

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE**



STRATEGIC PLAN





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A NOTE FROM DIRECTOR FURCOLO

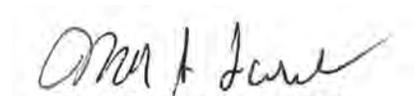
About the Department of Revenue (DOR)

The Rhode Island Department of Revenue oversees programs that help drive the state's economy and which fund services that affect the lives of Rhode Islanders every day. Created by the General Assembly in 2006, the Department of Revenue includes; the Rhode Island Lottery, the Division of Motor Vehicles, the Division of Municipal Finance, the Division of Taxation, the Office of Revenue Analysis, and the Central Collections Unit. Those units manage 1.7 million driver's licenses and vehicle registrations, process more than 2.5 million tax filings annually and will generate in excess of \$3.0 billion in revenue in Fiscal Year 2020 - approximately one-third of the state's annual budget.

Along with their revenue collection duties, the Department's 602 employees vigilantly maintain the security of the private information of state residents and businesses. They do that by adhering to the highest level of ethical conduct and respect of the public's trust, and are open, accountable and responsive to the needs of those they serve.

In addition, departmental initiatives are directed at improving the quality of services provided to the business community and residents of Rhode Island at large. We are committed to making it easier for residents and businesses to access the services they need to not only comply with the law, but to succeed and thrive in Rhode Island.

We hope that our efforts serve you well and we look forward to working with you, and for you.



Mark Furcolo, Director
State of Rhode Island
Department of Revenue



THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE (DOR)

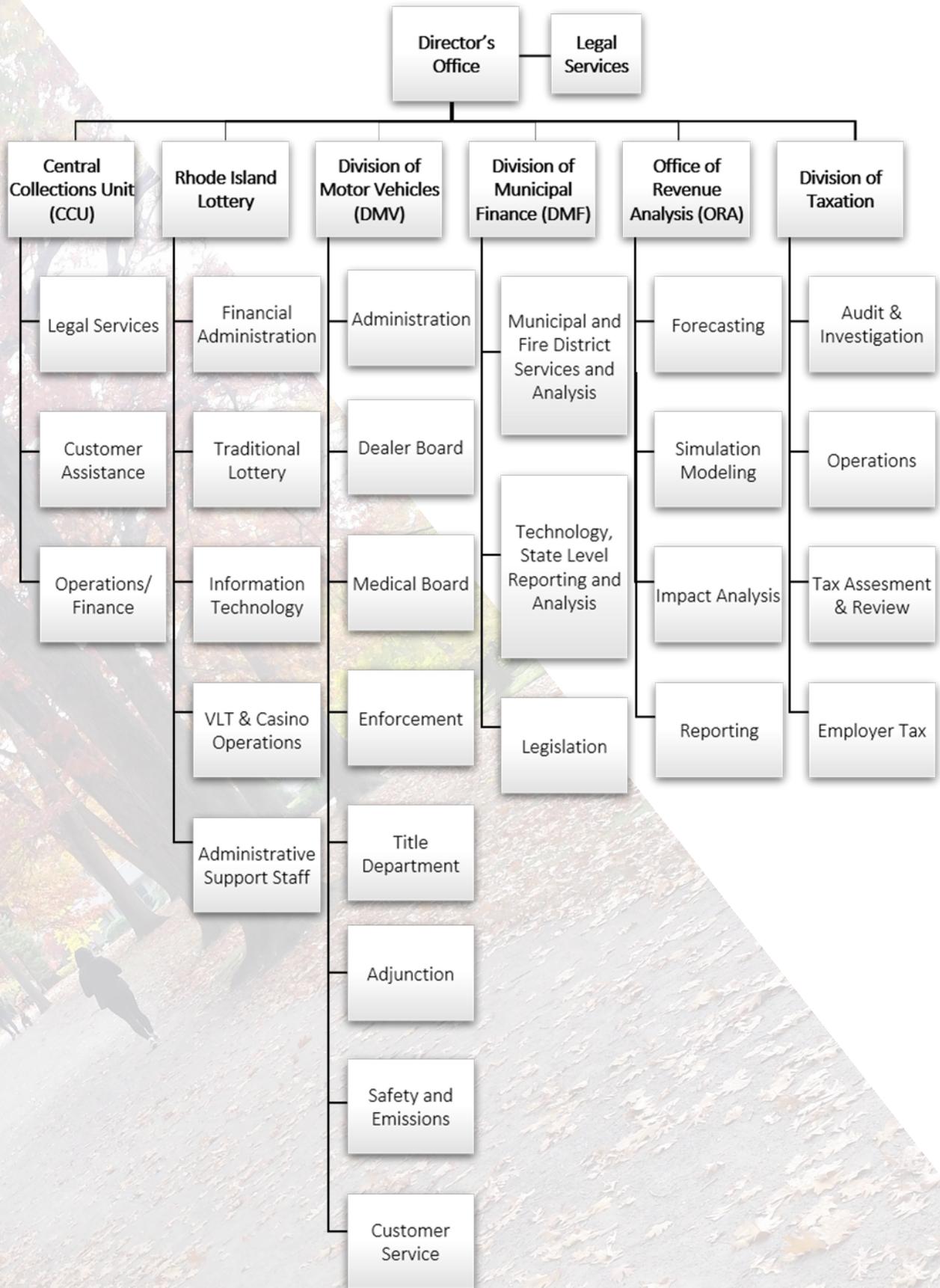
About the Department of Revenue

The Rhode Island Department of Revenue is a cabinet-level state government agency in Rhode Island which is responsible for ensuring the proper functioning of state government through the collection and distribution of state revenue, operation of the state lottery, oversight of municipal finance, and administration of state laws governing driver licensing, motor vehicle sales and motor vehicle registration. The State of Rhode Island Department of Revenue (DOR) employs over 600 employees across several key divisions including the Division of Municipal Finance, Division of Motor Vehicles, Office of Revenue Analysis, Central Collections Unit, Lottery, Division of Taxation, and Revenue Director's Office.

The mission of the Department of Revenue is to administer its programs and consistently execute the laws and regulations with integrity and accountability, thereby instilling public confidence in the work performed by the Department. As Department of Revenue employees, we adhere to the highest level of ethical conduct, and are open, accountable and responsive to the needs of those we serve.



DOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Purpose of Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is a comprehensive and systematic management tool that helps organizations assess the current environment, anticipate and respond appropriately to changes in the environment, envision the future, increase effectiveness, develop commitment to the organization mission and achieve consensus on strategies and objectives for achieving that mission.

Over the past 40 years, strategic planning has become increasingly widespread among governments and public agencies. Strategic planning requires all stakeholders reflect on the organization's vision, mission and fundamental values, and then define measurable strategic objectives for the whole organization. Clearly defined and articulated strategies help ensure that the organization's priority initiatives are given the best treatment.

Due to the variety of services provided by the Department and the expanse of coverage, effective cross-division coordination is indispensable for the Department of Revenue. The strategic plan provides a forum for senior staff, management leaders and administrators to reflect on division specific operational considerations alongside constituent needs and reach consensus on prioritized issues.

Methodology

The 2020 strategic plan was developed through a series of consultations with senior staff designed to understand the current situation of each division, identify goals and priorities for the coming year, and address strategic issues and concerns. The consultations were conducted through both online surveys and in-person meetings, and can be divided into 5 stages:

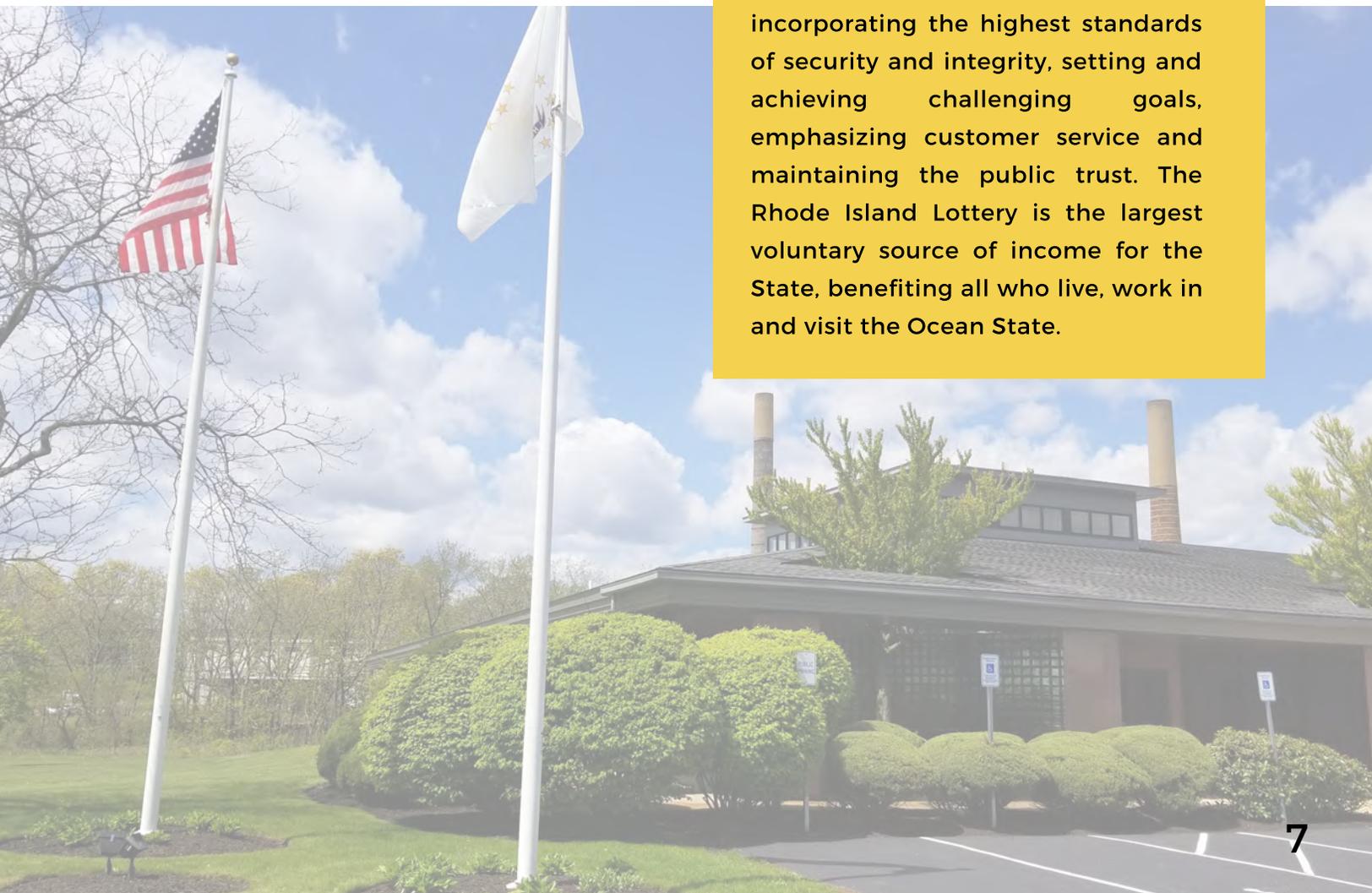


THE RHODE ISLAND LOTTERY



About The Lottery

The Rhode Island Lottery (Lottery, or The Lot) employs over 100 men and women to operate and oversee all aspects of Lottery operations and gaming in the State. The mission of the Rhode Island Lottery is to generate revenue for the State of Rhode Island through the responsible management and sale of entertaining Lottery products while incorporating the highest standards of security and integrity, setting and achieving challenging goals, emphasizing customer service and maintaining the public trust. The Rhode Island Lottery is the largest voluntary source of income for the State, benefiting all who live, work in and visit the Ocean State.



Mission

The Rhode Island Lottery is committed to generating revenue for the State of Rhode Island through the responsible management and sale of entertaining Lottery products. The Rhode Island Lottery will incorporate the highest standards of security and integrity, set and achieve challenging goals, and provide quality customer service and care.



