



Illinois Transforms Procurement and Saves

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In a statewide effort to increase efficiencies, standardize procedures, and bring transparency to government, the State of Illinois redesigned the purchasing function and formed the Bureau of Strategic Sourcing and Procurement (BOSSAP).

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State's redesigned procurement and savings strategies support government policies

By Katherine K. Frisch, Editor

As part of an effort to improve the effectiveness of state government, the State of Illinois has streamlined operations and services. Cost reductions, increased transparency of services and results, and improved accountability have led the effort to transform the state into a coordinated enterprise-wide organization. In addition, standardized processes and procedures have produced better service at lower prices, created the foundation for sustained productivity, and furthered government policies.

State Takes Steps Towards Savings

In 2003, Illinois Governor Rod R. Blagojevich instructed the Department of Central Management Services (CMS) to analyze the state's key functions and implement changes that would lead to greater efficiency and accountability. The McKinsey & Company consultancy was brought in to introduce strategic sourcing to the state's decentralized purchasing department. With the aid of McKinsey, CMS began to pursue a shared-services model that would reduce duplicated effort and, ultimately, coordinate statewide delivery of similar functions and services. In response to the governor's mandate, the Procurement Initiative was launched, and the resulting redesigned procurement organization became known as the Bureau of Strategic Sourcing and Procurement (BOSSAP).

The effort included programs for procurement, employee benefits, information technology (IT) and telecommunications, facilities management, internal audit, legal services, media services, and fleet management.

By August 2004, CMS began implementing improved procurement procedures for all agencies, boards, and commissions under the jurisdiction of the governor. In addition, new positions and responsibilities were established (see below).

To introduce BOSSAP and ensuing improvements, CMS held detailed presentations to discuss the new organization and answer questions. Comprehensive training sessions on new processes and procedural changes were made available to all. Existing staff was required to attend role-specific training sessions, such as negotiation strategy and reading financial statements. New personnel hired within BOSSAP were, and are, required to attend sessions on the state's "center-led" procurement processes.

To further support the reorganization efforts, the Call Center was created to address basic questions or direct agency users and vendors to the person best suited to respond.

"The Call Center is a key element of the BOSSAP strategy of being a shared procurement resource," says Mike Smith, Deputy Director, CMS. "The center ensures that anyone who needs procurement guidance can get access as quickly and efficiently as possible."

Illinois Improves Procurement Processes and Procedures

