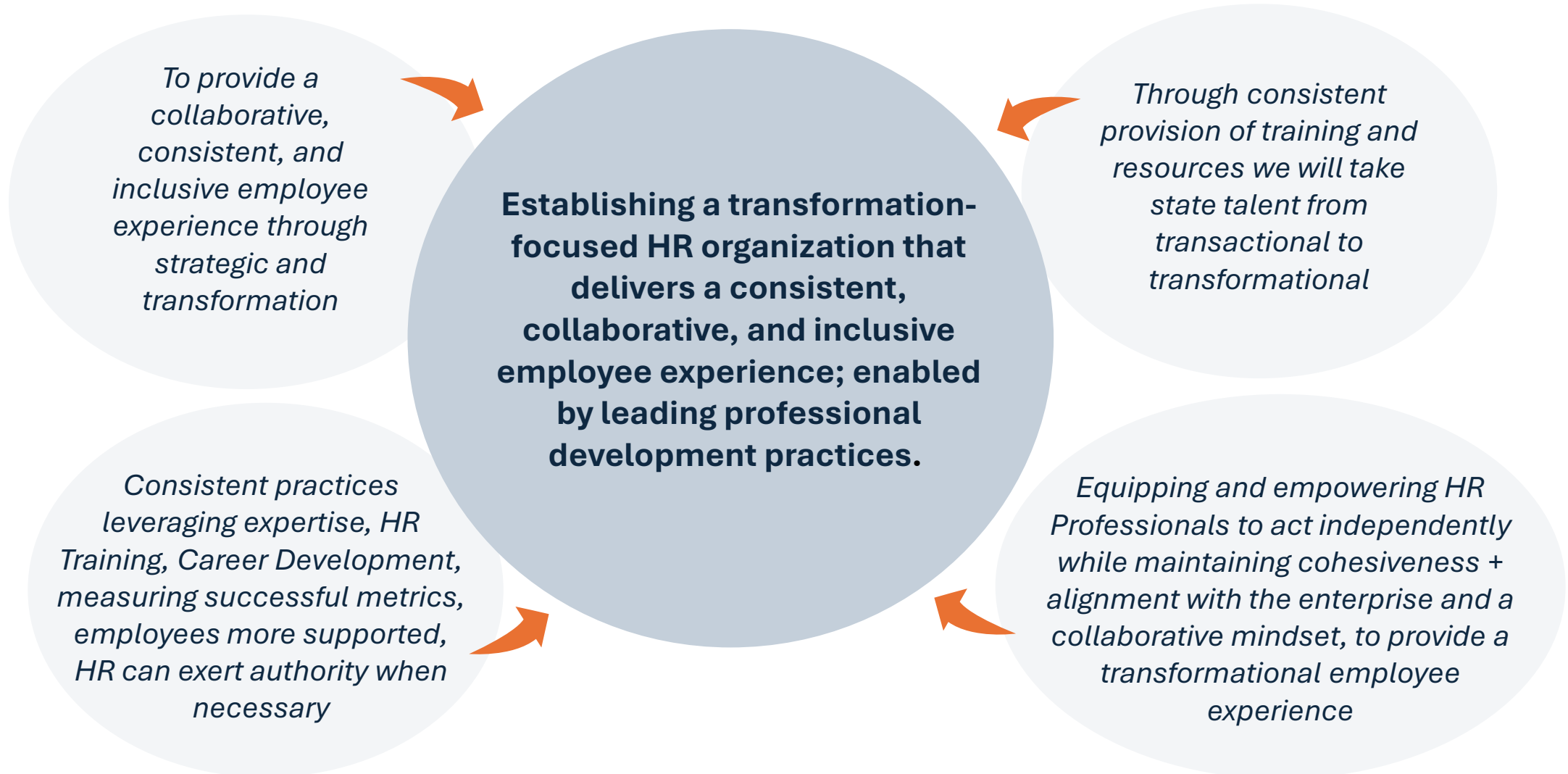


A strong desire was evident for **data-driven decisions** to enhance transparency, support strategic planning, and promote consistent, evidence-based HR practices.