Values

Integrity and Responsibility

We work hard to maintain the public trust by protecting and ensuring the security of our Lottery games, systems, drawings and operational facilities. We value and require ethical behavior by our employees, licensees and vendors. We promote the integrity of gaming in Rhode Island for the benefit of all Rhode Islanders.

Innovation

We strive to incorporate innovation into our products to provide the citizens of Rhode Island with the best entertainment experience available through our products. We pursue the use of technology that enhances the services that we provide to our customers and reduces our operating expenses.

Fiscal Accountability

We emphasize fiscal accountability by ensuring that all expenditures directly or indirectly generate revenue, enhance security, fulfill regulatory requirements, improve customer service and/or boost productivity.

Customer Responsiveness

We take pride in providing exemplary service to the people of Rhode Island through the courteous dissemination of clear and accurate information about our products, services and regulatory functions.

Excellence

We strive for excellence by taking a position of leadership on issues that impact the Lottery and achieve challenging goals by focusing on our core values.

What We Do

The Rhode Island Lottery (Lottery) was created under the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island in 1974 to operate lottery games to generate revenues for the state. The Lottery:

- Promotes and sells tickets for on-line games (e.g. Daily Numbers), Keno, and instant games (e.g. scratch tickets.)
- Operates all aspects of casino gaming (e.g. poker tables, sports betting, video lottery terminals) at the Twin River Casino Hotel and Tiverton Casino Hotel.
- Promotes responsible play.



Strategic Issues

Strategic Issue 1: Optimizing revenue by offering a broad variety of games that appeal to our diverse consumer base while ensuring the security of all gaming activities and promoting responsible play.

The Lottery serves a number of internal and external customers/ stakeholders. The primary internal stakeholders of the Rhode Island Lottery include our knowledgeable and experienced staff along with the Rhode Island Department of Revenue. While this group is primarily comprised of administrative and core function employees, our external partner groups are indispensable and critical to our success. These include: Lottery retailers, the Tiverton Casino Hotel, the Twin River Casino Hotel, our central system provider (IGT), our technology providers (i.e. IGT, Bally, Everi), casino gaming customers, Lottery players, cities/towns, branches of Rhode Island state government, and various other state agencies (i.e. the Rhode Island State Police, Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General, Rhode Island Department of Business Regulation, Rhode Island Division of Taxation, Rhode Island Department of Labor & Training, and Office of Child Support Services.)

Rhode Islanders benefit from the conduct of gaming and its generation of net revenue contributions to the state from associated Lottery activities that serve the public good. In addition, the Lottery remains respectful of, and sensitive to, the impact on those individuals who may have gambling problems when considering gaming operations. The Lottery operates and manages all aspects of legal gaming in the State of Rhode Island including casino gaming activities, (video lottery, table games, and sports betting) development, testing, and implementation of fun and

entertaining products consistent with the highest levels of service, integrity, and public accountability. All aspects of gaming are regulated and monitored to protect the public by making sure that the games are conducted with the utmost security. The accurate, timely dissemination of financial and operational information is paramount in the spirit of cooperation and transparency.

Objectives developed to address this issue include:

1. Positioning Lottery for product development and operational growth.

Our staff oversee the development of new games and enhancements to existing games, evaluate the performance of current product offerings and research data. They work with the marketing staff to coordinate research that provides the Lottery with information about market conditions and player opinions, so that the Lottery can respond to the dynamic nature of its customer base.

In addition, there is a great deal of coordination between advertising and promotions to ensure that the necessary level of advertising and promotional support is present to make Rhode Island Lottery games successful. Marketing staff members are responsible for a broad range of activities designed to improve the public's perception of and participation in the Lottery's games. Staff conducts consumer research and product development, procures television, radio, Internet, social media, and point-of-sale advertising, and oversees public and media relations. The Marketing Department's continued relationship with other Lotteries, staying current with the continuous changes in social media, technology, familiarity with the Lottery's retailer network, and being able to attend industry trainings and seminars, help ensure the Lottery's marketing and advertising programs continue to be both cost efficient and effective.

2. Capitalizing on our network of retailers.

The Lottery will continue to identify prospective Lottery retailers and recruit them to sell Lottery products to grow the retail network while maintaining the current retailer base. The Lottery promotes the benefits of selling Lottery products to various trade-styles in the marketplace while increasing the retail network with proven trade-styles and new trade-styles also helping overall Lottery sales. Efforts to expand internal and external Lottery exposure in retail locations and improve visibility/display of Lottery products, and point-of-sale materials are important to our cause. Improved merchandising/awareness of Lottery products stimulates

customer purchases to help increase sales. The Lottery will continue to develop retailer sales incentive programs to reward retailers for meeting defined sales goals while increasing revenue contributions to the State. Staff answer questions about retailer licensing, retailer accounting and general regulatory issues. In addition, they ensure retailers are well-stocked and track sales. Questions are also received from the general public, players and callers are directed to other sources if their questions are not related to one of these subject areas. Staff also communicates with retailers, game players and the general public via email and written correspondence. Further tracking, routing, and responding to correspondence and ensuring timely responses on matters directed to the Lottery are carried out.

3. Implementing the optimal game mix based on consumer preferences and game profitability.

Our staff coordinates with print vendors on issues including game concepts, new game recommendations, game production schedules, and other issues as necessary. Such a rapport is necessary as we conduct broad scope operational and/or product specific analysis, and review product performance measures. Game development involves the development and review of game prize structures, working papers and game profiles for various Lottery products. Continued collaboration and cooperation with these providers helps Lottery design and develop gaming products with strong player appeal and lasting value.

Strategic Issue 2: Furthering traditional gaming through system modernization and operational improvements.

The Rhode Island Lottery consistently seeks to incorporate innovation into our products to provide customers with the best entertainment experience available. We will pursue the use of technology to enhance our services by:

1. Incorporating igaming and internet sales of Lottery products.

We strive to diversify our sales channels and product portfolio which is designed to ensure ongoing revenue sources are sustainable to avoid market and economic downturns. We embrace technology with modernization being key to our ability to compete, remain relevant to our constituents, and deliver maximum revenue to our beneficiaries – the citizens of Rhode Island. In addition to convenience, technology will improve privacy and security, which are paramount to public trust.

Therefore, our strategies will orient towards and actively support the Lottery's digital transformation. The Rhode Island Lottery strives to build and nurture partnerships with stakeholder individuals, agencies, organizations, and businesses through continued outreach efforts. Appropriately promoting and highlighting these relationships and partnerships can help achieve and maintain positive public value.

Strategic Issue 3: Leveraging the Lottery brand with a focus on linked advertising and social media in an effort to maximize sales revenue.

The Rhode Island Lottery's marketing planning is focused on getting the most for our marketing dollars through continued tailoring and adjusting strategy to meet our intended audiences by:

1. Continuing to enhance and use social media to advance sales, engage Lottery customers, enhance customer relationships, and increase public understanding and support for the Lottery brand.

The Rhode Island Lottery will continue expansion of its website player registration and brand interactive site to include mobile and desktop access along with Lottery apps. In addition, we will expand webcasting of commercials and winner videos to increase awareness of games, promotions, and prizes available as well as awarded. The Rhode Island Lottery will maintain an exchange of information with player customers via website feedback, player forums, promotions, and customer service activities with validations, sales, and marketing staff. We will also continue with our current partnerships (i.e. Patriots, URI, PC, Providence Bruins) with a focus on special interest groups.

2. Developing marketing strategies to encompass both online and traditional Lottery customer interests without altering the successful Lottery-retailer partnership.

The Rhode Island Lottery continues to initiate and respond to change, to create competitive advantages, to minimize our risks, and to improve efficiency and effectiveness while sustaining performance. We maintain player confidence and trust in the integrity of the Lottery while maintaining and enforcing strict standards regarding the integrity of our games, drawings, information inquiries, continued enhancement of the Play Responsibly program while raising awareness of problem gambling and availability of help services.

Strategic Issue 4: Exercising proactive public relations leveraged through thoughtful processes reaching stakeholders and communities with a message promoting responsible play.

The Lottery promotes responsible use of products by working with all stakeholders in areas of responsible gaming awareness and education.

Objectives the Lottery is pursuing to address this strategic issue include:

1. Identifying stakeholders that can support the responsible gaming effort.

The Rhode Island Lottery is committed to educating players about important game-related information and encouraging them to play responsibly. The Play Responsibly public information initiative reminds consumers that the Rhode Island Lottery encourages conscientious and responsible participation in its games. The Lottery posts the Play Responsibly message in all public communications, including how-to-play brochures, retailer and player publications, point-of-sale materials, instant and on-line game tickets, and news releases.

The Lottery's Problem Gambling Program Manager represents the Lottery as an active member with the Rhode Island Council on Problem Gambling (RICPG), and membership with the National Council on Problem Gambling, Northeast Consortium of Problem Gambling Councils, and Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators. Our Problem Gambling Services Program contracts with twenty-six (26) providers. Its intake is centralized, which enables people who call the helpline to learn whether they may be seen within twenty-four (24) hours of their initial call.

Group therapy, as well as support groups are also available and are part of the cadre of services offered. In addition, our program is expanding to several college/university campuses in Rhode Island and will provide education on how to identify someone having problems with gambling and how to make a referral to the program.

The goal of the Rhode Island Lottery's advertising and promotion efforts is to responsibly reach and communicate with adult Rhode Islanders to enhance awareness and participation in Lottery games.

The Lottery makes considerable efforts to appropriately and effectively allocate its advertising dollars to reach the public, optimize revenue and enhance awareness

of games. Advertising efforts include creative concepts, production, planning, buying and placement of electronic, print and outdoor advertising and social media, as well as brand management and creation of a communications strategy. Marketing oversees and manages promotional events, along with the procurement and distribution of promotional products for the Lottery. With its winner awareness efforts, the Rhode Island Lottery generates publicity for winners of large jackpots and other draw game prizes, as well as instant ticket merchandise and cash prize winners.

Strategic Issue 5: Providing continuous service to residents through oversight and security of Lottery games, systems, drawings, and gaming facilities.

Maintaining public confidence in the security and integrity of the Rhode Island Lottery is a core value that is supported by several key initiatives, including:

1. Reviewing existing practices and adjusting, or implementing, processes that ensure Lottery security and integrity as necessary.

The Lottery collects revenue from a variety of sources: Lottery ticket sales, table games proceeds, video lottery, and sports betting. A key aspect of maintaining public confidence is providing assurance that Lottery operations and performance are of the highest standards. This includes not only the functions performed by the Lottery, but also the functions performed on behalf of the Lottery through contracted relationships. The Lottery contracts with outside vendors to provide for the support and operation of the Lottery's central, and sports betting systems, instant ticket printing, as well as equipment for table games/video lottery terminal operations and financial reporting of such operations.

2. Reviewing existing practices and adjusting, or implementing, processes and procedures that protect Lottery assets as necessary.

Maintaining public confidence in the security and integrity of the Rhode Island Lottery is a core value that is supported by several key initiatives. The Lottery continues to expand existing programs and initiatives to protect and enhance the security of its Lottery games, systems, drawings, operational facilities, and casinos. The goal is to provide protection for Lottery consumers, follow up on complaints, ensure retailers comply with rules, and gaming is conducted in accordance with all promulgated rules and laws as mandated.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: MOBILE SPORTS BETTING

Overview

Introduced in November of 2018, Rhode Island was the first state in New England to introduce sports betting at its casinos. Building on the success of this program, the Lottery recently launched an additional channel through which residents could place their sports bets at the casinos: a mobile sports betting app.

Program details

Last year, two locations in Rhode Island began to offer on-site sports betting: the Twin River Casino Hotel and Tiverton Casino Hotel.

On September 5, 2019, the Rhode Island Lottery introduced Rhode Island Sports Book, an app that allows user to bet on live-games all from the comfort of their home. Through the app, Rhode Island residents now have the ability to wage on various teams across different competitive games, including but not limited to football, soccer, basketball and baseball.

