



**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT**  
**Customer Service Annual Report**  
**FY 2020**

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## FY 2020 Highlights

### Department-Wide

- 100% participation in customer service training among required employees
- 76% overall satisfaction rate with customers' interactions with DBM, with more than 29 employees receiving positive feedback on customer service surveys
- 44 employees celebrated State employment anniversaries this year, including two who have been State employees for 40 years
- Maryland State jobs social media accounts experienced varied growth rates year-over-year and continue to reach up to one million individuals

### The Secretary's Office (TSO)

- Secretary Brinkley honored by *The Daily Record* as one of their most influential Marylanders for 2020—an award given to leaders in a variety of fields who have made outstanding contributions to their communities and to the State
- Processed roughly 650 constituent correspondences dealing with topics like budget requests, State personnel issues, and debt collection

### Office of Personnel Services and Benefits (OPSB)

- Online benefits management through the Workday platform expanded to all active and retired state personnel to streamline the first-ever fully online open enrollment period for benefits selection
- “OPSB STARS” recognized around the office and in the departmental newsletter

### Central Collection Unit (CCU)

- Continuing Phase 2 of a modernization project that will implement new and faster procedures for collecting State debt while also making it easier to interface with and exchange information between other State agencies

### Division of Procurement Policy and Administration (DPPA)

- Completed the merger of DBM's former Procurement Unit with the Department of General Services' Office of State Procurement to make it faster, less burdensome, and more straightforward to do business with State government

### Office of Budget Analysis (OBA)

- Launched new online budget transparency portal with simple, easy-to-use interface designed to allow everyday citizens with no budgetary experience to navigate through State spending data and be able to better understand where their tax dollars are being spent.
- Conducted advanced training on newly implemented budget system to make it easier for State agencies to prepare, understand, and submit their budgets

### Office of Capital Budgeting (OCB)

- OCB employee named this year's winner of DBM's Diane Bell Memorial Award

## Recognition Given to Employees

### The Diane Bell Memorial Award

The Diane Bell Memorial Award was established in January 2009 to honor a wonderful member of the DBM family who passed away in September 2008. Diane was widely known and well respected within the Department for her dedication, commitment to excellence, knowledge, hard work, professionalism, and excellent customer service skills. This Award honors her memory by recognizing in other DBM employees the qualities that made Diane so exceptional.

The recipient of the 2018 Diane Bell Memorial Award is Neil Bergsman.



Neil began his career in State service in 1985 and worked for the Department of Budget and Management in the Office of Budget Analysis from 1988 until 2004, when he transferred to the Department of Juvenile Services. He resigned from State service in 2007 but was rehired in 2013 as the Assistant Director of the Office of Capital Budgeting (OCB), where he has served ever since.

Neil is so well beloved by his team at OCB that each and every individual in his office joined together this year to nominate him as a group in order to reward him with the recognition he deserves before his upcoming retirement. In his nomination essay, Neil is described as someone who is greatly respected for his dedication to serving the people of Maryland and for his innate ability to motivate his team to excel. His

extensive knowledge of his craft unparalleled professionalism and customer service skills have made Neil invaluable to OCB. He will be difficult to replace, and the entire Department of Budget and Management will miss Neil when he retires.

The other nominees were:

- Nathan Bowen, Office of Budget Analysis;
- Joseph Consoli, Division of Finance and Administration; and
- April Hughes, Central Collection Unit.

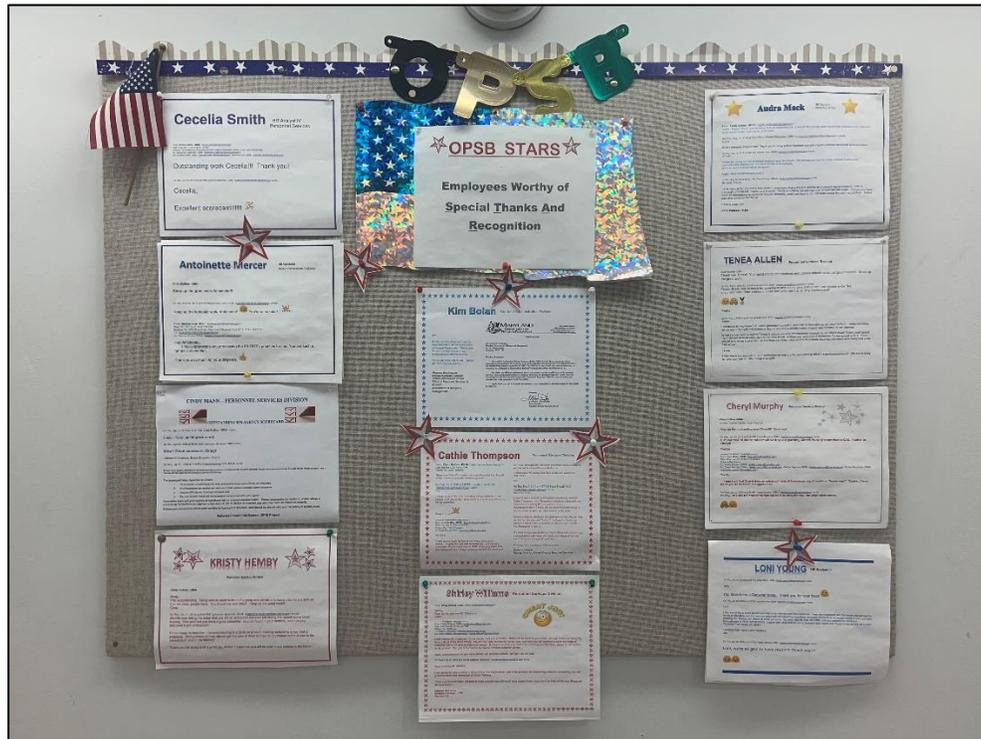
Recognition must also be given to the members of the award committee, each of whom took the time to review submissions and put forward a nominee. This year, the Committee members were:

- Christina Kuminski, Employee Benefits Division (OPSB);
- Nicole Webb, Office of the Statewide EEO Coordinator; and
- Paula Webber, Office of the Secretary.

Each of these individuals volunteered their time to serve on the Committee and we appreciate the time that they took out of their busy schedules to participate in this process.



## OPSB STARS



Since 2004, the Office of Personnel Services and Benefits has had a bulletin board posted outside their executive office on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of DBM's Baltimore location at 301 W. Preston Street on which executive personnel share positive feedback that has been received regarding the efforts of specific employees. The individuals named in this feedback are referred to as OPSB STARS, or employees who are worthy of "Special Thanks And Recognition."

When the program began, there was only the one bulletin board, but as some OPSB units began to move to different floors in the building, executive leadership wanted to ensure that all employees could still be recognized on an OPSB STARS board on their floor. This resulted in the addition of two more boards to the Personnel Services Division on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor and the Shared Services Division on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor.

Following the announcement of Governor Larry Hogan's Customer Service Initiative, the program has grown exponentially, and it is now rare to see one of the bulletin boards with empty space on it, due to the sheer amount of positive feedback that is received on a regular basis.

