

Reimagining Government

Overview

New York State has undergone a dramatic transformation over the past two years. This evolution to a fiscally sustainable and functioning, responsible government is the fundamental precursor to a more prosperous *New New York*. In the spirit of Governor Al Smith, New York has embarked on the largest redesign of State government in over eighty years. New initiatives to share services and increase efficiency have allowed agencies to focus resources on their core missions, thereby improving services. A new emphasis on public participation through innovative approaches such as the Regional Economic Development Councils and the Medicaid Redesign Team has increased transparency and fundamentally altered the way the State makes decisions. The success of these efforts provides a strong foundation for the additional work that lies ahead.

The 2013-14 Executive Budget allows New York to take the next steps in the continued transformation of State government, allowing for even greater transparency and efficiencies. The Open New York initiative will begin with the unveiling of OpenBudget.NY.gov, the State's new fiscal transparency website. A dramatic reorganization of information technology services will help agencies manage the rapid pace of technological change and improve the way New York State interacts with and serves its citizens and businesses. The ongoing streamlining of the State's organizational structure will make government work better, thereby contributing to the State's ability to make new targeted investments.

Open New York and Open Budget

The Executive Budget supports Governor Cuomo's Open New York initiative with the launch of "Open Budget," a new website that provides unprecedented access to New York's budget information. Open Budget uses technology to promote transparency and enhance citizen engagement which will, in turn, foster improved government performance.

The Open Budget portal provides easy, single-stop access to substantial and detailed budget data. To support transparency and encourage participation in government, this site gives researchers, citizens, business, and the media direct access to high-value data – including large amounts of raw financial data – so these groups can apply their collective expertise to search, explore and analyze budget information, and even develop applications that allow the data to be used for new and innovative purposes. Open Budget presents a user-friendly picture of revenue and expenditures and contains lookup tools and other features that allow people to easily view and download current and historical budget information.

Transforming Information Technology Operations

In 2012, Governor Cuomo created the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS), to fold the State's significant information technology resources and expertise into a single agency. The consolidation is in keeping with the Governor's efforts to break down the traditional, rigid agency silos, where technology efforts were often duplicated and applications were rarely targeted to customer needs. With this change, the State will be well-situated to take advantage of evolving technology developments and provide better services to the public at a reduced cost to taxpayers.

As a first step in this consolidation, over 3,300 IT professionals from 37 agencies were transferred to ITS in November, 2012. Employees are now able to share expertise over many programs and can be quickly re-tasked to meet emerging needs. Skill shortages in one program can be addressed by redeploying staff from areas where needs are not as high.

Consolidation efforts will continue in 2013-14 as systems and services are realigned based on industry best practices. The State will adopt uniform IT standards across agencies, allowing New York to leverage our significant buying power to achieve optimal pricing. IT investments will flow through a common governance process to ensure they are targeted toward initiatives that will benefit users and the citizens who rely on State IT systems. Resources will be shared among agencies so that if an agency has invested in the development of an application, that technology will be available to every agency.

Reorganizing Government

New York has made significant progress in restructuring the State organizational chart, enacting many of the recommendations of the Spending and Government Efficiency (SAGE) Commission. These efforts have improved the performance, efficiency and accountability of State government.

The State is reducing the cost of back office operations, such as business services, real estate management, information technology, and call centers, by consolidating these efforts into a central location. State procurement reforms allow agencies and local governments to purchase common goods and services through centralized contracts that will save a projected \$755 million over five years. Consolidations and coordination among agencies with overlapping missions have advanced operational improvements through shared services and changes in service delivery mechanisms.