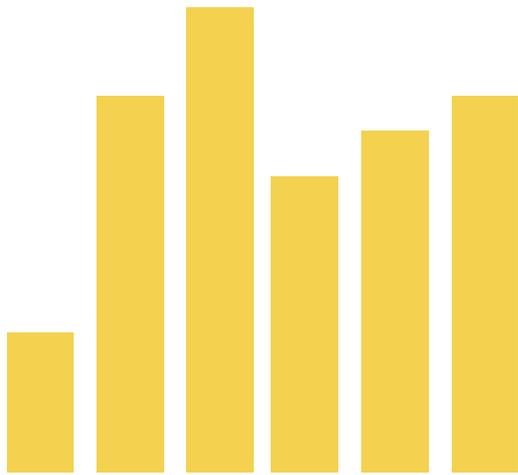
The Rhode Island Lottery worked with its partners in the sportsbook operation, Rhode Island-based companies IGT and Twin River Worldwide Holdings Inc., along with William Hill, following enactment of legislation requiring the start of statewide mobile sports betting in 2019.

The mobile application expands on the sports betting operations that commenced Nov. 26, 2018 at the Twin River Casino Hotel in Lincoln, followed at Tiverton Casino Hotel on Dec. 3, 2018.

Benefits

- **Reduction of Wait Times for On-site Wagers.** Due to the popularity of sport betting, queues to place sports bets sometimes form at the facilities. The introduction of a mobile app helps ease congestion onsite by providing an alternative channel through which customers can place bets.
 - **Convenience.** After registering for the app onsite, any person over the age of 18 will be able to place bets any time from the convenience of their mobile device when in the State.
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THE DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES



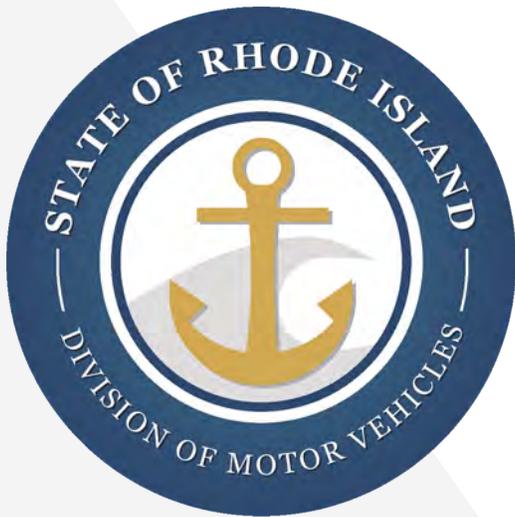
Over 1,700,000

Active licenses and registrations are maintained by the Rhode Island DMV

About DMV

The Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV, or Division) is a governmental agency within the Department of Revenue of the State of Rhode Island. Under the direction of the Administrator, the DMV administers motor vehicle and transportation related laws, specifically motor vehicle titling, registration and licensing laws, transportation safety laws, motor vehicle franchise dealer and manufacturer laws, and other motor vehicle-related laws and regulations. Responsibilities administered by the Division include motor vehicle registration, testing for the licensing of motor vehicle operators, inspection of motor vehicles, enforcement of laws relating to the issuance, suspension, and revocation of motor vehicle registrations and driver's licenses, and administration of the financial responsibility program.





Mission

The Division of Motor Vehicles is responsible for ensuring consistent administration and enforcement of all laws pertaining to the operation and registration of motor vehicles and is committed to providing excellent customer service with integrity and transparency.

Values

- Provide expedient customer service in all DMV transactions.
 - Provide simple and effective methods and procedures for customers to easily complete transactions whether in-person or through expanded online services.
 - Act as an educational public resource for the general population on topics related to DMV operations.
 - Ensure that contemporary and practical rules, regulations, and laws are enacted and enforced for the safe operation of vehicles on our roads.
 - Improve employee morale and motivate staff members.
 - Maintain the Division's status as a resource for state lawmakers, agencies, and the Governor's Office.
-

What We Do

Work performed by the Rhode Island Division of Motor Vehicles includes, but is not limited to:

- Regulation and enforcement of laws relating to the issuance, suspension and revocation of motor vehicle registration and drivers' licenses.
- Vehicle safety and emission inspection and insurance governance.
- Business licensing and regulation of new and used car dealerships through the oversight of the Motor Vehicle Dealers Licensing and Hearing Board.
- Administration of testing for a motor vehicle operator's permit, commercial driver's license (CDL), or driver's license.





Strategic Issues

Strategic Issue 1: Enhancing the DMV's existing off-site service capacity.

One of the major goals of the DMV is to provide excellent service to customers. By providing onsite and online services, the DMV aims to help customers process their vehicle registration transactions, credential applications, commercial transactions and more. To reach the highest level of customer satisfaction, DMV pursues initiatives intended to manage transaction times and mitigate customer wait times.

Objectives designed to address this strategic issue include:

1. Introducing new online self-service channels.

According to a walk-in customer survey conducted in 2017, as many as 18% of customers are unaware of the DMV's online service offerings. To reduce the walk-in wait times, the DMV pursues a variety of initiatives intended to increase awareness of online transactions.

The DMV's strategic plan includes the following initiatives intended to increase the number of customers using the Division's online services:

- Adding new online service options; and
- Reviewing online transaction error messaging.

2. Introducing new in-person self-service channels.

The DMV is assessing the benefits of increasing self-service options, including kiosks, to improve the customer experience. Broader self-service options would allow customers to process transactions at times that are convenient to them, thereby eliminating the need for some visits to DMV or AAA offices. The DMV expects such initiatives would reduce wait times and raise customer satisfaction.

These initiatives are expected to provide customers more convenience by reducing the chances that they need to visit a DMV office in-person to complete their transactions.

Strategic Issue 2: Improving customer preparedness and awareness through the modification of existing DMV public resources and processes.

Having customers come prepared before they visit DMV is one of the most effective ways to improve the transaction processing time and to reduce customer wait times. Customers who are prepared are less likely to need a return visit. According to recent surveys, more than 13% of customers do not prepare for their DMV visits and nearly 14% of transactions weren't able to be completed due to incomplete documentation.

The 2020 strategic plan includes, but is not limited to, the following initiatives intended to help customers to be more prepared for their visit.

1. Establishing accessible feedback tools.

While surveying visitors is one way that the DMV can obtain feedback from its customers, most customers who complete transactions online may not have the opportunity to participate in onsite surveys. It's important for the DMV to implement more-accessible feedback tools for customers to submit their feedback to the agency to gauge needs and recommendations, such as online submission tools.

2. Simplifying customer requirements.

Another way to improve process efficiency is to simplify the transaction procedures for the customers to make them more easily accessible and well-understood. Ensuring that instructions and DMV processes are easy to understand and follow can help to mitigate repeat visits to the DMV offices and the time spent by customer service representatives correcting customer errors.

Objectives designed to address this issue include:

- Improving website organization;
- Developing online tools to help customers find the information they need;
- Incorporating common questions and feedback into existing FAQs; and
- Revising forms and document checklists for greater accessibility.

These activities are expected to make the process of preparing for DMV visits more streamlined for customers, reducing the need for return visits due to missing or incomplete materials.

Strategic Issue 3: Incorporating emerging technologies and best practices in data management into DMV workflows to ensure consistent and efficient application and enforcement of state and federal law.

The legal branch of DMV's administrative office ensures that each unit within the Division follows state regulations, local rules, and federal laws. To ensure that DMV data is both up-to-date and is properly propagated and executed on throughout the agency, the DMV administration incorporates new technology initiatives into its annual strategic plan to enable law review and enforcement efficiencies in DMV operations.

Objectives designed to address this issue include:

1. Evaluating current laws, policies, regulations, rules, etc.

An accurate understanding of the current laws and regulations is the premise upon which policy is established for units within the DMV. Regular reviews of current federal and state laws ensure DMV is in compliance with the latest practices. The strategic plan includes the following initiatives intended to ensure the DMV is following the federal and state law and incorporating best practices in enforcement into its work streams:

-
- Establishing a working group to conduct an annual review of best practices, legislation, etc., from other states and through the AAMVA; and
 - Having senior staff attend AAMVA conferences to stay apprised of best practices.

By having a working group conduct best-practice reviews and attend conferences, DMV staff can develop a more accurate understanding of laws and regulations and can learn from the experience of other states/stakeholders in implementing similar practices.

2. Utilizing current technologies available to ensure that problem drivers are identified and restricted from operating motor vehicles.

Taking advantage of new technology is an essential tool for DMV staff and can be utilized to prevent misconduct and ensure efficient execution of the law. Updated technology systems ensure all citizens are safe while operating vehicles. The DMV is phasing in the State-to-State (S2S) technology, which is designed to enhance and speed information-sharing among motor-vehicle registries across the country.

3. Enhancing data integrity.

The DMV hosts one of the largest state databases and dedicates various resources to ensure that monitoring of incoming data follows best practices and the staff is properly trained to conduct business to ensure the integrity of the data held by the DMV. Auditing helps the DMV to maintain data integrity and monitor the system for fraud.

The 2020 strategic plan includes, but is not limited to, the following initiatives intended to enhance data integrity:

- Establishing an audit working group;
- Formalizing annual audit calendar procedures; and
- Continuing to enhance fraud-prevention training provided for DMV staff.

Enhanced auditing and inspection capacity is necessary for DMV to correctly store and analyze data. Audit procedures ensure enhanced data accuracy and provide an additional layer of security to existing measures.

Strategic Issue 4: Ensuring staffing and facility levels are adequate to meet customer volume and maintain reasonable wait times.

Adequate staffing and well-maintained facilities are critical components of ensuring efficacious customer service. As a part of its strategic plan, the DMV

is pursuing several initiatives intended to improve customer flow and DMV staffing procedures.

Objectives designed to address this strategic issue include:

1. Monitoring and maintaining necessary staffing levels.

Staffing levels are a critical component of the customer experience. To ensure wait times are not dramatically affected by these fluctuations in customer volume, it's necessary to maintain and adjust staffing levels as demand increases.

The plan includes the following initiatives intended to increase the staffing supply to meet with the customer demand:

- Maintaining continuous recruitment and selection of Customer Service Representatives (CSRs); and
- Conducting quarterly reviews of DMV staffing plan for number of staff needed.

These activities are expected to help DMV improve customer service by increasing its labor force and reducing the customer wait time.

2. Regulating demand through the expansion of reservation programs.

In October 2017, the DMV implemented reservation in the Adjudication Offices, where substantial service gains were observed. The average wait time for all Adjudication transactions was reduced from (1:15:00) to 00:39:00 minutes.

In April 2019, the DMV began offering reservations to Commercial Drivers License (CDL) holders. The agency is developing a pilot reservation program to reservations will be offered for general transactions. Some of the objectives of this program include, but are not limited to:

- Decreasing wait times;
- Increasing customer preparedness; and
- Gaining staffing efficiencies.

Strategic Issue 5: Effectively developing and implementing legislative and executives mandates.

A significant piece of what the DMV does is implement initiatives, programs or policies required by state or federal mandates. Examples of such legislative and executive mandates to be executed in the upcoming 1-5 years include:

1. REAL ID

In October 2020, per federal regulation, a REAL ID or valid passport will be required to board domestic air flights and to enter secure federal facilities. In December 2018, the RI DMV successfully implemented this change in RIMS and continues to monitor program progress, making improvements when needed.

Federal REAL ID regulations require customers visit a DMV office to provide original identity documents. The DMV will experience an exponentially higher number of customer visits at all branches.

2. STATE to STATE (S2S)

Part of the REAL ID mandate is State-to-State (S2S) technology ,which enables states to share driver data to increase security and compliance with state law regarding out-of-state transfers. On June 1, 2019, the DMV launched this technology upgrade and continues to refine the system, which includes working closely with other states.

3. Plate Reissuance

Per state law, the RI DMV is required to to start issuing new standard or 'stock' plates with a new design no later than June 2020. This mandate requires changes in the DMV computer system (RIMS) along with securing a vendor and developing a project plan to distribute the plates, collect the additional fees and manage the returned mail.