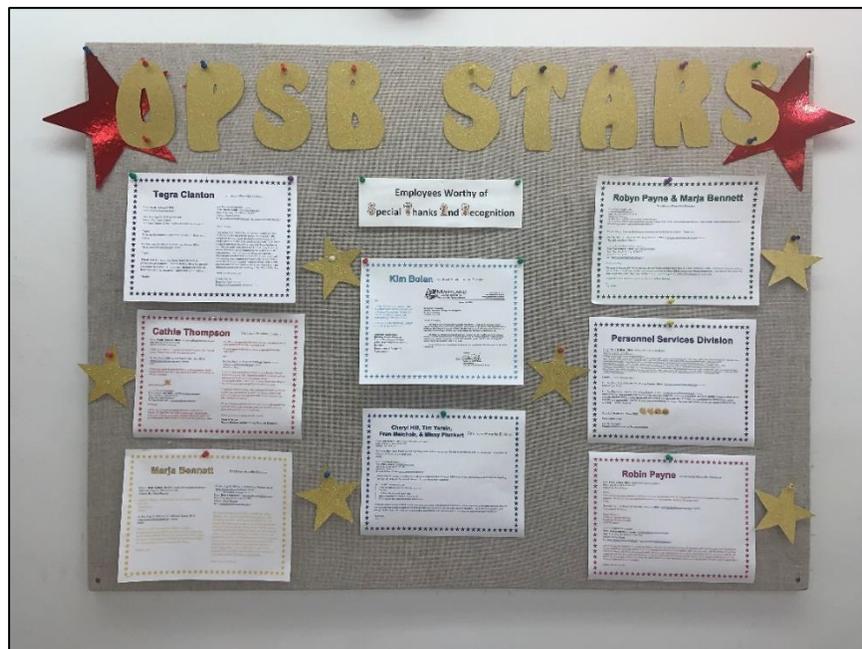
DBM attributes this uptick to three major factors. The first is the Customer Service Initiative itself. By reminding State employees of the most important element of their jobs—the "service" part—Governor Hogan has begun to transform the way we approach all interactions with our customers. The required customer service training

lesson has played an important role in demonstrating to DBM employees just what that means, and it has become clear that we have embraced that message.

Moreover, since late 2015, we have been incorporating the OPSB STARs recognition into our departmental newsletter by sharing a link to a presentation that displays all the OPSB STARs feedback received over the previous three months. We believe that this practice has encouraged DBM employees to improve their customer service both by reinforcing the recognition already garnered through the use of the bulletin boards in OPSB and by exposing DBM employees outside of OPSB to the recognition that their colleagues are receiving.

Finally, with the launch of the Customer Service Initiative, we began sharing the feedback received as part of DBM customer service surveys with the named employees and their supervisors. Because their work puts them in contact with members of the general public more frequently than other DBM employees, OPSB employees often receive more survey feedback than those in other divisions, and executive personnel at OPSB have begun to add these survey responses to the OPSB STARs boards. This increased awareness of the customer service survey creates a kind of loop that builds on itself as more and more employees see the recognition that their colleagues are receiving, which drives them to want to perform their jobs better in the hopes of being recognized in the same way.

OPSB executive personnel believe that the OPSB STARs program, combined with the Governor's Customer Service Initiative, has begun to foster a new era of employee recognition, with many employees now asking for copies of these write-ups to be included in their personnel file. Moving forward, DBM will continue to look for novel ideas like this to recognize stellar efforts from our employees and demonstrate the importance of adherence to the true meaning of good customer service in State government.



## Employee Appreciation Picnic



DBM has hosted a celebratory picnic for Employee Appreciation Day for the past nine years. The location has varied; however, it has traditionally taken place at an outdoor venue with grills, seating, and equipment for various family activities. This has also been the time when service milestone awards and the Diane Bell award are presented. Secretary Brinkley delivers some introductory remarks expressing his appreciation for another year of excellence from his DBM colleagues before transitioning to the awards portion of the event, when he recognizes each recipient individually and presents them with their certificate or award.

It was the intention of the Department to conduct a similar event in 2020; however, the coronavirus pandemic unfortunately deflated all such plans for an in-person celebration of DBM employees. As described in their respective portions of this report, though, we still recognized those employees celebrating milestone anniversaries in State service, and we announced the winner of the 2019 Diane Bell Memorial Award.

Depending upon the State continuing to make the necessary progress in containing the coronavirus pandemic, DBM would like to return to a semblance of normalcy with our employee appreciation picnic in 2021, but we understand that we will likely need to require participants to engage in the same kind of social distancing and good public health practices that we've been living with since the virus first arrived in Maryland in March.

We look forward to using this space in next year's report to relate tales and share photos from DBM's 2021 Employee Appreciation Picnic.

**\*\*NOTE: The photo used in this section was taken at DBM's 2019 Employee Appreciation Picnic\*\***

Service Milestone Awards

In an ordinary year, the service milestone awards for DBM employees would have been presented at our annual employee appreciation picnic. This year, we were forced to recognize these employees in a video presentation by Secretary Brinkley. The following individuals were named and thanked by the Secretary on tape before separately receiving an award commensurate with their years of service in State government.

**5 YEAR AWARD**

Tenea Allen, OPSB  
 Shaquel Braxton, CCU  
 Daisha Calloway, CCU  
 Jamie Cook, CCU  
 Erica Gilliam, CCU  
 Sheron Gresham, OAG  
 Tiffany Howard, OAG  
 Kevin Igoe, TSO  
 Nicole March, CCU  
 Christina Perrotti, OCB  
 Derek Roberts, OPSB  
 Shirron Scott, CCU  
 Jonathan West, F&A

**10 YEAR AWARD**

Amanda Brady, OAG  
 John Casey, CCU  
 James Cheseldine, CCU  
 Clifton Gray, OAG  
 Christopher Langley, OPSB

**15 YEAR AWARD**

Lorin Barnes, OPSB  
 Cynthia Davis, CCU  
 Montez Foster, CCU  
 April Hughes, CCU  
 Rubina Pak, OPSB  
 Kimberly Townes, OAG  
 Andrea Tony, OAG

**20 YEAR AWARD**

Christina Beck, CCU  
 Veronica Dower-Smith, CCU  
 Lindsey Einschultz, CCU  
 Jennifer English, OPSB  
 Cheryl Murphy, OPSB  
 Margo Smith, CCU

**25 YEAR AWARD**

Secretary David Brinkley  
 James Fox, OPSB  
 Kimyata Harrison, OPSB  
 Kwame Kwakye, OCB  
 Clarence Traynham, DPPA

**30 YEAR AWARD**

Robert Hayden, DPPA  
 Joan Peacock, TSO  
 Gloria Richardson, OPSB

**35 YEAR AWARD**

Lynnetta Johnson, CCU

**40 YEAR AWARD**

Natasha Herbert Brown, TSO  
 Sherie Leister, CCU

### Survey Feedback Notifications

Following the implementation of department-specific customer service surveys, personnel from DBM's communications office have begun to notify specific employees and their supervisors when they have been received positive feedback in a customer service survey response. In these notifications, the employees are shown the text of the survey response comments, thanked for their quality customer service, and encouraged to maintain that level of commitment to the Governor's Customer Service Initiative moving forward.