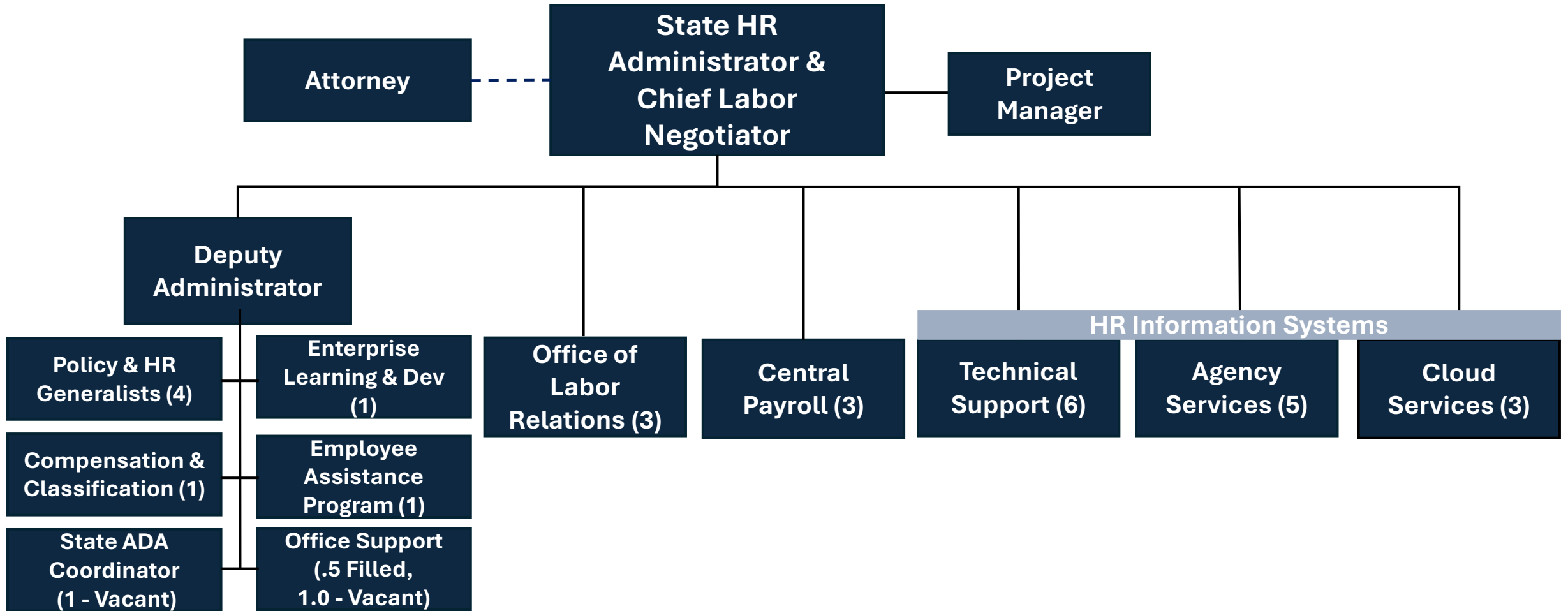


# HR CENTRALIZATION: VISION STATEMENT

This unified vision has been developed from the four visioning statements that lab participants developed during the session. It reflects the desire to stand up an HR organization that enables employees and HR professionals to drive excellence across the enterprise.



# CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



# PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

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## **Human Resources Business Services Bureau:**

New bureau within the State Human Resources Division housing all central HR staff and agency assigned HR staff.

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## **Enterprise HR Services:**

A team within the Human Resources Business Services Bureau comprised of HR professionals leading enterprise initiatives, providing policy development and guidance, and assisting agency HR teams as needed.