4. Non-binary Gender Options for Credentials

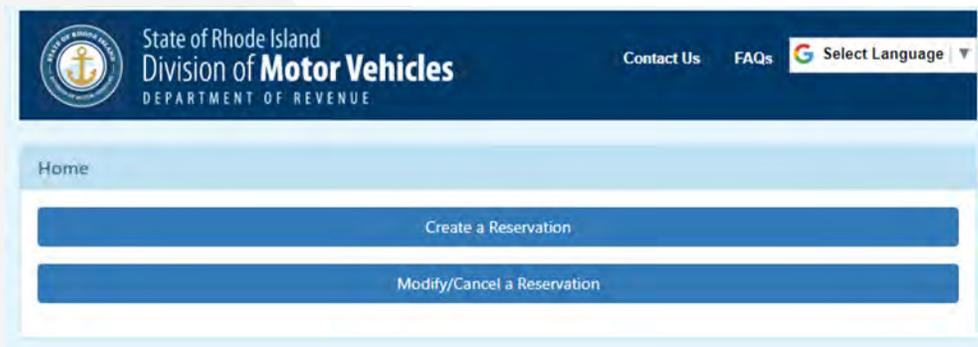
One of the Raimondo Administration's initiatives is for the state to offer a third, nonbinary, gender option on state-issued credentials. This option requires significant development within the DMV computer system.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: DMV RESERVATIONS

Overview

As of August 2019, there were 864,449 registered vehicles and 848,804 credentials in the State of Rhode Island. The DMV is the governmental agency that processes these transactions. It is one of the few state agencies with which every Rhode Islander needs to interact at least once in their lifetime whether for a license, identification card, or vehicle registration.

To improve the quality of the in-person services provided by the DMV, the DMV is currently in the process of planning an expansion of the existing reservation system to help shorten wait times for customers.



Program Details

October 2017, the DMV first implemented reservation in the Adjudication Office, where substantial service gains were observed. The average wait time for all Adjudication transactions were reduced from one 1:15:00 to 00:39:00.

In April 2019, the DMV began offering reservations to Commercial Drivers License (CDL) holders. The agency is developing a pilot reservation program to offer reservations for general transactions.

Benefits

- **Reducing onsite wait times:** by providing for a predictable customer stream, the reservation system helps ensure staffing meets customer expectations, and mitigates wait times.
- **Increasing online transactions:** online customers will be directed to web services when available to reduce office visits.
- **Improving customer preparedness:** By creating a coordinated preparation checklist for reservation customers, DMV can improve the customer experience by reducing potential errors and the necessity for return visits.

THE DIVISION OF MUNICIPAL FINANCE

About DMF

The Division of Municipal Finance (DMF, or Division) is a governmental agency within the Rhode Island Department of Revenue. Under the guidance of the state's laws and regulations, DMF assists in the development of policy and provides guidance to and about municipalities for its stakeholders, which include municipalities, fire districts, the Governor's Office, state legislators, other state agencies, local associations, and the public.



Apart from providing guidance, the Division is responsible for:

- Calculations related to municipal state aid and reimbursement programs;
- Operating and providing useful data through the Municipal Transparency Portal and the Division's website;
- Staffing state oversight under the Fiscal Stability Act;
- Monitoring and reporting on compliance with municipal tax levy cap as well as granting exemptions;
- Receiving, processing, analyzing, and approving of municipal, school district, and fire district financial reporting;
- Providing technical assistance to municipalities and assessor;
- Calculating the relative wealth of municipalities;
- Monitoring, reporting, and providing fiscal impacts on proposed and enacted legislative changes; and
- Reporting on legislative mandates.

Mission

The Division of Municipal Finance's mission is to fulfill its mandates in an efficient and timely manner while providing guidance to municipalities and their stakeholders in matters relating to property taxes, state aid, and local fiscal stability. We promote the highest standards in local government transparency, fiscal policy, and decision-making by serving as a conduit for information and education for taxpayers, government officials, and the public.

Values

- Provide accurate information on mandates and fulfill fiduciary roles with emphasis on analysis.
 - Monitor, analyze, and provide guidance regarding legislative initiatives to stakeholders.
 - Take advantage of technological improvements to enhance the vision and mission of DMF.
 - Provide stakeholders with valued content.
 - Provide tools and knowledge to enable municipalities and fire districts to manage their fiscal stability.
-

What We Do

- Monitor the compliance of fire districts and municipalities with applicable state law.
- Provide assistance and training to municipal employees, tax assessors, and other key community stakeholders.
- Compile and analyze data, municipal collective bargaining agreements, local pension actuarial reports, other post-employment benefit actuarial reports, and annual financial reports.
- Administer and maintain coding structures utilized by municipalities for financial reporting and property tax assessments.
- Review, calculate, and distribute various forms of state aid and reimbursements.
- Operate and maintain the Municipal Transparency Portal.
- Review and approve of municipal requests regarding statutory levy caps and related disclosures.
- Produce and distribute various reports, reference documents, briefings, guidance documents, and aid tables as mandated under state law.
- Produce fiscal notes on relevant municipal proposals as requested.
- Provide positions to legislature on proposed legislation.
- Provide assistance and oversight to financially challenged municipalities and other political subdivisions in order to promote fiscal stability within the state.



Strategic Issues

Strategic Issue 1: Synergizing the dual roles of our unit, one of calculating and analyzing data to distribute aid programs and the second of providing financially challenged municipalities and other political sub-divisions with assistance and oversight.

Under state laws and regulations, the Division of Municipal Finance is charged with providing assistance and oversight to financially challenged municipalities and other political sub-divisions in order to promote fiscal stability as well as producing useful and reliable data and reports for stakeholders.

The Division has a wealth of data available to assist municipalities and hopes to promote efficiencies that will assist with synergizing the dual roles of the unit to improve operations to better serve taxpayers, government officials and the public.

Objectives designed to address this strategic issue include:

1. Developing cross-functional knowledge

Cross training is beneficial for the Division of Municipal Finance because it offers more flexibility for management and increases productivity by expanding the functional coverage of each employee. The training will also help promote a collaborative culture within the Division, as employees start to take on multiple roles and understand one another better. On the other hand, cross training provides employees with more advancement opportunities and a higher level of job satisfaction. Due to the wide array of duties that the Division performs, it is essential that the Division implements cross training effectively to ensure timely and efficient completion of tasks.

Activities proposed for this objective include:

- **Holding subject matter expert presentations and work groups.** This allows employees to learn from others who can share their experience in performing their own work duties while also helping to develop staff presentation skills and materials for future distribution.
- **Reviewing workflows to identify areas of cross-sectional relevance, then developing a schedule of exchange meetings to ensure institutional alignment across personnel.** By reviewing workflows, management seeks to identify workflows that utilize shared resources or pertain to similar content areas to then provide opportunities for information exchange for staff working on projects with common interests to ensure internal alignment regarding existing resources and communications.

2. Fulfilling mandates in a timely and accurate manner.

The Division of Municipal Finance's mission is to fulfill its mandates under state law in a timely and efficient manner. The Division regards maintaining the high quality of its work as a critical priority. Therefore, the Division will continue providing municipalities and stakeholders with useful information and assistance, and identifying methods that can help improve DMF's efficiency.

Activities proposed for this objective include:

- **Completing fiscal notes on time so that stakeholders get the most up-to-date and relevant information.** This ensures timeliness of completion and facilitates communication between DMF and its stakeholders.
- **Completing mandated reports on time.** Timely completion remains a high

priority for the Division, and ensures stakeholders have ready access to assistance and required content.

3. Providing quality reporting to external stakeholders.

The production and publication of reports is one of the major duties of the Division, and stakeholders rely heavily on the important information provided in DMF's reports. Therefore, high quality and timely completion of reports are two essentials for the Division. DMF strives to provide reports that are accurate and provide valued insights for municipalities and other external stakeholders.

There is one activity proposed for this objective:

- **Developing an updated calendar and timeline for refreshing all data and materials hosted online.** This keeps DMF on track of its diverse mandated duties and ensures transparency regarding data production and publications.

Strategic Issue 2: Providing accurate analysis and stakeholder assistance in an efficient manner.

By utilizing technology more effectively, the Division will be able to devote resources to other strategic initiatives while enhancing accuracy. Wider adoption and better utilization of improved technology requires substantial due diligence in product evaluation and internal training.

Objectives designed to address this strategic issue include:

1. Having a system and workflow in place to manage the large volumes of data and documents.

The Division takes in a large amount of data in different formats and from different sources within municipalities. At present, a large amount of resources are spent tracking and gathering data as opposed to analyzing and disseminating data. A system that manages data in a organized and efficient way will allow the Division to devote more energy to data analysis, thus providing the public and DMF's stakeholders with more value-added outputs.

Activities proposed for this objective include:

- **Migrating the existing historic document database to a new platform with improved search functions.** Carrying out work with the new platform will improve the efficiency of the Division. The migration process also ensures that existing historic data and documents are transferred into a new uniform format.
-

- **Completing a review of current software programs and analysis of utility of other features available.** This helps the Division to better understand capabilities under current software and explore other features that can potentially help improve its work efficiency.
- **Conducting a market review of workflow software to enable digital submission of documents and automated deadline communication.** By adopting effective new workflow software, the Division will improve its workflow management, so that the employees and municipalities are always clear about the progress of their work and future deadlines.

2. Streamlining the collection and maintenance of external data

Due to the large amount of data received in different formats, the Division spends a lot of energy in gathering and organizing data. Streamlining the collection process can help to improve the efficiency of data collection and understanding of DMF's internal processes by external stakeholders, increasing compliance.

Activities proposed for this objective include:

- **Providing automated data submission processes for municipalities.** Under the guidance and instructions of the new submission processes, the municipalities will provide information according to a more organized format so that the process of submission is simpler to understand for municipal users.
- **Designing overview briefings regarding data submission processes, distribute them to municipalities and provide training for them so that information collected is streamlined.** This ensures the effectiveness of the new submission processes and avoids potential confusion.

4. Remaining agile in our knowledge and use of technology and software.

Technology and more advanced software can facilitate the work of the Division to enable greater efficiencies, improved training, and streamlined workflows.

Activities proposed for this objective include:

- **Developing internal training on the state's online learning management system, provided by those with advanced technological skills in DMF sharing with those having limited skills.** The training session will allow employees to see the improvements that technology can potentially bring, and therefore incentivize them to develop their technological skills. It also helps foster a learning environment within the Division.

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- **Providing training for employees to improve their skills in designing website visualizations with software providers.** This allows employees to gain firsthand information from experts who participated in the development of the software, and boost their competency in using the software's key features.

5. Improving the quality of resources available online.

Improved resources help facilitate the understanding of report users, promote transparency and reduce confusion. The more self-service options the Division can provide for municipalities and stakeholders, the easier it is for stakeholders to access the resources and information they need, allowing DMF to divert staffing resources to other tasks.

Activities proposed for this objective include:

- **Revising existing processes to reduce reliance on static data tables and migrate data to configurable tables such as Excel and Access files.** This provides stakeholders and municipalities with the opportunity to view data more dynamically according to their needs, and allows for easier importation into DMF's internal databases.
- **Creating embedded surveys asking for external feedback on DMF's digital resources.** The survey serves as a channel to receive feedback from the public directly, providing insights on what kinds of improvements stakeholders desire to DMF's existing digital resources.
- **Eliminating under-utilized resources from DMF work streams using feedback from stakeholder surveys and analysis of Google analytics.** Because the Division's time and capacity are limited, focusing on tasks that are most relevant to stakeholders is a priority for the Division. Informative feedback from stakeholders allows the Division to learn what their primary needs are and devote more resources to those priorities.

Strategic Issue 3: Providing self-serve assistance and training opportunities to municipalities and stakeholders.

DMF works closely with municipalities and stakeholders, which are both the providers of data and the users of information and reports produced by the Division. Better collaboration and understanding between stakeholders and the Division can largely improve the Division's work efficiency and enable the Division to better fulfill its mandated duties. By introducing the Division's broader perspectives to municipalities and stakeholders and utilizing technology effectively, DMF will promote public awareness of the Division and thus provide better services for the public.

Objectives to address this strategic issue include:

1. Developing tools to assist municipalities and other local political subdivisions in their efforts to maintain and enhance fiscal health.

The Division's mission is to provide guidance to municipalities in achieving and maintaining fiscal stability. Among all forms of assistance, functional financial tools is one of the most important because the more tools municipalities have at their disposal, the less reliance they have on state resources.