The following DBM employees have been named in customer service survey responses as having provided constituents with exceptional customer service—many on more than one occasion—and congratulated with a personalized notification from the communications office:

Abimbola Ajaiyeoba, OPSB  
Tyrone Bartee, OPSB  
Marja Bennett, OPSB  
Renee Carnes, DPPA  
Shantwan Davis, CCU  
Cindy Dorsey, CCU  
Jim Fox, OPSB  
Bill Frank, TSO  
Cheryl Hill, OPSB  
Marcella Hudson, CCU  
Shawann Hudson, OPSB  
Gabriella Huth, OPSB  
Stephanie Krakowitz, CCU  
Andrea Lockett, DPPA  
Katie Lombardi, OPSB  
Jerry Mason, OPSB

Roderick Morant, CCU  
Melissa O'Donnell, CCU  
Robin Payne, OPSB  
Nick Pepersack, TSO  
Missy Plunkert, OPSB  
Lonney Stewart, CCU  
Cathie Thompson, OPSB  
Lisa Valley, OPSB  
LaShaun Wall, OPSB  
Patricia West, OPSB  
Barbara West-Davis, CCU  
Laura Wixted, OPSB  
Tim Yersin, OPSB

## External Recognition

### **SECRETARY BRINKLEY HONORED BY THE DAILY RECORD**

Since 2007, *The Daily Record* has sought to identify leaders who have demonstrated professional excellence in a variety of different fields throughout Maryland and whose contributions to improving and enriching their communities will stand the test of time. Their 2020 list recognizes 53 men and women in the categories of civic leadership, communications, education, finance, general business, health care, law, philanthropy, real estate, and technology. In their section on finance, The Daily Record this year named Secretary Brinkley one of their honorees and provided the following write-up highlighting his accomplishments:



“Overseeing any budget, whether it be for an individual, family, business or organization, can be tricky. Now imagine managing Gov. Larry Hogan’s proposed \$47.9 billion budget for the state of Maryland in Fiscal 2021.

This task falls to Secretary David R. Brinkley of the state’s Department of Budget and Management who manages to balance the budget as well as approve funding and avoid cuts where possible for more than 6 million residents of the state. During the budget approval process for the General Assembly, Brinkley must explain where the money goes.

A University of Maryland College, Park graduate, the Republican served more than 20 years in the General Assembly representing his birthplace and home county of Frederick. He served as a member of the House of Delegates (District 4A) from 1995 to 2003 and later as a senator (District 4) from 2003 to 2015 rising to become senate minority leader.

As a senator, he was on the budget and tax committee for a decade and also spent two years on the finance committee. After losing a re-election bid in the 2015 primary, Brinkley became a member of Hogan’s transition team helping to craft his first budget in 2015 before being tapped as secretary.

Through his work, Brinkley is active with a number of boards and committees including the Maryland Cybersecurity Coordinating Council, the Procurement Improvement council and the Task Force to Study Cooperative Purchasing for Health Insurance.”

## Leadership Analysis of FY20 and Summary of FY21 Approach

In prior years, we have used this space to explain how DBM is uniquely positioned when it comes to following the tenets of Governor Hogan's Customer Service Initiative because most of our "customers" are actually employees of other State agencies. That is not to say that we do not interact with the public—in fact, our CCU is dedicated solely to collecting qualifying State debts from individuals, and OPSB provides important services to people involved in all aspects of State employment, from job-seekers to current State employees to people who have retired from their service with the State government. As such, we have held in the past that any analysis of DBM's past results and any game plan for laying out our future approach must account for the fact that most of our "customers" do not meet the typical definition that other agencies employ and must adjust our tactics and expectations accordingly.

This year, however, requires a different approach.

While DBM operated commensurately with previous years for more than half of FY 2020, the coronavirus pandemic that struck Maryland in March of 2020 turned the world upside-down. Thanks to the leadership of Governor Hogan and Secretary Brinkley, DBM was prepared for this radical transformation of the way we do business. By the end of February, senior staff had been briefed about the significant impact that the coronavirus pandemic was going to have on Marylanders as a whole and, necessarily, on our traditional operational structure. Secretary Brinkley scheduled a mandatory telework day for Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> in order to test DBM's capabilities to maintain continuity of operations even through the hectic upheaval of society as we knew it around us. Fortunately for DBM, the telework test day was a great success, because Governor Hogan ordered state offices closed the very next day, and we were forced in a wholly new way of doing business.

We must acknowledge at this point the incredible efforts of every single one of DBM's employees and their dedication to adapting to the new normal brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. Our team rose to the occasion to meet and overcome the challenges of the new normal we found ourselves in—both those we could anticipate and those we did not foresee—in our quest to provide the same level of quality customer service from our new teleworking conditions as we have in the past from our State offices. Our colleagues deserve far more recognition for their successes during this pandemic than we could ever hope to express in this space, and we intend to make good on that when we are once again able to host an in-person employee appreciation picnic (hopefully at some time in 2021). Until then, however, we will continue to try to make sure each employee understands what they mean to DBM whenever possible.

With regard to the specific procedures instituted in order to keep DBM operational throughout the pandemic, relatively little actually changed from the way that DBM has typically conducted business in previous years. The only true difference is that everything has now been taking place online. Senior staff would meet for a video conference every week to update DBM leadership about their operations. Our

individual divisions would then hold their own conference calls to relay any directives from leadership and to make sure all the staffers had the tools and resources at their disposal to perform all their required duties from their telework location. Leadership of other agencies or entities may have been required to take a more hands-on approach with their lower-level staffers to ensure that their operational structure remained intact, but again, the quality of our team here at DBM precluded us from having to take such drastic steps, leaving senior leadership able to continue to take the same high-level approach to guiding the Department as we would under normal circumstances.

We plan for much of this to remain true as we progress through FY 2021 and, hopefully, start to see the coronavirus recede to the brink of elimination. Even so, we are prepared to continue our majority teleworking operation, with the exception of returning to the office from time to time to perform any duties that must necessarily be done in person.

With the approaching start of the fall budget season, we are proud to announce that we have been conducting our agency capital budget meetings via teleconference for the first time ever to great success, and we plan to carry that practice forward for our agency operating budget meetings as well. Similarly, the coordination of our budget messaging for FY 2022 with the Governor's Office and the publication of the corresponding budget books have been traditionally conducted digitally or via telephone, so we do not anticipate that anything will change on that front.

The great unknown at this point remains the issue of how the General Assembly will conduct the 2021 Legislative Session. Throughout the 2020 interim, the legislature has conducted briefings via teleconference without significant issue, but it is uncertain whether their digital infrastructure, which was only upgraded to allow for video streaming a handful of years ago, would be able to support an entire 90-day session of floor proceedings, committee hearings, and legislative actions. In any case, DBM is prepared to work with our colleagues in the legislature to provide them with all the information they will need to know about the forthcoming FY 2022 state budget proposal, along with any budgetary concerns we have about the thousands of pieces of legislation we anticipate that they will introduce.