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## **Agency HR Leaders ( Working Title TBD)**

The Agency HR Leader represents the most senior-level HR professional assigned to a specific agency. This strategic role bridges agency leadership with enterprise HR operations. These positions report directly to the Human Resources Business Services Bureau and will become DOA SHRD employees.

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## **Agency HR Teams**

Agency HR teams are comprised of human resource professionals assigned to provide direct support to a specific agency. These positions will continue to report up through their specific Agency HR Leader and will become DOA SHRD employees.

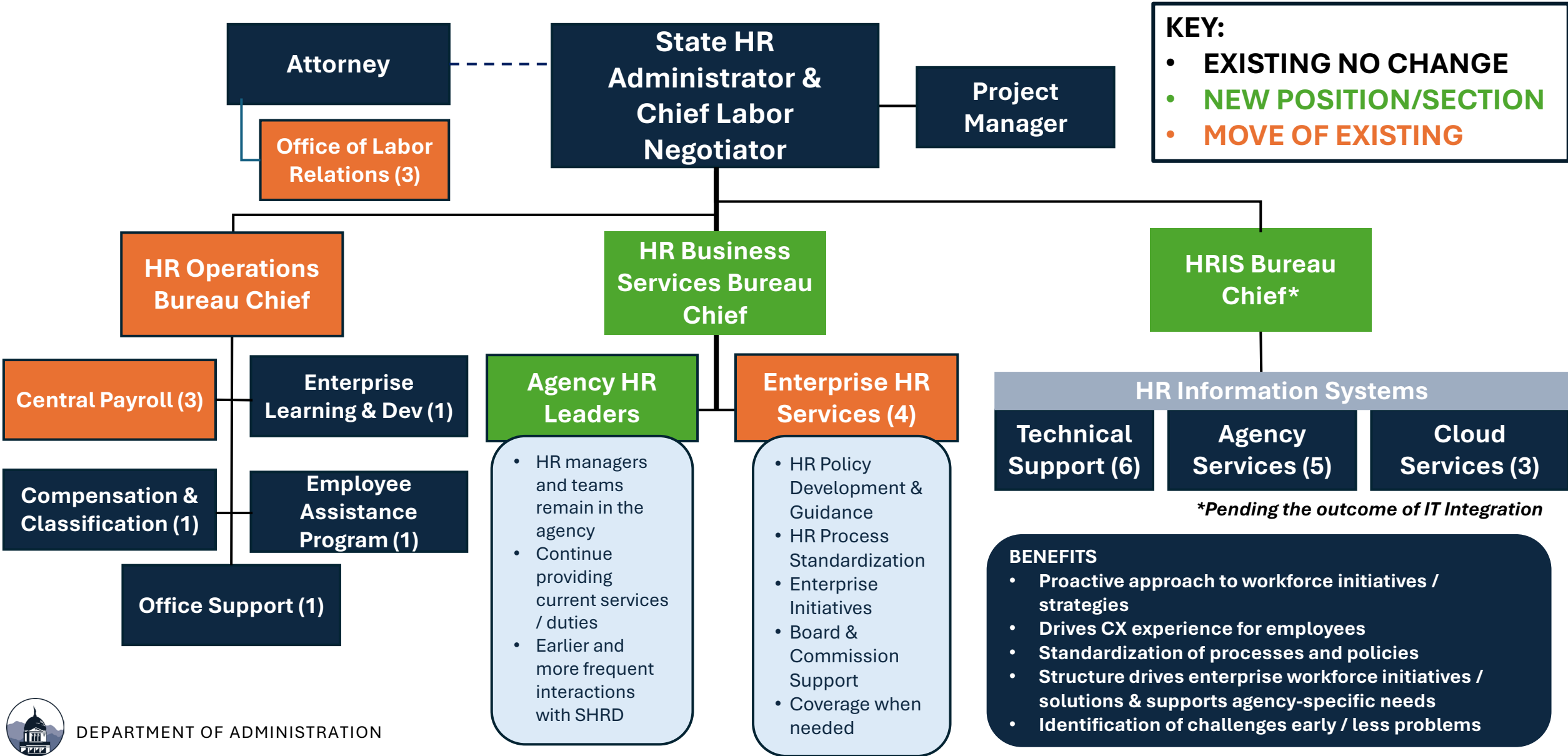
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## **Central HR Staff**

Central HR staff operate within the SHRD central office, supporting enterprise-wide initiatives and providing specialized guidance across all agencies.



# PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



# CENTRAL HR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## **Enterprise HR Programs, Policies, and Business Services:**

- Compensation and Classification
- ADA/EEO
- Enterprise Learning and Development
- Employee Assistance Program
- Advising Agency HR Leaders on state policy, rules, statutes, and practices.

## **HR Information Systems: Manage and maintain the following enterprise systems.**

- Core HRIS System (SABHRS)
- Performance Management and Training (TALENT/LEARN)
- Recruitment System (SOMRS)

## **Central Payroll Processing:**

- State/federal payroll tax management.
- Deductions management.
- Manage biweekly processing of enterprise payroll.

## **Labor Relations:**

- Negotiate the biennial pay package for state employees.
- Negotiate collective bargaining agreements for each of the state's bargaining units.
- Assist agencies administering collective bargaining agreements.
- Represent state government in administrative hearings and labor arbitrations.



# AGENCY HR TEAMS - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The support provided by agency assigned HR staff is not changing. Agency HR teams will continue to offer the same core support and services to their assigned agency while proactively engaging with the HR Business Services Bureau. **There will be an expectation that items will be elevated to the HR Business Services Bureau for awareness.**

- Recruiting / New Hire Onboarding
- Employee Offboarding / Exit Interviews
- Agency Level Workforce Planning / Strategies
- Agency Level Pay / Compensation Strategies and Requests
- Position Classification
- Leave Management
- Advising on HR Policy & Labor Law
- Labor Relations / CBA Adherence & Support/LMCs
- Ensures Alignment with Enterprise HR Policy / Strategies
- Agency Specific Training & Development
- Employee Safety / Workers' Compensation
- Bi-Weekly Timesheets / Payroll Verification



# ELEVATION TO HR BUSINESS SERVICES BUREAU

Below are examples of items that are expected to be elevated to the HR Business Services Bureau for awareness. Agency HR teams will continue to support their assigned agencies through these situations and will notify the bureau for awareness and guidance. **The HR Business Services Bureau will engage as needed; not all situations will require their direct involvement.**

- Interventions are being considered that may impact statewide HR policies, pay plans, job classifications, or labor relations.
- A request involves an exception to policy or deviation from standard classification or compensation rules.
- An agency head or senior official requests HR action that may conflict with statewide direction or employment law.
- Formal disciplinary actions at the due process step for awareness.
- Labor relation items such as grievances, corrective actions, proposed settlements, compensation requests, requests for MOUs, and mandatory subjects of bargaining.
- Employee complaints regarding harassment, sexual harassment, and discrimination.
- Classification requests for HR positions or for leadership positions with oversight of HR.
- Pay adjustments and lump-sum requests.
- Personal appointed position requests.
- Department-specific policy development requests.
- All reorganizations.
- All Reductions in Force (RIF).
- All proposed demotions: discipline, reorganization, etc.



# AGENCY HR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE IMPACT



Payroll, Safety, Training, and Wellness positions will remain agency specific and not transfer to DOA. These positions can still report within the agency HR organizational structure.



The Agency HR Leader will report directly into SHRD HR Business Services Bureau and will maintain a dotted line to an agency specific leader. Agency Leaders will become DOA SHRD employees.



The Agency HR Leader will supervise the HR employees assigned to provide services to the respective agency. Agency HR staff will become DOA SHRD employees.