Activities proposed for this objective include:

- **Developing Excel templates that can be utilized to assist municipalities and other local political subdivisions with fiscal management and administrative functions.** Templates provide an excellent framework on which municipalities can base their work, incorporating best-practices in fiscal and data management and accounting.
- **Enhancing visualizations by increasing the number of visualizations across digital platforms.** Data visualizations make information more explicit and comprehensible to municipalities and stakeholders, and increased number of visualizations on diverse platforms helps disperse the resources available and improve public understanding of those resources.
- **Developing reports tailored to specific municipality.** Each municipality has different strengths and issues, and thus their current situations are different. By developing reports for specific municipalities, the Division improves understanding of certain issues and is able to provide tailored support to municipal stakeholders.

Strategic Issue 4: Offer opportunities for staff development in order to promote employee satisfaction.

Well-qualified staff is the most valuable resource for DMF, and the Division hopes to establish an enjoyable and fulfilling work environment for all employees. It is important that DMF employees work in a setting where their opinions are valued and sufficient personal development opportunities are provided.

Objectives designed to address this strategic issue include:

1. Improving the public and internal feedback system.

Employees are the ones who perform DMF's mandated duties on a day to day basis, so they have a thorough understanding of how and where to focus resources most effectively. Hearing their opinions can help the Division improve

operations and outputs and avoid waste. Through an improved feedback system the Division can evaluate the needs of employees and potentially make changes to address their concerns.

Activities proposed for this objective include:

- **Utilizing online surveys placed on the website to receive feedback from both inside and outside the organization.** The survey will be easily accessible to employees so that they are welcome to share their opinions whenever they feel necessary to. Survey responses will be checked on a regular basis to ensure the Division receives timely updates.

2. Providing more sharing and personal development opportunities

Well-qualified staff require sufficient challenges and personal development opportunities to stay engaged in the activities of the Office. In the upcoming year, DMF will offer employees more platforms and events through which they can reflect on their past work experience and learn from one another's experiences.

Activities proposed for this objective include:

- **Implementing the state's performance review program.** The review program will enable employees to evaluate their performance over the past period and identify any areas they hope to improve upon in the future. It helps them to set goals and standards and incentivize them to meet those benchmarks.
 - **Holding learning events to promote sharing experiences and knowledge.** Such events not only foster employees' understanding of different functions within the Division, but also allows them to learn about one another's experience and share technical expertise. This activity supports the establishment of a learning environment.
-

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: VISUALIZATION ENHANCEMENTS

OVERVIEW

The Division of Municipal Finance strives to provide municipalities and other local government stakeholders with the financial tools and knowledge to maintain fiscal stability unencumbered. The Division has identified a vehicle to deliver these tools and knowledge in an effective and resource efficient manner.

Website visualization tools utilized by DMF stakeholders will be evaluated for usefulness and digestibility with the intent of enhancing the Division's current visualization offerings. The Division sees this program, once implemented, as a core function that will be utilized to maintain and continuously improve upon the Division's status as a resource for the Department of Revenue, Legislature, municipalities, state agencies, fire districts, local associations and the Governor's Office.

By enhancing visualizations available to its stakeholders, it will better enable the Division to meet its mandated duties, as well as enabling policy decision makers at the state and local levels to make informed decisions.

PROGRAM DETAIL

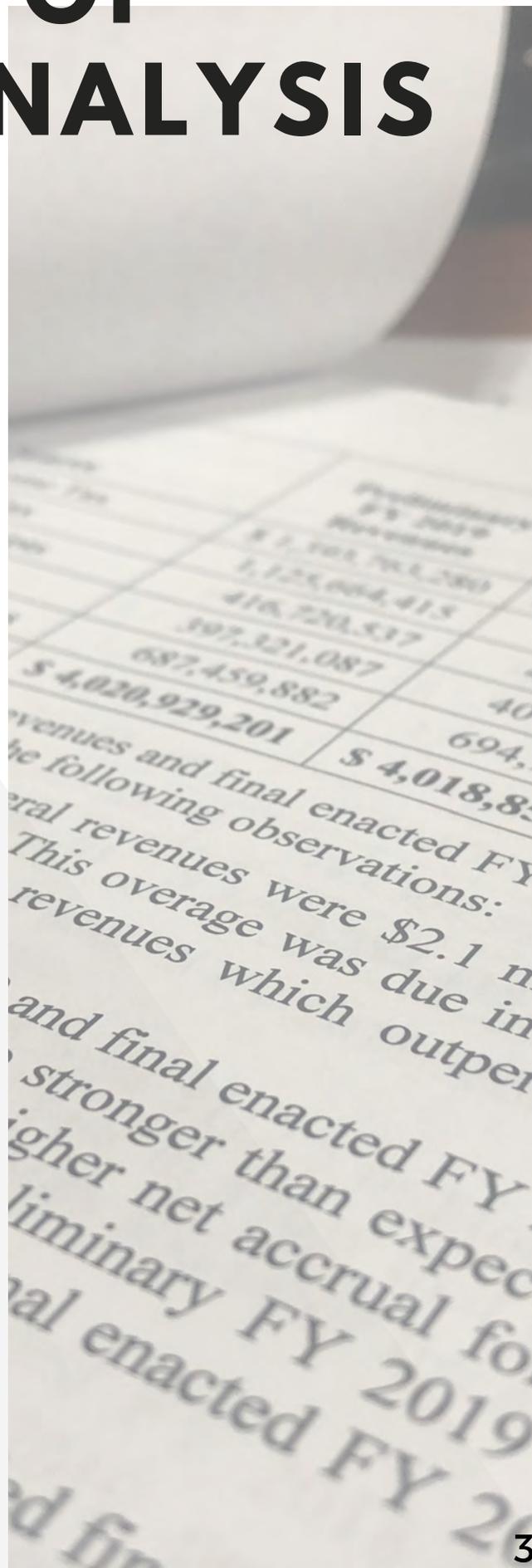
Through the Division's normal course of business, it receives a multitude of data from municipalities and fire districts. DMF uses this data for calculating state aid and monitoring compliance with applicable laws. The Division also compiles the information and produces reporting that is accessible on its websites by stakeholders. However, the Division has determined that it can enhance the data represented by utilizing visualization tools.

DMF will implement these enhancements in four steps. One, the Division will provide Tableau visualization software training to all its employees. Two, the Division will evaluate current reporting and visualizations tools available to determine if enhancements are needed. Three, the Division will evaluate existing internal and external data sources that are not currently represented on its websites but have been determined to be useful for the purposes of its stakeholders. Lastly, the Division will continuously monitor usage of its visualization tools using Google Analytics and surveys of stakeholders.

THE OFFICE OF REVENUE ANALYSIS

About ORA

The Office of Revenue Analysis (ORA, or Office) serves internal and external decision makers by analyzing and forecasting data about the State's tax systems and revenue streams and presenting the results clearly and concisely through the publication of reports. The Office produces monthly and statutory reports, cost-benefit analyses of tax proposals, and fiscal notes for revenue-related legislation. ORA also houses, and is the operator of, the state's sales tax and personal income tax simulation models. Finally, ORA maintains the motor vehicle excise tax program, which is used to calculate reimbursement amounts for the motor vehicle excise tax phaseout.



Mission

The Office of Revenue Analysis' mission is to analyze, evaluate and appraise the tax system of the state. The Office makes recommendations for the revision of the state's tax system that are in the best interests of the state's economy, prepares the biennial Tax Expenditures Report, the annual Unified Economic Development Report, the periodic economic development tax incentive evaluations, and develops and prepares cost benefit analyses of tax expenditure items. The Office also provides objective information and advice on the state's revenue system and the impact of proposed changes to it.

Values

- Produce and publish reports and analyses on a timely basis.
- Provide high-quality service to executive and legislative branch stakeholders.
- Increase public understanding of the data and information provided by the Office.
- Hire and retain well-qualified staff.



What We Do

- Produce monthly reports that assess the state's revenues and cash collections and produce estimates of revenue proposals for the state budget.
- Consult with the Office of Management Budget (OMB) on revenue forecasts for the biannual Revenue Estimating Conference (REC), revenue proposals for the Governor's budget and provide estimates of the same.
- Prepare the biennial Tax Expenditures Report as required under Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) § 44-48.1-1.
- Prepare the annual Unified Economic Development Report as required under RIGL § 42-142-6.
- Prepare periodic evaluations of specified tax incentives as required under the Rhode Island Economic Development Tax Incentives Evaluation Act, RIGL § 44-48.2-4.
- Complete revenue fiscal notes as assigned by the State Budget Office pursuant to RIGL Chapter 22-12.
- Provide support to the principals of the biannual RECs as established in RIGL Chapter 35-16 and present public testimony as necessary.
- Collaborate with the Division of Municipal Finance on the administration of the motor vehicle and trailer excise tax phaseout as detailed in RIGL Chapter 44-34.



Strategic Issues

Strategic Issue 1: Providing resources to allow the Office to acquire and maintain economic impact and revenue simulation models, and data, in order to fulfill its responsibilities under the law.

To maintain timely and efficient fulfillment of its mandated duties, ORA is pursuing several initiatives to improve its data sources and transmission procedures.

Objectives designed to address this strategic issue include:

1. Improving data collection.

Under Rhode Island General Laws, the Office of Revenue Analysis (ORA) is responsible for analyzing and forecasting various revenue items, economic development proposals, and presenting the results of such analysis through the production of reports, and public testimony. The collection of data requires the active participation of outside agencies, and ORA's ability to produce these reports is largely dependent on the access to high quality data from third party entities. Clear process guidelines and data collection protocols are needed to enable the swift transfer of data to the Office for enhanced forecasting, estimation, and analysis.

High-quality data is the foundation of ORA's work, so it is important that the Office receives all information needed from those agencies maintaining relevant data. Data collection can be improved by utilizing existing data sources more efficiently, by capturing more information from external systems for use in analysis and through improved communication with entities that have access to primary data sources. ORA is focused on the hiring/retention of data specialists dedicated to fulfilling its data needs and requirements on a priority basis. All data received by ORA will be well-maintained and ready for use by ORA staff in the fulfillment of the Office's responsibilities.

2. Timely production and publication of mandated reports.

The Office's mandated duties include the production and publication of reports. The timely production of reports enables stakeholder access to public information and transparency. The Office is focused on producing reports according to assigned deadlines. Detailed timelines allow employees to remain on track with their work and incentivize them to complete tasks on time.

Strategic Issue 2: Hiring and retaining well-qualified staff with the requisite skills necessary to execute the work of the Office and enhance the Office's professional reputation on State economic and revenue issues.

Due to the wide range and complexity of ORA's responsibilities, it is not possible to complete its tasks without highly qualified staff. ORA has regarded hiring and retaining well-qualified staff as one of its top priorities. Objectives designed to address this strategic issue include:

1. Developing and maintaining a training program for current staff to enhance the skills needed by analysts to effectively execute their duties.

The training program will provide employees with the tools necessary to perform at a high level in their jobs. Upon successful completion of the courses, the employees will develop enhanced programming knowledge and forecasting skills.

Four activities are proposed for this objective:

- **Utilizing online courses through the state's newly developed online training system to enhance quantitative skills and database management.** Online courses are more convenient and accessible than traditional training sessions, as they allow learners to complete the learning tasks at their own pace and according to their own schedules.

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- **Working with software vendors to conduct annual training seminars on the use of their models with attention to state specific modeling scenarios.** This keeps employees up-to-date with the latest developments and updates made to the software, so that employees can utilize those technologies more efficiently in their day-to-day work.
 - **Maintaining a SAS training curriculum to allow staff to develop higher level programming skills.** Programming is an important skill that can help employees improve their efficiency significantly, enabling employees to produce high-quality reports utilizing advance SAS functionalities.
 - **Developing a data visualization training curriculum to provide staff with the skills needed to enhance the delivery of information by the Office.** Data visualization is an important tool for conveying quantitative information to the public in a manner that is not overwhelming and more accessible to the user.