The Department's direction beyond that point will likely depend on where we stand as state on the containment of the coronavirus. If things are under control, we may return to a more traditional office-based operational structure, but that is not a full guarantee, it is possible we may look back at this time as a proof of concept that teleworking can succeed in the government sector and begin to rethink the need for the state to own or lease large office buildings when state employees can perform the vast majority of their assigned duties while teleworking. DBM looks forward to making this issue part of a larger discussion about streamlining State government operations as we settle into a new normal, just as the rest of the world must find a new normal and a way to move forward in the wake of the coronavirus.

## Detailed FY20 Results and FY21 Plans

### Customer Service Survey Results

#### **FY20 RESULTS**

As we have stated in our previous customer service annual reports, DBM is more likely than most agencies to receive survey responses from employees at other State agencies. This was borne about when we reviewed responses from previous fiscal years, in which more than 10% of entries were listed as “Internal”—in other words: coming from an employee at another agency.

As a result of this, we decided in the past to include those internal responses in our calculations. We determined that the benefits of getting a better picture of just whom DBM serves and what they think of that service we are provided far outweighed any potential for fellow State employees who are familiar with the Customer Service Initiative and what the survey responses are used for to game the system by providing higher rankings than what our employees truly earned.

Unfortunately, since FY 2019 DBM has only been provided with details about those responses that were categorized as “External”—meaning that they originated from constituents or public servants not employed at the State level. As a result, DBM saw our overall satisfaction rating drop from 82% in FY 2018 to 71% in FY 2019, but that figure did rise somewhat to 76% this year. On the other side, the percentage of respondents who expressed their dissatisfaction with the way they had been treated by DBM personnel increased from 16% in FY 2018 to 26% in FY 2019 before falling back down some to 20% in FY 2020.

If any individuals who completed surveys provided contact information, members of the communications office followed up with them with different goals. Positive feedback was greeted with a thank you message and an assurance that any DBM employee they named would, along with his or supervisor, receive word of their compliments. If anyone expressing dissatisfaction left a way to respond, members of the communications office followed up with them to determine the nature of their grievance, the need for any additional assistance, and the appropriateness of informing anyone named in their response of the poor feedback. Follow-up responses to these emails, though, remain exceedingly rare.

Unlike with the constituent correspondences received by DBM (see *infra*), survey responses remained relatively constant throughout the latter half of the fiscal year into the coronavirus pandemic. This makes sense because survey responses are only filled in by individuals who already had some form of interaction with DBM, so they would be aware that we were operational throughout the pandemic. If someone was simply thinking of writing in to DBM, say to voice their support for some generic budget program, they may not have realized we were still open, so it's possible they decided to table their correspondence until a later time when they knew someone in the office would be around to read it and respond.

### **FY21 PLANS**

Over the course of FY 2021, we will continue to analyze the data brought in from future customer service survey responses to highlight specific strengths of DBM's interactions with our customers and pinpoint the weaknesses where we can improve.

The coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent closing of State offices scuttled DBM's plans to investigate the possibility of using paper surveys as some other agencies have done to better gauge our in-person interactions between constituents and walk-ins at our main office locations in Baltimore City and at our MVA-based Central Collection Unit satellite locations. This would help us capture the opinions of a greater number of our "customers" who otherwise would not deal with our employees over email and would, thus, not have access to the survey link in our email signatures. As we continue to corral the coronavirus from a public health perspective, DBM hopes to return to this idea in order to expand the universe of survey results we receive and the population from which we receive them.

We will also continue to share internally the comments left by constituents, both positive and negative, to reinforce the importance of positive customer service in every interaction we have, because you never know who will take the time to complete a survey response and how your treatment of that customer will impact the ratings received by the entire department. As stated in the Recognition Given to Employees section, we have been forwarding the positive remarks to the employee and their supervisor and the negative remarks specifically to the supervisor with the request that they follow up with the employee about the issue directly, and we will do so for FY 2021 as soon as we receive the individual Mail IQ service from the Governor's Office or we receive the weekly summary spreadsheet of survey responses, whichever comes first.

## Status of Customer Service Training

### **FY20 RESULTS**

During the 2017 Fiscal Year, personnel from DBM joined employees from across State government to put together a one-size-fits-all online customer service training lesson that agencies can use as the foundation for a sound, ongoing training platform. In FY 2018, we worked to perfect our system of training new employees using this lesson. Since then, we have continued to use this system to the best of our abilities to ensure that new employees receive the highest quality customer service training we can provide.

In the wake of the success of prior years, it was determined that we would continue to assign this lesson to DBM employees through the State's learning management system, The Hub, in order to ensure that any new hires completed the online lesson before the end of the 2019 fiscal year. This made it easy to track completion progress and allowed us to quickly follow up with any employees who had been listed as "Not Completed," along with their supervisors. For FY 2020, DBM has once again achieved 100% completion of the online customer service training lesson from all required employees.

Feedback from employees about this training lesson remains generally positive, with many appreciating the light-hearted nature of it, compared to the dullness that many have come to expect from required office training. We have received criticism, however, that the lesson really only teaches what those with experience in an office environment would refer to as commonsense thinking—that it covers a great breadth of important customer service tenets but does not go into much depth about any one of them. We acknowledge this, but our goal at present is to give newer employees a sound foundation of customer service principles that they may not have been aware of prior to joining DBM. The fact that it also serves as a brief but significant refresher for more experienced employees who may not have received such training in quite a while is merely an added benefit.

Taken as a whole, DBM remains proud of the customer service training lesson itself that has helped train employees across State government since the implementation of the Customer Service Initiative and of our own employees for displaying great eagerness to complete the lesson with relatively little prompting. We will be happy to continue working with current and future employees to maintain that 100% status as we incorporate any future training into our customer service curriculum.

### **FY21 PLANS**

DBM will ensure compliance with existing training requirements for all new hires in FY20 and will work to implement ongoing "refresher" customer service training courses for those veteran employees who have already completed the preliminary course. Any such "refresher" courses will need to take into account the feedback that we've received regarding the preliminary course and delve past superficial, commonsense customer

service advice and into a more detailed analysis and explanation of customer service best practices—why they work and how we can implement them here at DBM.

Given the move toward teleworking prompted by the coronavirus pandemic this year, it may prove easier than in the past to begin to implement these “refresher” training courses. The thought had been that such courses would need to take place in person because the advanced nature of their material would require more than just a simple interaction between the employee and the computer. Now that we have nearly perfected the teleconferencing abilities of our modern-day computers, it makes sense that we would now be able to conduct those training programs online as well without jeopardizing the ongoing operational capacity of the Department during that time. We will look into this possibility and plan to have something more to report about this in next year’s customer service annual report.

In addition, communications office personnel will continue to send a welcome email to all new hires that informs them of the required customer service training requirement. They will be given one month to complete the training at their convenience as they become accustomed to their normal duties. One week prior to the deadline, communications office personnel will follow up to remind any employees who have not yet completed the training. Two days before the deadline, the supervisors of any remaining stragglers will be notified and asked to follow up directly with those employees. We believe that these procedures will continue to ensure 100% participation by our new hires within a reasonable amount of time from their start date.