The transformation of State government continues through 2013-14. Reforms and Executive Budget actions will:

- **Implement the Justice Center.** The Executive Budget transitions Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (CQCAPD) operations to the Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs, by June 30, 2013. In 2012, landmark legislation was enacted creating the Justice Center. The core mission of the Justice Center will be to protect the health and safety of vulnerable individuals in the State's care by maintaining primary responsibility for tracking, investigating and pursuing serious abuse and neglect complaints about facilities and provider agencies that are operated, certified, or licensed by six agencies.
- **Improve DMV Customer Service.** The Executive Budget proposes a comprehensive customer service improvement initiative at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). DMV will improve the overall customer experience and reduce office wait times to 30 minutes or less by early 2014, as well as increase the number of transactions serviced outside of DMV offices by 50 percent. In addition, DMV will offer Saturday hours in certain offices to increase customer convenience.
- **Streamline Medicaid Administration.** The Executive Budget proposes the consolidation of all of the State's Medicaid administration activities into the Department of Health. Currently, multiple agencies play a role in administering the Medicaid program, despite the Federal requirement that there be one State Medicaid Agency. In 2013-14, all State Medicaid administrative functions (e.g., rate setting, negotiation of managed care contracts, claims processing) will be consolidated in DOH. This will standardize administrative practices, generate efficiencies, and free agencies to focus on Medicaid policy and the implications of Medicaid on their constituencies.

- **Streamline Administration of Homeless Housing Development to Speed the Completion of Projects.** The Executive Budget will transfer the \$30 million Homeless Housing Assistance Program – which finances construction of housing units for homeless individuals – from the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) to Homes and Community Renewal (HCR). Currently, programs to finance construction of homeless and affordable housing are managed by OTDA and HCR, often requiring developers to work with two separate agencies to complete a single project. With this transfer, affordable housing developers will have a single point of contact and oversight – making it easier to do business with the State and speeding completion of projects.
- **Reduce Welfare Fraud to Protect Critical Services.** The Executive Budget proposes to merge the Office of the Welfare Inspector General (OWIG) into the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). With focused leadership, a full complement of staff, and support resources from OIG, the State will complete more investigations and refer more cases for prosecution to eliminate and deter fraudulent welfare payments. Combatting welfare fraud saves taxpayer money and helps ensure the most efficient use of resources available to serve those in need.
- **Attract and Manage Talent.** The Governor’s Office of Employee Relations (GOER) will be merged with the Department of Civil Service to focus on an enterprise-wide, strategic approach to managing the State government workforce. This merger will create a single State Employee Workforce Development Center, combining the currently separate recruitment and training efforts of the two agencies under a single official. This function will be of increased importance as we continue to find new ways to improve government effectiveness. The merged entity will be tasked with ensuring that as the demand for certain functions declines, workers are trained for new positions.
- **Coordinate and Consolidate Lab Functions.** Beginning in 2013-14, the State will initiate a four year master plan that will leverage State lab activities for more focused research, create more opportunities for economic development, and help agencies maintain flat spending over the next two years. New York State’s public health and environmental labs are operated by five agencies (DOH, Ag&Markets, DEC, OPWDD and OMH), with overlapping functions, different standards and accreditation, and limited coordination in response to public health concerns.
- **Improve the Workforce Development System.** State agencies will adopt consistent and high performance standards for workforce training and development, in conjunction with and certified by the State Department of Labor (DOL). The current workforce development system fails to train individuals to fill existing job openings, and is not equipped to prepare New Yorkers for the jobs that will be in demand over the next five to ten years.
- **Coordinate Health Insurance Purchasing.** The New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) and the Department of Health (DOH) both negotiate and purchase health insurance on behalf of the State. Beginning in 2013-14, DOH and the Department of Civil Service will adopt common approaches to take advantage of efficiencies resulting from best practices, including the alignment of hospital cost reimbursement policies, the expansion of patient centered medical home models, and the promotion of evidence-based strategies to enhance wellness and reduce health care costs. Future annual savings of more than \$50 million may be possible when these agencies adopt a common purchasing strategy for medical services.

- **Improve Services to Veterans.** The New York Employment Services System will be expanded to serve as a centralized statewide case management system for services to veterans. The cost of conversion is estimated at \$200,000 in hardware-related expenses, all of which is expected to be covered by a Federal grant.
- **Consolidate Back Office Functions.** The Executive Budget will consolidate disparate State agency print facilities into designated anchor facilities, based on proximity and common printing capability. This will reduce the number of print shops by 63 percent (from 24 to 9), and improve services and consistency while capturing State savings. The Budget will also consolidate warehouse functions, beginning with new policies to ensure a sound and reliable inventory system.