

### FAQs about Data Center Optimization

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### General DCO Overview Q&A

#### 1. Why are we doing this?

In December 2017, Gartner benchmarked DIS and 84 agencies against peer groups, identified service gaps and developed a strategy to improve efficiency.

Among the findings from Gartner's assessment of the state's current IT infrastructure environment were: inconsistent security, lack of standards, obsolete or end-of-life technology, limited economies of scale and limited or no disaster recovery.

Consolidating disparate and siloed data centers across the executive branch in Arkansas will mitigate a majority, if not all, of these risks.

On Feb. 8, 2018, Governor Hutchinson released a memo to agency directors regarding his transformation initiative. Among the projects specifically referenced in this memo was data center optimization.

#### 2. Is this process optional?

The data center optimization initiative is not optional. It is a high priority for the transformation office and the governor. The governor issued a letter to agency directors, [June 20, 2018](#), requesting cooperation from all agencies.

#### 3. How will the data center optimization initiative be impacted by the governor's transformation initiative?

While we are unable to predict the possible impact(s) of the transformation initiative, the data center optimization initiative will proceed. The data gathering tool, currently under development within DIS, has been designed to mitigate potential impacts.

## Fiscal, Procurement, Contract Q&A

**1. What is the cost difference going to be in maintaining the status quo vs moving IT infrastructure to State Data Center-West?**

Any cost differences will be unique to the specific environments (e.g., applications, platforms, storage, networks, etc.) being migrated, and will have to be provided on a case-by-case basis.

**2. How does the fiscal division relate to this DCO Push/Pull initiative?**

Fiscal divisions will play a vital role in the DCO initiative. The DIS pull team will work with push team members on the agency side to gather the expenses associated with an agency's infrastructure, software and other technologies that will be incorporated into the shared services environment. This cost analysis will help insure each agency understands the true budget impact of their moving to the shared services environment.

**3. What are the initiative's goals related to fiscal?**

Fiscal's goals will be to identify the true cost impact of the initiative. This will include determining which expenses will be discontinued under a shared services environment and what new services will cost the agency. The net of these two will result in the true budget impact to an agency.

**4. Will the agency receive cost estimates to use for budgeting purposes? If so, how would we receive them and what level of detail would be available?**

Yes, DIS will supply cost estimates for budgeting purposes. The work of the fiscal push/pull team should result in an estimate of expenditures expected to be discontinued in a shared services environment as well as a quote for new services at an item level, similar to a quote you would receive from DIS today.

**5. Will the agency need to provide any funding information?**

Each agency will have unique funding challenges associated with this effort. DIS will work with agencies and their budget analyst to make sure its appropriations are available. If an agency cannot secure its appropriations, this will be taken into consideration on the migration timeline.

**6. How will IT purchases occur – at the agency level or at the state level?**

Procurements within the shared services environment will be handled by DIS. Agency specific procurements will continue to be handled by the individual agency.

**7. What type of approval process is anticipated for IT purchases?**

The overall approval process for IT purchases is not changing at this time. Procurements within the shared services environment will be handled by DIS. Agency specific procurements will continue to be handled by the individual agency.

**8. Are there IT reporting requirements relating to budgets, funding, assets, etc.?**

At this time, no specific reporting requirements associated with this initiative have been identified. The agency IT plan will be the starting point for all fiscal information. If an asset is part of the shared services environment, it will be DIS' asset and responsibility in terms of inventory and associated reporting.

**9. Will billing occur on the current DIS bill using the current billing system?**

Billing will be done through the current billing system with the data center items included on the agency's monthly DIS invoice. At this time, billing will occur at current DIS rates. Rates are reviewed on a quarterly basis with ad hoc adjustments made as needed.

**10. Are agency level IT contracts allowed?**

Shared service contracts will be through DIS. Contracts for agency specific needs will remain at the agency level.

## Technology Q&A

1. What is the plan to move agency equipment to State Data Center-West?

See pages 26-27 of [DCO Push/Pull Team PowerPoint](#)

See video by project sponsor Jim Coyne.

With few exceptions, the preferred option is not to relocate existing equipment as part of the DCO initiative.

2. How long will our servers be offline during the equipment move?

It will vary from agency to agency depending upon the complexity of the migration. In the case of the Arkansas Development Finance Authority (ADFA), servers were taken offline at COB on a Friday afternoon and relocated to State Data Center-West. ADFA's systems were returned to full operational status within 12 hours.

[To learn more about ADFA's experience visit the video clip by AEDC and ADFA IT Manager Larry Tate](#)

3. How much notice will we be allotted for patron awareness?

Within reason, a degree of flexibility can be permitted once a specific organization's migration schedule(s) have been established. However, this is coming. Therefore, we suggest that Push Team members begin creating patron awareness effective immediately.

4. How does DIS intend to move our domain to their domain?

DIS will work with each organization's Push Team members to identify the correct architecture to meet that organization's specific requirements.

5. How much downtime will there be to migrate the domain?

It will vary from agency to agency depending upon the complexity of the migration. In the case of the Arkansas Development Finance Authority (ADFA), servers were taken offline at COB on a Friday afternoon and relocated to State Data Center-West. ADFA's systems were returned to full operational status within 12 hours.

6. If we have to move to DIS exchange services, what happens to an agency's exchange service?

At that time, it will become redundant. A transition process may be incorporated into the move, on an as-required basis.

7. Who will control the replacement of IT equipment?  
Post optimization, agency applications may not run on a dedicated piece of hardware as the shared services environment will be highly virtualized. If equipment within the shared services environment needs to be replaced, responsibility will be with DIS.
8. Will agencies be allowed to keep local servers for file storage/backup?  
Possibly. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending upon need.
9. Once consolidated, will agencies continue to have the ability to use the cloud?  
Selecting a cloud vendor(s) on behalf of the state is among the next efforts to be determined in the initiative. An extensive use of cloud will be a part of the DCO architecture.
10. What happens to agency's cloud services such as its cloud based switches, router/firewall, and its backup services with DATTO?  
DIS will work with each organization's Push Team members to identify the correct architecture to address that organization's specific requirements for its entire environment. That includes network devices (e.g., switches, routers, firewalls, etc.), as well as servers, storage, backup/archival, etc.
11. What is the design for accessibility of IT staff to meet agency IT needs?  
DIS personnel supporting the shared services environment will be available to agencies. DIS pull team members are available to answer questions and provide information. Contact information for each member can be found at this link [Data Center Optimization Initiative](#).
12. Will the agencies have access to programmers for maintaining, updating and developing specific agency applications?  
The DCO initiative is an infrastructure-only project. Responsibility for agency-specific applications will remain with agencies as will the employees responsible for maintaining, updating and developing them. Agencies that prefer to transfer management of agency-specific applications to DIS should contact a DIS customer account representative to discuss.
13. Will there be a cost to the agency for maintaining existing and future applications?  
Costs should be no different post-migration for agencies retaining responsibility for the management of agency-specific applications.
14. Will agencies have ability to provision its own servers?  
The end goal is to have a self-provisioning portal so agencies can access and provision its own servers.
15. Will any equipment or infrastructure remaining in other facilities? If so, what?  
A solution will be engineered on a case-by-case basis. If it makes sense for equipment and/or infrastructure to remain at the agency location, it may remain, but will be administered as part of the shared services environment.

## Personnel/HR Q&A

1. How will DCO impact the personnel reporting structure?  
Employees will continue to report to his/her agency director. The roles/responsibilities of IT employees impacted by DCO may be realigned to better support agency-specific technology needs.