## Customer Inquiry Response Times and Overall Time-to-Resolution

### **FY20 RESULTS**

Unlike in FY 2019, the constituent correspondences handled by DBM this year more closely approximated the traditional makeup of the letters and emails we receive from constituents. That is, until the coronavirus pandemic hit the state and caused a massive drop-off in correspondences. As referenced earlier in this report, we believe that this makes sense because people typically only write to us in order to either make their opinion known about an issue or to obtain assistance that they feel they can no longer get elsewhere. In either situation, the individual must believe that someone will be available to review their email; otherwise, there would be no point in writing in. Thus, when state offices were closed, it's quite possible people assumed the Department was completely non-operational, even though we never experienced a total outage the entire day, and decided to hold off on writing us a letter until the offices opened back up.

As for the specific count, nearly one-third (194 out of 647) of the letters and emails received by DBM personnel dealt with the budget request process in some form. In our tracking database, we have classified these correspondences into categories for specific budget requests (both operating and capital) submitted by stakeholders and public officials and designated whether they were submitted as part of the original budget creation process or intended for submission with a supplemental budget during the legislative session. The specific budget requests are forwarded along to the appropriate analysts for consideration in the State budget, while the communications office sends an acknowledgement letter thanking the individual or organization for their request but reinforcing the fiscal position we find ourselves in.

As has been expressed in prior reports, this heavy balance toward a single category of correspondence presents an inherent challenge for DBM with attempting to maintain low overall time-to-resolution. During key times of the year—from the end of December through the end of the legislative session—outside forces constrain DBM's ability to provide timely responses to budget requests. When the new budget is being finalized, DBM cannot make public any details of the forthcoming budget, so we have to hold our responses to any budget requests we receive during that time until after the Governor announces the new budget. Similarly, when constituents write in about certain funding provided in the Governor's proposed budget, the fact that the legislature may cut or otherwise alter that funding often requires that we wait until the budget is enacted until we can guarantee the constituents of the status of their funding.

In spite of these challenges, we believe the current system is the best method of handling constituent correspondences coming to us either directly or from the Governor's Office, so all our future plans for improvement will use it as the foundation upon which we will work to implement more best practices to continue to reduce our average time-to-resolution.

### **FY21 PLANS**

When looking at our plans for FY 2021, the most prominent variable at this time is the issue of how long the coronavirus pandemic will affect our departmental operations as well as people's behavior. As of this writing, we are still seeing a marked decrease in the number of incoming correspondences, and that could easily last into the foreseeable future. Although the number of people contacting us on other issues may begin to return to normal levels, it's possible all the press coverage about the drastic revenue losses that we will see in this fiscal year and in FY 2022 will have a chilling effect on the number of individuals and organizations writing in with budget requests. If this happens, we could easily see a dramatic overall decrease in our correspondence totals for the year, but as we have seen in the past, any unforeseen issue—provided it reaches a sufficient number of people—could easily drive those numbers back up again.

For the time being, though, we maintain that adherence to the current system we have in place would serve us best in reducing our average time-to-resolution metrics. If the communications office does not receive a draft from the division responding to the correspondence within one week, the lead on the service will send a follow-up email to the designated individual within that division asking for a draft as soon as is feasible. If the internal review is not conducted within one week from receipt of the initial draft, it will be easy for the lead on the service to speak with the individual response for reviewing it and ask that they do so as soon as is feasible. Finally, if the Governor's Office takes longer than a week to give DBM the go ahead for the final response, the lead on the service will send a follow-up email to the appropriate individual who has been tasked with reviewing that specific draft.

While there will certainly be exceptions to the rule, we believe that following the above process will ultimately improve upon our average as we work toward our ultimate goal of two weeks to resolution.

## Improving the Customer Experience from Multiple Perspectives

### Making Agency Services Available Online

#### **COMPLETION OF WORKDAY BENEFITS IMPLEMENTATION**

The Maryland Statewide Personnel System (SPS) is a cloud-based HR management, benefits and time tracking system accessed using a web browser. The SPS is made up of three applications: JobAps, the State's online recruitment tool; Workday, for personnel transactions, time tracking and absence management, and benefits; and Cornerstone, the State's learning management system.



SPS agencies had been using Workday's timekeeping module for the past few years now to track hours worked and leave usage by their employees, but that was always set to be the first step toward full implementation of Workday throughout State operations.

DBM and the Department of Information Technology served as the test agencies for the full rollout of Workday's benefits module. After that success, we began using the benefits module Statewide in January 2019 to process benefits events for new hires and for qualifying life events that necessitate a change in benefits enrollment.

In October 2019, DBM's Employee Benefits Division (EBD) expanded the use of the Workday system to include all 165,000 active and retired personnel for the purposes of processing their Calendar Year 2020 benefit elections as part of the first-ever Statewide online open enrollment period.

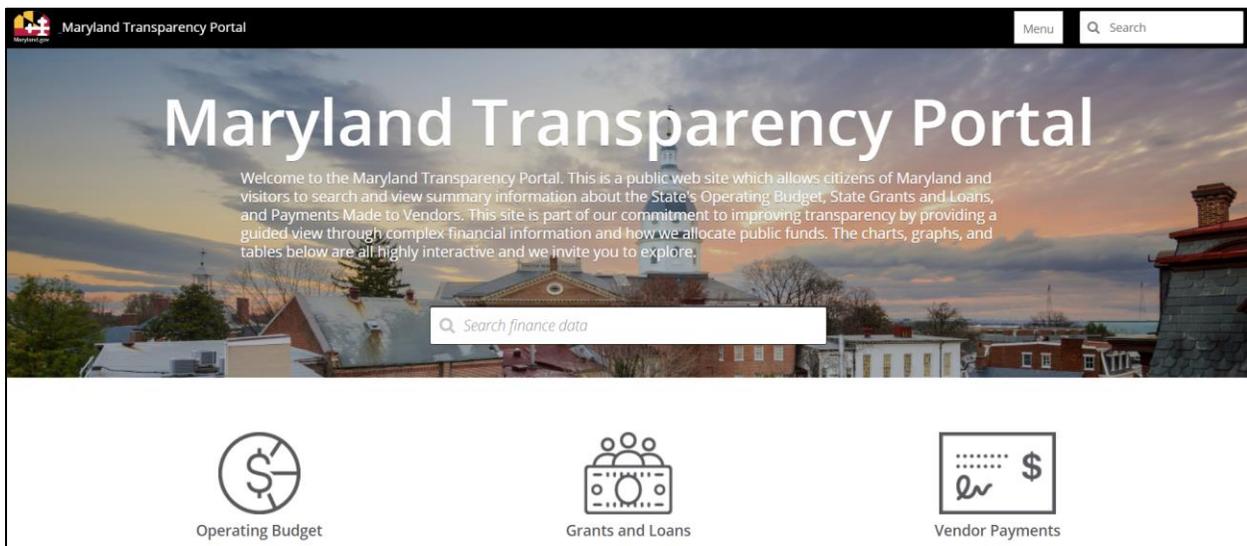
Workday has improved EBD's customer service response time and increased efficiencies by providing data at our fingertips with fewer keystrokes and less time spent processing. The system itself is robust and superior to anything used in the past, and we have only tapped into the tip of overall functionality. In 2020, we identified and corrected items that caused members trouble during last year's open enrollment, and we expect the 2021 Open Enrollment season to run even smoother.