3. Continuing a range of recruiting activities.

The talent needs of the Office of Revenue Analysis require individuals with advanced degrees and a quantitative orientation. To attract such talent, it is important to let potential qualified persons know about the job opportunities in ORA. Therefore, the Office targets recruiting activities at academic programs that offer a terminal Master's degree in economics, public policy, etc. via the direct communication with such academic programs. Detailed information on what is required to succeed in a job at ORA is provided in order to let candidates know what it takes to be successful in their career at ORA. ORA is working on spreading job postings on more social platforms and professional association boards. This ensures that the job opportunities are exposed to a wider audience, increasing the possibility that qualified candidates will apply.

Strategic Issue 3: Delivering a professional work environment that encourages employees to undertake thoughtful analyses and independent research consistent with the Office's objectives that support the mission of other divisions within the Department.

It is important to support employees' intellectual curiosity and provide them with opportunities to conduct meaningful research relevant to the Office's mission. Upon completion of diverse and challenging analyses and projects, employees expand both their skill sets and their understanding of ORA operations by partaking in a diverse and challenging array of analyses.

Objectives designed to address this strategic issue include:

1. Initiating a system that provides employees with the opportunity to pursue research projects of interest to them consistent with the mission of the Office and mission of other divisions within the department.

By initiating a system to organize assigned research projects, ORA allows employees to pursue individual research projects while managing progress on their daily work and responsibilities. Project portfolio systems facilitate collaboration by encouraging employees to share useful materials and related experience amongst one another, improving their efficiency in completing research projects while promoting a learning environment within the Office.

ORA will require employees to develop work plans for the upcoming fiscal year that outline the tasks they will undertake, balancing existing mandates on ORA against new projects identified to support other divisions or the mission of ORA. The work plans will allow each employee to manage their time and effort while maintaining a desirable work-life balance. These work plans will be reviewed with employees to provide feedback on their identified tasks and establish a timeline for the successful completion of projects and continuously maintain a performance development program.

Strategic Issue 4: Promoting the Office as the repository of information on state revenues and the state economy.

The Office of Revenue Analysis performs a wide array of mandated duties and provides crucial and constructive information to its stakeholders on the state's revenue and economy. By promoting the Office's mission to provide reliable and accessible information, ORA aims to increase public understanding of the state's revenue streams and tax systems and improve public engagement with the state.

Objectives to address this strategic issue include:

1. Raising awareness of the ORA's work consistent with the overall vision and mission of the Department of Revenue.

Increasing public understanding of the work product is essential for the Office to fulfill its mandated duty of "making recommendations...in accordance with the best interest of the economy of the state."

As a part of this effort, ORA will take on a more active position in the community through seminars and presentations to various external constituencies such as professional associations, research groups, college courses, etc. regarding compiled reports. The Office will reach out more often and actively participate in diverse events to discuss the role of the Office and understanding the reports it produces. This will allow the public to become more familiar with what the Office does and increase the comprehension of the content of its work.

2. Increasing public awareness of the Office.

Besides presenting at seminars and events, the Office will also make use of social media platforms to keep the public updated on pertinent research developments.

The Office works to maintain and update the Office's web site to regularly post the latest reports. The Office's social media presence is very limited and needs to be expanded to reach younger and more diverse audiences. Social media platforms will also allow the Office to receive first-hand feedback on its work from the public and external stakeholders.

Strategic Issue 5: Encouraging understanding and economic literacy amongst the public regarding the state of Rhode Island's economy and revenue streams.

The Office of Revenue Analysis has always regarded providing high quality information to its stakeholders as one of its values. Improved comprehension and economic literacy amongst the public will establish an audience that is receptive to learning about the work of the Office and the state of the economy. Objectives to address this strategic issue include:

1. Improving public interpretation and understanding of information and data provided in ORA's reports.

The majority of the Office's mandated duties is the production and publication of reports. By providing assistance and guidance for report users, the Office will make the messages it delivers in reports more clear and understandable to the general public.

Three activities are proposed for this objective:

- **Adding introductory and explanatory paragraphs on the website.** The paragraphs will enable readers to develop a general idea of what the report covers and an understanding of key terms and findings. It also enables readers
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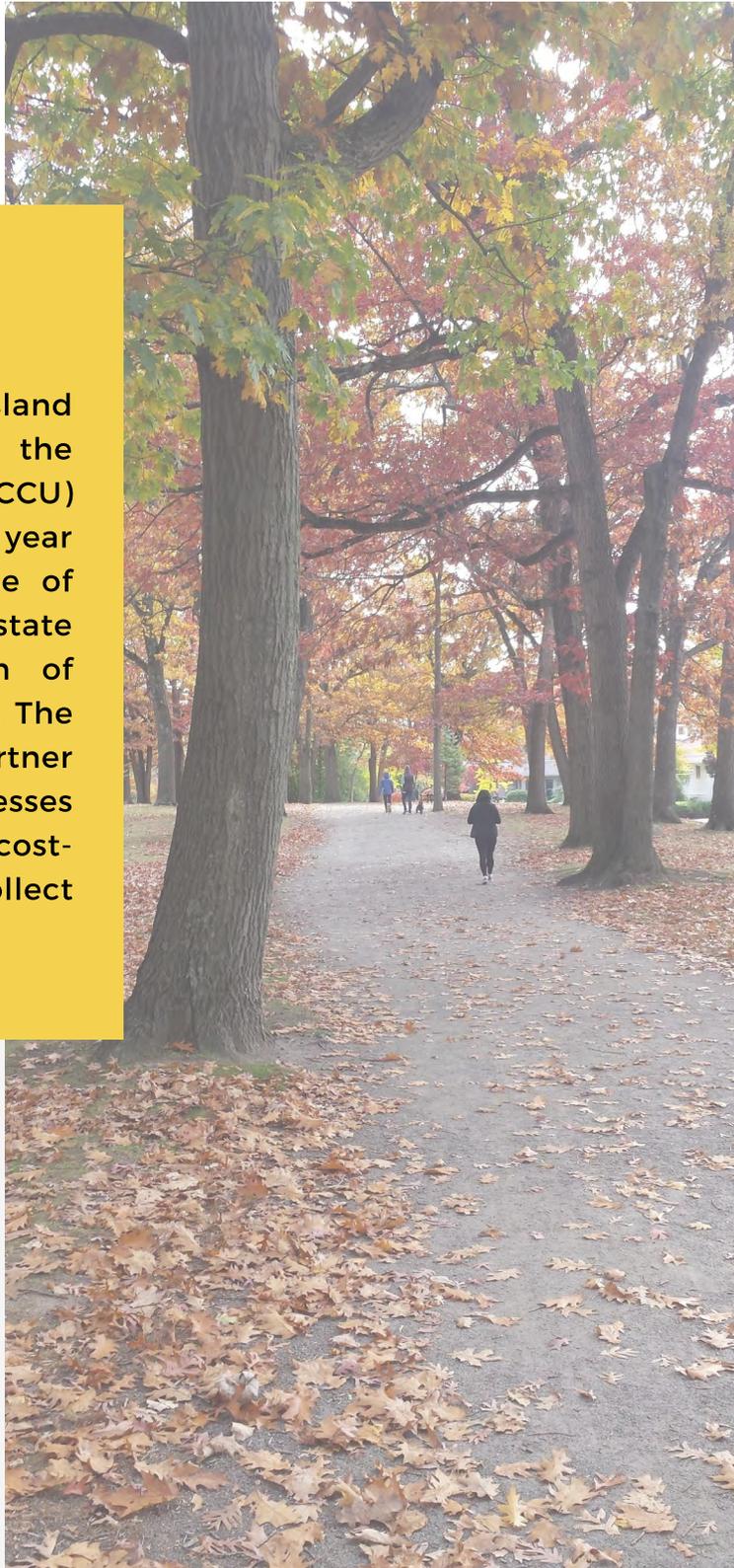
to decide whether the information provided in the report is relevant to their needs before reading.

- **Developing data visualizations for the ORA website.** Data visualization delivers messages in a more easily understandable and interactive way, increasing the accessibility of the information and data processed by ORA.
- **Developing one-page briefings on longer reports to improve their accessibility.** The briefings will include and explain crucial information in order to benefit readers with limited economic knowledge.

THE CENTRAL COLLECTIONS UNIT

About the CCU:

Within the Rhode Island Department of Revenue, the Central Collections Unit (CCU) was established in fiscal year 2019 with the core purpose of assisting state and quasi-state agencies in the collection of statutorily designated debts. The CCU collaborates with partner agencies to establish processes to ensure efficient and cost-effective measures to collect debts owed to the state.



Mission

The Central Collections Unit (CCU) assists state agencies in the monitoring and collection of debts owed to the state utilizing the most efficient methods and adhering to the highest professional standards.

Values

- To serve the public with integrity.
- To be fair and efficient in the administration of our caseload.
- To be professional and respectful in our interactions.

What We Do

- Consult and collaborate with agencies to implement debt collection processes and procedures to enable more efficient collections.
- Provide collection services and tools to partner agencies including, but not limited to: noticing, debt tracking, skip-tracing, implementing and monitoring of payment plans, settlement negotiations, and legal services.
- File civil lawsuits in Rhode Island state courts and other state courts to enforce the collection of debts owed.
- Collect and remit payments to state and quasi-state agencies without any fees.
- Collect and remit payments owed to individual persons by debtors that were ordered by state or quasi-state agencies.



Strategic Issues

Strategic Issue 1: Expanding debt collection efforts in order to increase debt collection activity on behalf of the state.

The CCU's purpose is to assist state agencies in the collection of debt owed to or ordered by state and quasi-state agencies. Therefore, the CCU relies on the referral of cases from partner agencies. It vital that the CCU develop a collaborative and communicative relationship with partner agencies. The CCU can expand its network, obtain more cases, and increase public compliance with its programs by presenting monthly reports and engaging with partner agencies to demonstrate the benefits of the centralized collection process.

The following activities are suggested as a part of the CCU's annual strategic plan to expand existing partnerships and engage new partner agencies:

1. Reaching out to more agencies.

The CCU relies solely on partner agency referrals in order to commence collection activities. The 2020 strategic plan includes initiatives intended to expand the partnerships between the CCU and other state agencies with eligible debts. Some measures include:

- Increasing distribution of informative materials about the CCU to agencies and all units within those agencies;
- Identifying presentation opportunities (e.g. conference, meetings) for non-participating agencies; and
- Examining new ways to assist partner agencies in the collection of debts.

Enhancing agency outreach will help increase agency awareness as to the purpose of the CCU, the services the CCU provides and its processes. This will help encourage agencies to partner with the CCU to improve the collection of debt owed to the state.

2. Increasing number of cases from agencies.

Continuing and open communication between partner agencies and the CCU can help partner agencies streamline the referral of cases and can also provide transparency regarding the CCU's progress in collecting on referred debts.

In order to maintain effective communications with partner agencies and keep

them informed during the process, the CCU intends to conduct annual status meetings with the partner agencies and send monthly reports on the debts collected on behalf of those agencies.

Regular communication with partner agencies encourages open channels for feedback and process refinement, while also providing opportunities for status updates to partner agency leadership.

Strategic Issue 2: Streamlining and improving existing processes and procedures within the CCU to enable more efficient collections rates.

The CCU will monitor the collection processes and review where improvements can be made to improve all aspects of the process to include communications with debtors, skip-tracing techniques, noticing practices, and payment options. Streamlining the collection process helps ensure that the best and most efficient practices are being utilized for greater productivity.

Objectives designed to address this issue include:

1. Improving the collection process.

An efficient collection process is integral to successfully collect debt and bring in revenue to the state. A proficient and user-friendly case management system can help reduce the administrative burden placed on CCU employees so their focus can be on improved communications with debtors. The 2020 strategic plan includes the following initiatives intended to improve the collections process:

- Linking payment processing with the CCU's case management system (CMS);
- Launching an online payment portal;
- Developing an RFP for a more advanced CMS platform; and
- Reviewing the current debt classification process for potential streamlining opportunities, including digital submission options and categorical tagging of debts.

By implementing enhanced collections technology, reviewing existing referral processes, and implementing online service channels, the CCU will be able to streamline its debt collection process and offer alternative channels for fulfilling obligations to existing debtors.