Supervision, performance management, and policy guidance for the Agency HR Leader are provided by SHRD in collaboration with the agency leader.



# SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

## SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

There will be an SLA for HR services for each agency.

- Defines the scope of HR services provided by SHRD to the agency.
- Describes the operating relationship between SHRD and the agency.
- Outlines the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the parties.

Individual agency meetings will be scheduled to work through and finalize the SLA.



## RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS MEMO

Outlines responsibilities for both Agency HR Leaders and Central HR.



**LOOKING AHEAD**

# HR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE SURVEY



## SURVEY PURPOSE

This survey allows us to better understand the knowledge and experience of current HR staff. This survey will provide an opportunity for us to hear from HR staff about their experience, strengths, and interest in development. It will provide staff an opportunity to share ideas and feedback around centralization. Following this survey SHRD will be able to prioritize training needs, identify SMEs, and develop a mentorship program.

## AUDIENCE

Agency HR staff identified through the recent discovery process who would most likely be part of the centralization into SHRD.

## CONTENT

Self-evaluation of each HR practices area, opportunity to share areas of interest for development, and interest in mentoring.

## PROPOSED TIMELINE

- **Dec 4** – Announce survey and share details with enterprise HR staff at the HR Symposium.
- **Dec 8** – Email inviting HR staff to participate in the survey.
- **Dec 19** – Deadline for survey completion.



# CURRENT HR CENTRALIZATION PRIORITIES

## IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES:

- Confirm position mapping with agencies
- Finalize agency service level agreements (SLAs)
- Finalize SHRD organizational structure and working titles
- Recruit HR Business Services Bureau Chief
- Define SABHRS roles and security structure
- Develop talent performance management templates
- Determine funding model with OBPP
- Finalize transfer details for all centralization initiative

## TRANSITION PRIORITIES:

- Develop agency centralization onboarding plan
- Inventory and review agency-specific policies, procedures, and forms
- Establish enterprise priorities for standardization
- Establish a process for agency HR engagement on standardization initiatives
- Create an ongoing feedback channel for agency HR and agency leadership with SHRD





# CENTRALIZATION INITIATIVES

# STAFF TRANSITIONS – LOGISTICAL ITEMS / TOPICS

## STAFF TRANSITION PLANNING

As staff transition from agencies to DOA, a multitude of logistical issues need to be addressed to support a smooth transition. Planning is underway to address these topics.



Examples of these topics include:

- C Number
- Maintaining current email addresses / emails
- Accommodating ‘dual’ reporting structures within all HRIS systems
- Ensuring staff have appropriate system access for their role
- Transition of IT hardware/software assigned to individual employees
- Personnel files and related information (e.g., I-9s, FMLA, etc.)
- Badges and Access
- Current DOA Background Check Requirements
- Transition of Leave Balances
- VEBA Groups / Memberships
- ProCard Transition / Protocols
- Travel Expenses
- Signature Blocks
- Business Cards
- Work Cellphones / MDM Reimbursement
- Outlook
- Address Book Agency
- Distribution Lists
- Staff Requests with Dual Reports To
- Schedule, leave, remote work approval
- Recruitments for Centralized Positions
- Pay Adjustment Requests for Centralized Positions
- Agency budget management – training and development example



# CENTRALIZATION RESOURCES

- **Centralization Resource Center**

- [centralization.mt.gov](http://centralization.mt.gov)
- Updated FAQs, Presentations, General Updates

- **HR Centralization**

- DOA State Human Resources Division (SHRD)
  - Karol Anne Davis and Dean Mack



- **Procurement Centralization**

- DOA Human Resources
  - Natasha Cook, DOA HR Generalist

- **IT Centralization**

- DOA Human Resources
  - Chris Bacon, DOA HR Manager
- Weekly Update Emails

- **Union Questions**

- DOA SHRD Office of Labor Relations
  - Karol Anne Davis
  - Christian Mackay
  - Caitlin Buzzas





Q&A