## UNVEILING MARYLAND'S NEW BUDGET TRANSPARENCY PORTAL

In July of 2019, DBM helped launch the Maryland Transparency Portal, a new web-based application that will empower citizens to become better informed about the details of the state budget with a user-friendly and easy-to-navigate interface. Using the Socrata platform currently trusted by government agencies at the local, state, and federal level throughout the country, the Maryland Transparency Portal (<http://mtp.maryland.gov>) allows users to:

- Navigate budget information—including expenditure detail, fund detail, and position information;
- Navigate vendor payment detail by fiscal year (FY); and
- Navigate grant and loan detail by fiscal year.

Four years of budget information were available at launch: FY 2017 through FY 2020. Data for FY 2021 was added with the passage of the new budget. Additional budget information will be added with the introduction of future budgets, revised following the Maryland General Assembly's action on the budget each year, and finalized to coincide with the release of each fiscal year's closeout report.



Although information regarding vendor payments and the details of state grants and loans are already available on DBM's website, the Maryland Transparency Portal will streamline that information and place it within the context of the overall state budgetary structure. In addition, the new web app will enable DBM and DoIT to update budget information earlier than in prior years, and it will interconnect with other valuable Maryland data sources, including the Open Data Portal, in order to provide citizens with a comprehensive, but transparent, archive of Maryland's fiscal actions.

The Maryland Transparency Portal is an essential step in keeping the governor's promise to make state government accessible and convenient. Using the Portal, all the details of the Maryland State budget are just a few clicks away.

## Processing Times for Customer Interactions

### **PHASE 2 OF CCU'S MODERNIZATION PROJECT**

The Central Collection Unit went live in July 2018 with a significant modernization project that replaced several legacy systems. Previous accomplishments included the implementation of a state-of-the-art, Commercial-Off-The-Shelf (COTS) Debt Collection Information System (DCIS) software application, several Bank of America Payment Gateway systems, the OnBase Document Management system, the FICO Creditor Portal, the Online Forms application in addition to a new VoIP Contact Center. The new systems enable creditor access to CCU debts, the ability to submit online debt referral and debt adjustment forms, payment processing and document management for CCU operations in addition to self-service web and IVR payment processing for debtors.



As part of Phase 2 of the CCU IT Modernization project, the project transitioned to BB&T merchant services, which allows for a simpler and faster “pay-as-a-guest” feature to enable debtors to pay off their accounts with CCU in one fell swoop without having to establish a permanent username and password in our system. In addition, the new online forms system has praised by other State agencies for the way it has improved data quality and functionality. Finally, new interfaces were established with the MVA Customer Connect project to improve system integration between the agencies.

DBM is confident that these steps and those we will take in the future will address the concerns we most often hear from constituents who are having difficulty accessing the online system or reaching a collections agent by phone. Modernizing the Central Collection Unit will ultimately accelerate the timing of all interactions with State debtors and hopefully make even the process of debt collection just a little bit more palatable.

### **CONCLUDING THE PROCUREMENT UNIT'S MERGER WITH DGS**

The final step in the Statewide Procurement Reform process triggered by the passage of 2017's HB 1021 occurred in October of 2019 when the DBM Procurement Unit officially transferred to the Department of General Services. At that time, DBM's control of services contracts in the State formally shifted to DGS.

Since then, the new Office of State Procurement (OSP) has maintained office space in Baltimore for DGS commodities, facilities maintenance, A&E and construction contracting and in Annapolis for services and IT related contracting—as well as the new Policy, Review and Training Bureau being led by DBM's former Chief of Procurement, Jamie Tomaszewski.

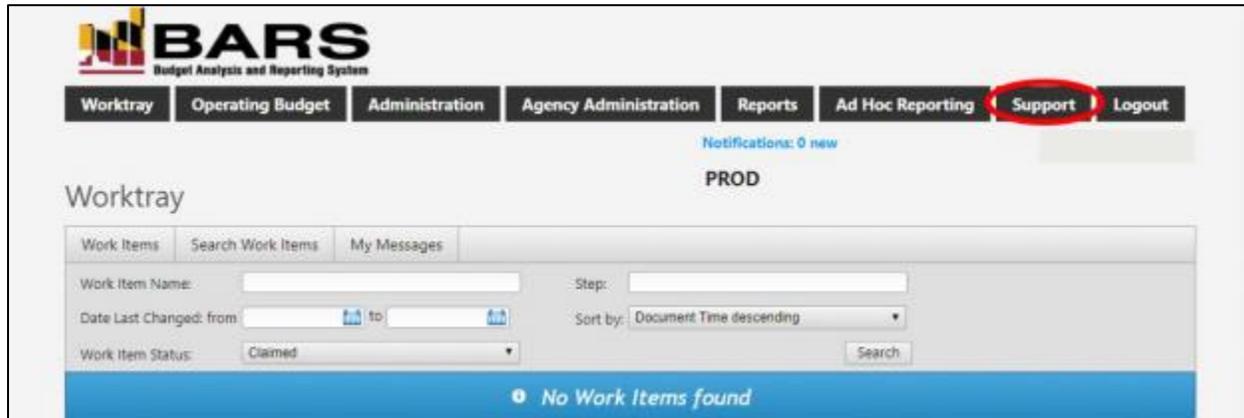
As part of this new Bureau under the OSP, Jamie established the policies and best practices for procurement for the entire State as part of the State of Maryland Procurement Manual. The manual serves as the guiding document for the Maryland Procurement Academy to use to certify all procurement officers in the State. Additionally, Jamie is continuing to update the Statewide solicitation templates for use by all agencies and the business community as the State continues to implement the recommendations from the Commission to Modernize State Procurement.



With the exception of some contractors still contacting DBM with questions about upcoming procurements, the transition has been a resounding success, and everyone on both sides of this merger is confident that it will ultimately lead to a simpler, faster, and more helpful relationship between the State and procurement contractors in the long run.

### OBA CONTINUES TRAINING ON THEIR NEW BUDGET SYSTEM

Following a wonderfully successful launch, State agencies continued to use the BARS (Budget and Analysis Reporting System) to create and submit their FY 2021 budget requests, and they will continue to do so for all future budgets. The full implementation of this system marks the culmination of a years-long process that began when the Board of Public Works approved the contract to replace OBA's legacy budget system in September of 2016, and our team has been hard at work since then bringing the new program to life and customizing it to suit Maryland's unique budgetary idiosyncrasies.