2. Acquiring more collection techniques.

Improving the quality of communications between CCU staff and debtors while enhancing the CCU's debt research capacity helps to ensure staff members are able to successfully contact and discuss the details of referred cases with debtors. The 2020 strategic plan includes the following initiatives intended to improve the CCU's collection techniques:

- Improving email phrasing and phone call transcripts;
- Providing training on effective communications with debtors; and
- Continuously maintaining and upgrading secure processes for transmission of sensitive debtor information.

Comprehensive email/phone call transcripts help to simplify communications between CCU employees and debtors for more successful exchanges. Training CCU employees on how to effectively and pleasantly communicate with debtors will help the debtors understand the collection process for a more satisfying experience.

The CCU will develop a training system which will ensure each staff member has a clear understanding of the collections goals, internal protocols, and collections tools so when they do communicate with debtors, the CCU will be able to speak knowledgeably, professionally and personally with the debtor.

The trainings will also educate new staff members as they arrive, enabling him/her to continue the work of the previous staff agent with minimal disruption.

Because the CCU will be handling sensitive data, all employees will receive regular training on personally identifiable information (PII) and how to protect it. The CCU is also advised by the Division of Information Technology (DOIT) as to how securely store PII.

Strategic Issue 3: Hiring and retaining well-qualified staff with the requisite skills necessary to execute the work of the Centralized Collections Unit.

The CCU continuously monitors its caseload to ensure staffing levels are adequate to fulfill the complete debt collection process as efficiently as possible.

The following objectives are being pursued by the CCU to address this strategic issue:

1. Maintaining employee morale and motivation.

The CCU intends to implement the state performance management program to establish goals and an opportunity for professional feedback which aims to improve employee morale and motivation, as well as work efficiency. Through the state performance program, CCU employees will develop professional goals and receive feedback on their performance and constructive guidance on their progress.

The CCU will also assess a rotation schedule and other options for employees to provide an opportunity for cross-training and diversify the job responsibilities. Role rotation opportunities will also help staff to develop their professional skills and ensure, through cross-training, that employees' skills are transferable to other roles within the CCU as may be required.

2. Providing professional opportunities to employees.

Providing employees the opportunity to develop the skills they need to perform their job duties is among the chief priorities of the CCU. Personnel equipped with the requisite skills are more likely to be able to operate without the need of assistance and to collect more efficiently on outstanding debts. It is important for the CCU to provide professional training to employees to ensure their expertise and alignment with industry standards.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: CCU ONLINE PAYMENT PORTAL

Overview

Established in July 2018, the CCU is a new division that functions as a debt collector for the state. It offers several services to partner agencies to help facilitate payment on existing debts, including payment processing services for debtors. At present, the CCU accepts three types of payment methods: cash, credit card and check.

Prior to the creation of the 2019 CCU Online Payment Portal, cash and credit card transactions could only be made in person, while checks could be mailed in to the CCU's headquarters. Now, credit card payments can be made online using the new payment portal. The successful implementation of the portal has enabled the CCU to collect on more debts and has increased the accessibility of making payments for debtors.

Program Details

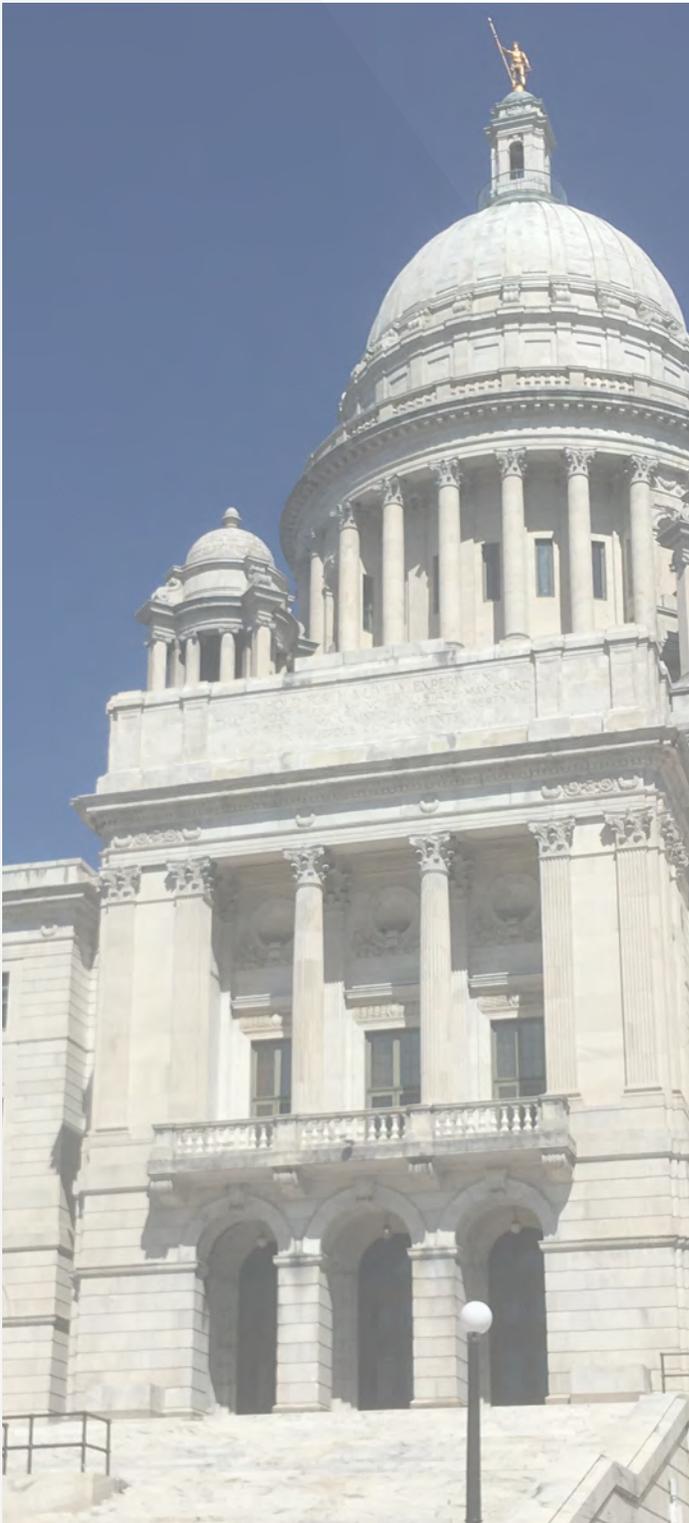
In January 2019, the CCU started its OTCP (Over-the-Counter Payment) initiative and began drafting requirements for payment portal technology with Rhode Island Interactive, LLC (RII). The online payment portal was expected to shorten the collection period and increase efficiency for the CCU by enabling long-distance payments and self-service functionality.

The project was completed in April 2019.

Benefits

1. **Provides convenience to customers.** Debtor can access the online payment portal 24-7 from their desktops, laptops, or mobile devices.
2. **Increases the collection rate.** Payment authorizations take place in real time to ensure the collection process completion.
3. **Provides digital monitoring and auditing capacity.** The CCU can better monitor the process of collecting funds and avoid potential fraud issues.

THE DIVISION OF TAXATION



About Taxation

The Division of Taxation (Division) administers more than 58 different taxes and fees, including personal income tax, corporate income tax, and sales tax. Taxes represent the most significant source of General Fund revenue. The Division each year collects and distributes more than \$3 billion - money that is used to help pay for vital services for all Rhode Islanders - including public safety, education, transportation, and recreation.

Mission

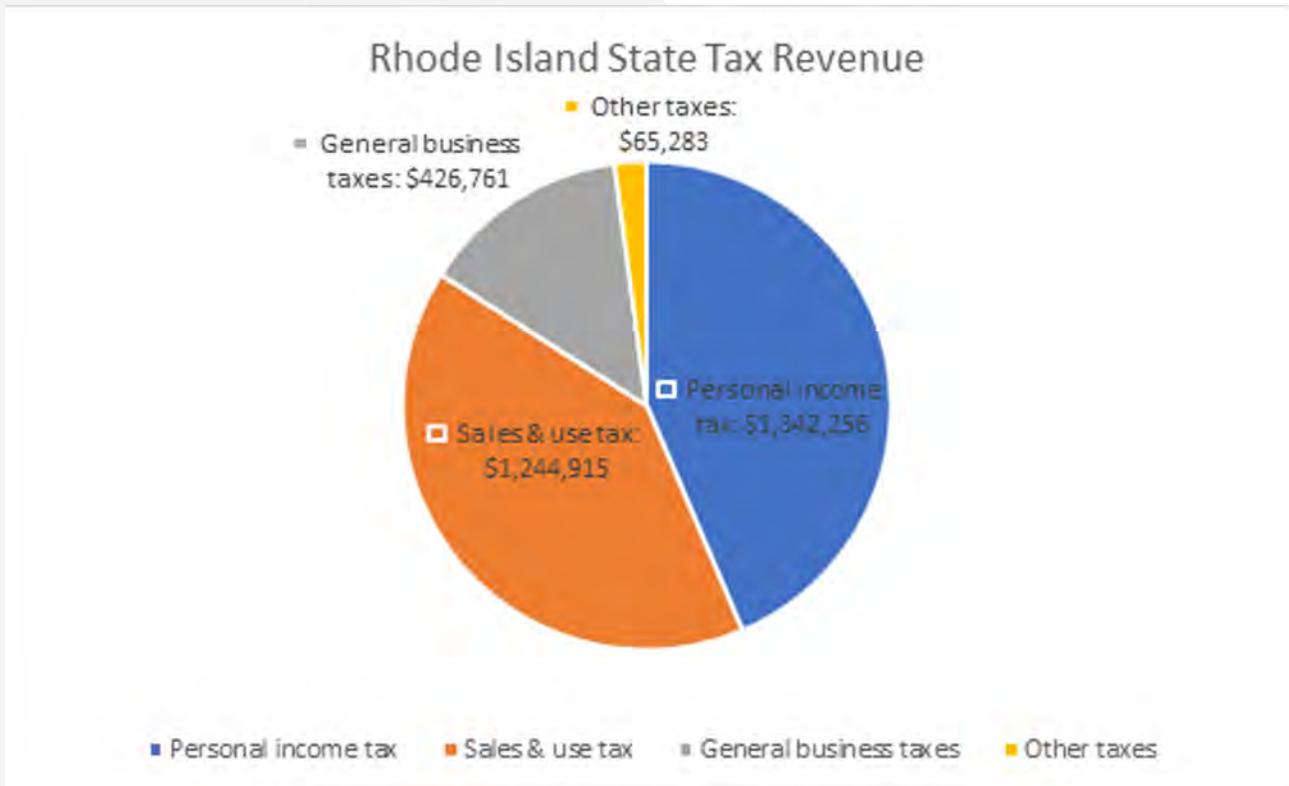
The Division of Taxation's mission is to foster voluntary compliance with the Rhode Island tax laws and instill public confidence through professional, impartial, and ethical conduct.

Values

- **Integrity:** in all actions.
- **Respect and fairness for all involved:** taxpayers and employees.
- **Competence:** in all transactions and interactions.
- **Efficiency:** in all processes.

What We Do

The Division of Taxation administers and collects all taxes as required by Rhode Island law in the most efficient and cost-effective manner and assists taxpayers by helping them understand and meet their tax responsibilities.



Dollars in chart are expressed in thousands. Data is from State of Rhode Island 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report's "Statement of Activities" on page 118.



Strategic Issues

Strategic Issue 1: Improving compliance with Rhode Island tax laws.

The Division intends to improve compliance with Rhode Island tax laws by increasing the amount of meetings it has with taxpayers and tax preparers. The Division also believes that compliance will be enhanced as more taxpayers and tax preparers learn of the advantages of the Division's online taxpayer portal.

Objectives designed to address this strategic issue include:

1. Increasing outreach and education opportunities to taxpayers/preparers.

The Division regularly meets with tax professionals from the Rhode Island Society of Certified Public Accountants, the Rhode Island Association of Public Accountants, the National Association of Tax Professionals, CPE Associates, and the Rhode Island Society of Enrolled Agents. In addition, as part of its effort to reach seniors and low-income taxpayers, the Division meets regularly with representatives of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program and the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program. The Division intends to broaden its reach to tax professionals and volunteers.