This year, a series of webinars aimed at providing enhanced training on the BARS budgeting system were held under the direction of OBA staff. As part of the webinars, all State agencies were asked to select a day to perform a deep dive with OBA staff to develop a greater proficiency with the BARS system. Now that many agencies have multiple years of experience in the system, we have transformed these training webinars in two ways: incorporating best practices and lessons-learned to create a more digestible product for agencies (i.e., shorter, denser), and rolling out these webinars later in the year so that the information is available to agency users closer to their budget submission timelines (i.e., "just in time" instruction).

More than 250 agency users attended this year's webinars. This year's BARS "Refresher" seminar covered a litany of content and best practices for using the BARS system for the FY 2022 budget submission process. Each session discussed foundational elements of the BARS system, additional improvements made to the system based on previous agency feedback, and tips for further mastery of the system that DBM users employ. DBM continues to emphasize connections between the BARS system and Microsoft Excel, a program with which many agency users have already exhibited a deep understanding. These sessions also included an update on the numerous tools available to agencies to assist in the completion of the budget submission process.

Early feedback from attendees indicates an overall positive reception to these training methods despite this year's online-only limitations.

## Connecting Directly with our Customers

### **SECRETARY BRINKLEY'S ROAD TRIPS**

In an ordinary year, the DBM communications office would have once again coordinated several “road trips” to localities across the State for DBM senior staff to meet with elected officials and stakeholders, tour capital projects that have received State funding, and otherwise spread the word about the new State budget to the most important customers of all: the people of Maryland. Unfortunately, COVID-19 turned FY 2020 into anything but an ordinary year.

While the coronavirus pandemic prevented Secretary Brinkley from conducting these visits for a good portion of this year, he was still able to speak to several groups about the contents of the proposed FY 2021 state budget during the early days of the 2020 Legislative Session—before the General Assembly declared an early “Sine Die” adjournment in March as a result of the outbreak. In that brief time, the Secretary addressed groups like the Maryland Association of Counties’ Legislative Committee, he spoke at Episcopal Advocacy Day and Washington County Day in Annapolis, and he defended the Department’s budget from criticism levied by legislative leadership in the General Assembly.

Secretary Brinkley is cautiously optimistic about being able to schedule some more of these “road trips” in the future, but the viability of those plans ultimately depends on our State’s ability to control any further spread of COVID-19.

So far, Secretary Brinkley has traveled to Allegany, Baltimore, Calvert, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Montgomery, Prince George’s, St. Mary’s, Talbot, and Washington Counties—some as part of his own independent visits and others in conjunction with Governor Hogan’s past regional cabinet meetings.

Wherever he has gone, Secretary Brinkley has invited members of the respective legislative delegations, along with local government officials to join him on the tours, to listen to some important remarks about the State’s current fiscal situation, and to share with him some details about the importance of the projects to their constituents.

On these visits, Secretary Brinkley has also striven to meet with local business owners and community leaders in order to listen to what they have been experiencing over the past four years, to explain where Maryland stands from a fiscal perspective, and to respond to any questions or concerns they may have about the current administration’s efforts to make Maryland a more attractive play to live, work, and do business.

Finally, while the visits have not drawn the same level of attention as when Governor Hogan visits places across the State, we have been able to garner a modest amount of local press coverage on these visits. Secretary Brinkley has been able to use this coverage to express the importance of these regions to maintain a successful Maryland economy, a strong Maryland culture, and a healthy Maryland environment.

PRESS COVERAGE OF DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY

In FY 2020, [the Kirwan Education Commission completed its work](#) and issued their final report of recommendations to improve the state’s public education system. Secretary Brinkley opposed the final report because it failed to specify a dedicated revenue source to pay for these improvements.



On January 15, 2020, [Governor Hogan released his proposed FY 2021 state budget](#), a so-called “accountability budget” that focused on combatting violent crime, investing in public education, and fostering economic development.

After the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, [Secretary Brinkley participated in an informal revision of the state’s revenue projections](#) to account for a rough estimate of the impact of the virus and the ensuing shutdown on the state economy.



In order to stay ahead of the negative impact of the coronavirus on state operations, [Secretary Brinkley brought \\$120 million in cuts to the Board of Public Works in May 2020](#), but more cuts will be forthcoming in FY 2021.

Social Media Usage to Improve the Customer Experience

**MARYLAND STATE JOBS**

DBM operates one major State social media profile across several platforms concerning the availability of and recruitment for positions of all kinds within all State government (not only at DBM). According to our most recent social media report, the reach of this profile is as follows:

Facebook  
 38,472 followers (as of 07/01/2020)  
 37,946 followers (on 07/01/2019)  
 1.4% increase in followers during FY 2020



Facebook is visually oriented content with text and link information. Facebook continues to serve as our best tool to reach 25- to 35-year-old job seekers, our primary social media target audience, along with those in the 35- to 44-year-old age bracket, our secondary target audience. Combined, these two age groups comprise 50% of our total Facebook followers.

Twitter

4,048 followers (as of 07/01/2020)

3,925 followers (on 07/01/2019)

3.1% increase in followers during FY 2020



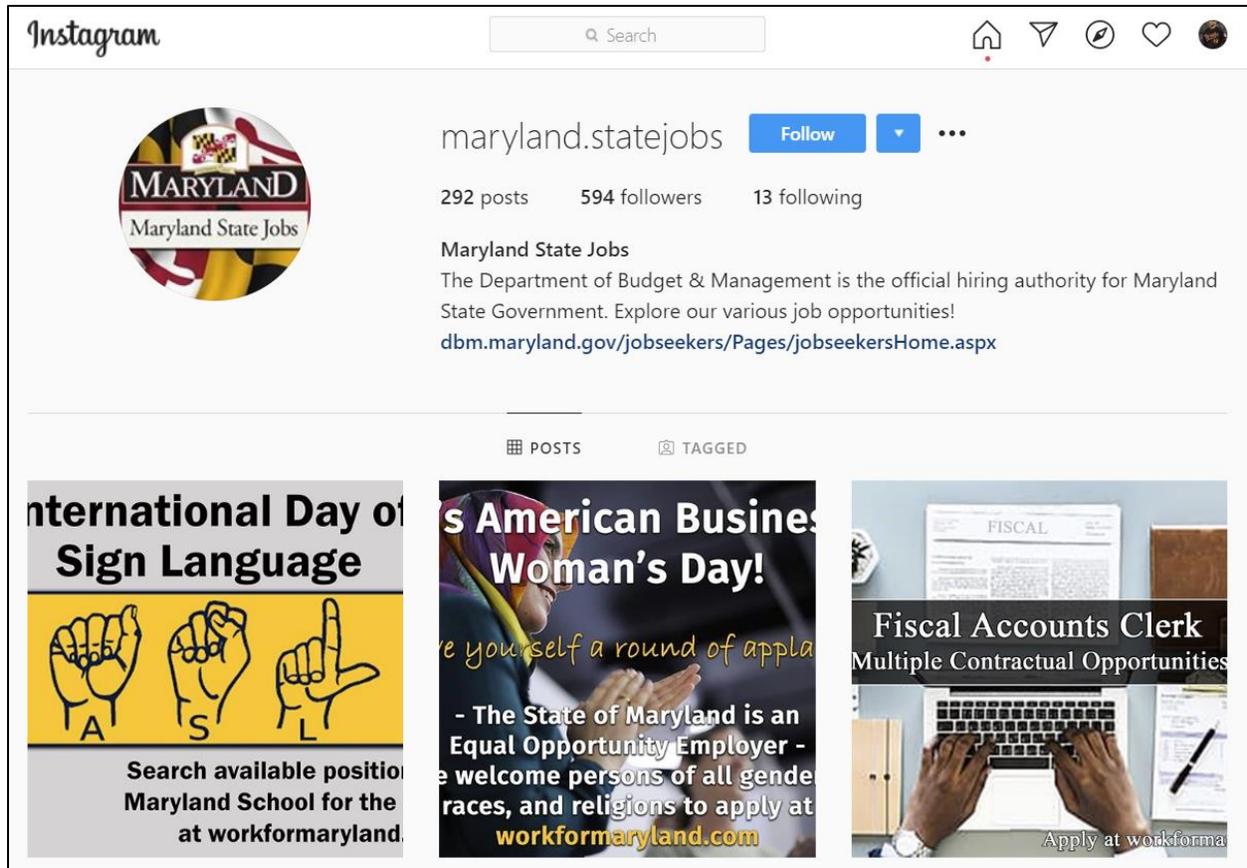
Twitter is more oriented to brief communications where Facebook allows more detail. We offer our Maryland State Jobs Twitter account as a customer service, and courtesy to Maryland citizens who may not be Facebook members or might want brief ongoing updates. The Mayor’s Office of Employment Development continues their commitment to sharing our daily posts with their now 2,400 followers and provides the opportunity for us to fully serve our community.