To help ensure that paid tax preparers and volunteer tax preparers have the most

current and accurate information for the coming tax-filing season, the Division makes presentations at a series of meetings and seminars throughout southern New England each fall and winter. These include presentations to the Rhode Island Society of Certified Public Accountants, the National Association of Tax Professionals, the VITA program, the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program, CPE Associates, and others.

The Division sponsors its own “Seminar for Tax Preparers” each year, at two Community College of Rhode Island campuses in different parts of the state, to try to reach all tax practitioners, including those who work for regional or national tax preparation firms. The goal is to provide up-to-date information, answer their questions, and help ensure a smooth filing season. The Division intends to broaden its reach to tax professionals and volunteers.

The Division works with the Rhode Island Department of Revenue’s public information officer, who uses a range of traditional and social media to keep taxpayers up-to-date on changes in State tax law and how the changes will affect them. The Division intends to increase its outreach in this regard.

The Division recently began mailing annual account statements to taxpayers who have delinquencies. The reminder mailings provide those taxpayers with an updated look at their accounts – and information on how to contact the Division to pay off their tax debts.

2. Modernizing taxpayer outreach through the portal and website.

The Division recently launched a taxpayer portal through which certain payments and certain filings may be made. As a convenience, the Division also lets taxpayers grant tax preparers, under certain circumstances, the ability to access their online accounts. (More information on the portal appears elsewhere in this publication.)

The Division intends to monitor taxpayer use of and access to the portal and the Division’s website to improve filing and payment and reduce errors.

The Division also intends to update and expand functionality on the portal and website in order to enhance taxpayer convenience and compliance.

Strategic Issue 2: Continuously improving taxpayer assistance and customer satisfaction.

In its ongoing effort to aid taxpayers and increase customer satisfaction, the Division has acquired, installed, and implemented a new agency-wide computer system. The system serves as a time-saving tool for taxpayers and authorized taxpayer representatives. The Division is also engaged in the incremental rollout of a taxpayer portal, and will launch a new telephone system.

1. Updating customer-service training based on technology upgrades.

In 2013, the Division revolutionized the way it does business by launching a multi-year project involving the acquisition, installation, and implementation of a new, agency-wide computer system, known as STAARS.

Instead of maintaining a combination of paper and digital records in separate systems disbursed throughout the agency, the Division used STAARS to unite all taxpayer data and related information into a single browser-based computer system.

The Division used STAARS not only to modernize its tax and revenue-accounting system, but also to improve its customer service. Through STAARS, Division personnel provide taxpayers more quickly than before with information related to their accounts. The new system also serves as a time-saving tool for authorized taxpayer representatives.

Through ongoing training, Division personnel have become adept at using STAARS to provide the most effective and efficient service to taxpayers and other stakeholders.

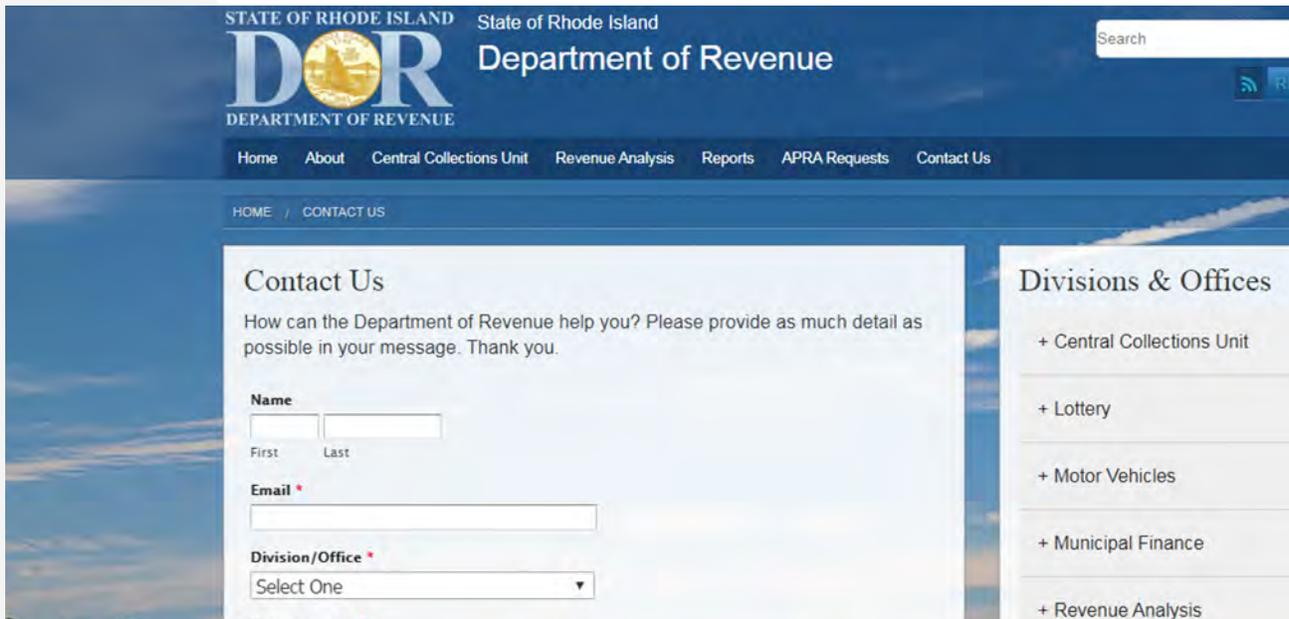
The Division has trained key personnel on the use of its new portal. When taxpayers or their authorized representatives have questions about the portal, the Division steers their inquiries to informed staff who can help them. The Division plans to broaden its training to include additional agency personnel, which, in turn, will further enhance customer service. The Division has also begun reaching out to tax professionals to brief them on the use of the new portal.

2. Conducting customer-service surveys.

The Division continuously seeks ways to improve upon the services that the

agency provides – and welcomes input from taxpayers regarding their experiences with the Division’s customer service.

The Division already receives customer-service input from taxpayers via the “contact us” portion of the Department of Revenue website.

The image shows a screenshot of the Rhode Island Department of Revenue website's 'Contact Us' page. The header features the 'DOR' logo and the text 'STATE OF RHODE ISLAND State of Rhode Island Department of Revenue'. A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Home, About, Central Collections Unit, Revenue Analysis, Reports, APRA Requests, and Contact Us. The main content area is titled 'Contact Us' and includes a message: 'How can the Department of Revenue help you? Please provide as much detail as possible in your message. Thank you.' The form contains fields for Name (split into First and Last), Email (marked with a red asterisk), and a dropdown menu for Division/Office (marked with a red asterisk and currently set to 'Select One'). To the right of the form is a sidebar titled 'Divisions & Offices' with expandable sections for Central Collections Unit, Lottery, Motor Vehicles, Municipal Finance, and Revenue Analysis.

When the Division sponsors its annual “Seminar for Tax Preparers” at two Community College of Rhode Island campuses, the Division provides a customer-service survey to each participant.

The Division’s Audit & Investigation section in January 2019 began sending out post-audit surveys with all field-audit bills. The surveys ask taxpayers to evaluate their level of satisfaction with the customer service provided by the Division’s audit personnel. Thus far, the satisfaction rate exceeds 95%.

The Division recently finalized plans to capture taxpayer views of its customer service by including a link on the Division’s website, as well as on the Division’s portal.

3. Implementing a new Taxpayer Service Center and reservation system in conjunction with facility reconfiguration and new telephone system by June 30, 2021.

During Rhode Island’s most recent tax amnesty program (for Rhode Island State taxes), in December 2017, the Division made available two special features:

-
- A centralized phone bank; and
 - An online reservation system.

Following amnesty, the Division carefully examined the results of both features.

The Division is piloting a Taxpayer Service Center on a limited basis using lessons learned from the Amnesty Program.

The Division plans to revive its online reservation center. The goal is to give taxpayers a convenient way to make a reservation – thus reducing any wait time that may arise.

The Division intends to officially implement the new Taxpayer Service Center and online reservation system. The Division intends for the launch to be in conjunction with a reconfiguration of the agency's office in Providence and the installation of a new telephone system.

4. Continuing to improve business processes to improve telephone answer and wait times.

The Division receives an average of approximately 4,200 phone calls a week – a total of more than 220,000 phone calls per year. The Division has made measurable progress in improving taxpayer experience when calling the agency by phone:

- The Division answered a greater percentage of all incoming calls over the last three years: 88% in the 2019 fiscal year, up from 80% in the 2018 fiscal year, and 70% in the 2017 fiscal year.
- The Division reduced the amount of time that callers spent, on average, waiting for their calls to be answered by Division personnel: It took 1 minute and 21 seconds in the 2019 fiscal year, down from 1 minute and 53 seconds in the 2018 fiscal year, and 3 minutes and 16 seconds in the 2017 fiscal year.

The Division intends to continue to use its latest technology, as well as its top-flight staff, to improve average telephone answer times, wait times, and call durations.



Note: These numbers are for the 2019 fiscal year. Call volume varies depending on the time of year. For example, during tax-filing season, from January through April, the Division typically receives a greater-than-average number of calls on a weekly basis.

Strategic Issue 3: Improving employee satisfaction and ensuring employee success.

To help ensure employee success and satisfaction, the Division is assessing all of its current employee training programs. The Division also is updating the training programs to reflect changes in organizational structure, tax law, and technology.

Objectives designed to address this issue include:

1. Assessing and updating all employee training currently in place.

The Division has ongoing programs to train new and existing employees. These include training on:

- The STAARS computer system;
- Security of confidential taxpayer information;
- Legal principles;
- Customer service and customer satisfaction; and
- Routine training currently in place for changes/clarification in Tax administration.

The Division is in the process of assessing and updating its employee training programs.

2. Updating the employee training plan to address updated organizational structure and priorities based on critical agency needs.

The acquisition, installation, and implementation of the STAARS computer system prompted the Division to alter the traditional “silo” approach to managing by tax type. It led to a realignment of responsibilities among Division personnel.

The Division has been challenged by sweeping changes enacted in 2010 to the personal income tax, in 2014 to the corporate income tax, and in 2017 and 2019 to the sales and use tax (remote sellers), as well as major changes at the federal level that have far-reaching impacts on State taxes, including the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

The integrated tax system has allowed the Division to cross train staff to improve compliance. The employee training plan is being updated to conform to organizational restructuring.

Strategic Issue 4: Continuing to modernize and leverage use of new technology to enhance business processes.

The Division is enhancing business processes by implementing a new cashier system as well as an online reservation system. Objectives designed to address this issue include:

1. Implementing a new cashier system.

The Division began the process of acquiring, installing, and implementing a new cashier system to handle payments from taxpayers. The new system will allow the Division to more quickly process payments - whether the payments are made electronically or by check or cash - and ensure that the Division’s revenue and accounting system is quickly updated to reflect the payments.

2. Implementing a reservation system after customer assessment.

As noted earlier, the Division piloted an online reservation system during the Rhode Island tax amnesty in December 2017. Based on that experience, and on the Division’s upcoming customer-service assessment, the Division plans to offer an online reservation system as a permanent feature.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: ONLINE TAXPAYER PORTAL

Overview

The Division began the soft launch of its online portal in 2019 and deemed it a success. Returns for all tax types (except for the personal income tax and corporate tax) may now be filed via the portal. Applications for letters of good standing also may be filed on the portal. Payments of tax – including payments of personal income tax and corporate tax – may be made via the portal.



Program Details

The Division is managing an incremental rollout of the portal for broader functionality, with full implementation to follow. The agency has also enlisted a number of stakeholders to “test drive” the portal and offer their input.

Benefits

- The portal offers convenient online access for all taxpayers to file nearly all returns (except for the personal income tax and corporate tax) and pay all taxes and fees – including personal income tax and corporate tax.
- The portal offers faster service for applications for letters of good standing.
- The portal allows taxpayers to gain access to the history of their payments and filings.
- The portal offers taxpayers the ability to view notices and generate service requests.