Instagram

550 followers (as of 07/01/2020)

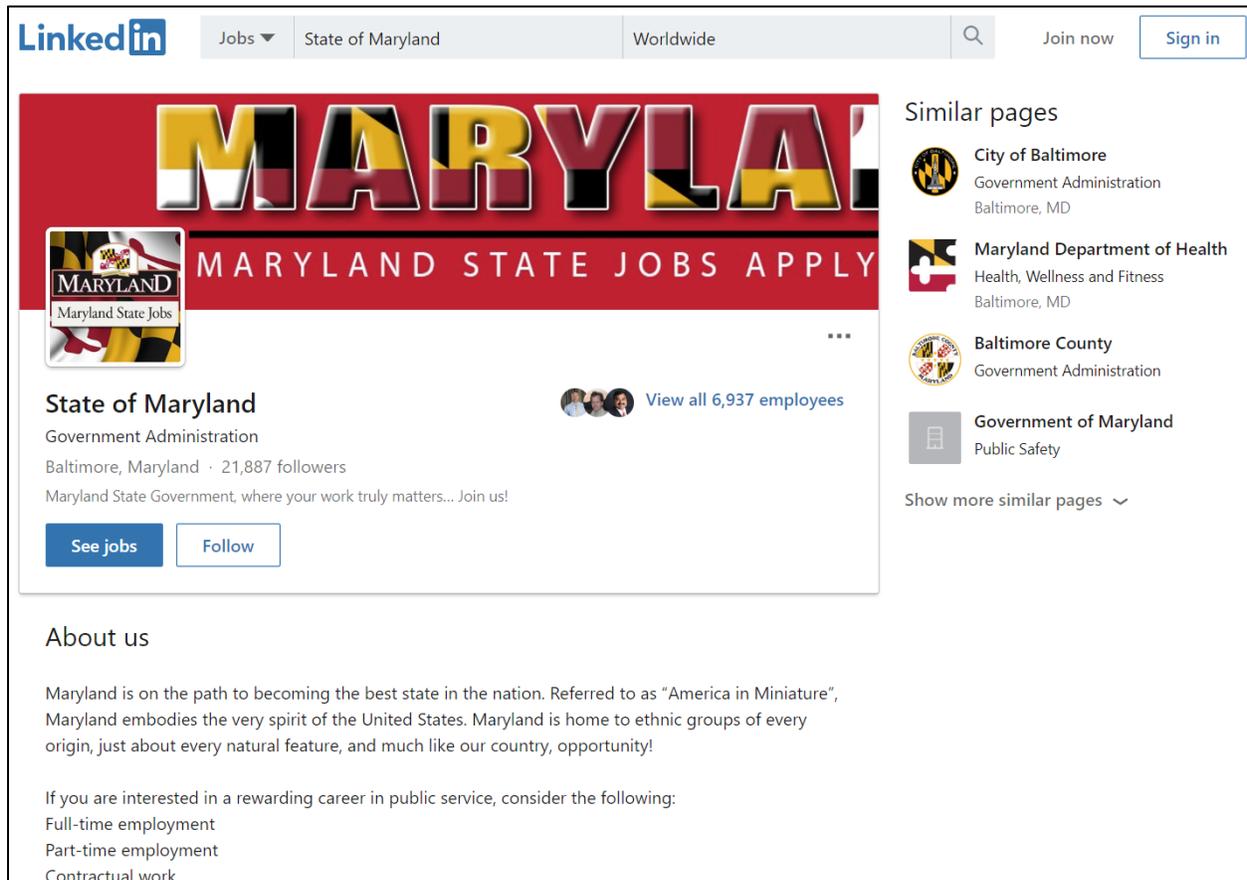
400 followers (on 07/01/2019)

= 37.5% increase in followers during FY 2020

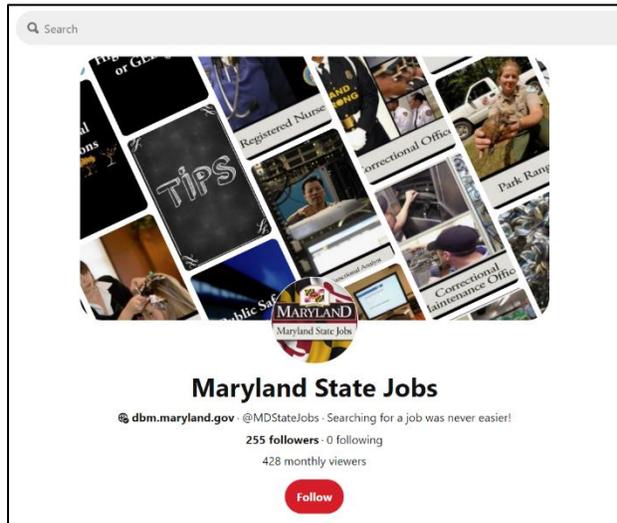


Since we have added this platform to our Maryland State Jobs social media campaign, our followers have steadily increased. Initially we were only posting sporadically to Instagram because their original post format didn't conform to our standard job postings. Once Instagram incorporated our format into their platform, we have been posting daily, and the results speak for themselves. Now Instagram is DBM's fastest growing social media platform with an increase of 38% followers.

LinkedIn  
21,677 followers (as of 07/01/2020)  
16,396 followers (on 07/01/2019)  
= 32.2% increase in followers during FY 2020



We have had great success with our LinkedIn account, which continues to expand our audience. Within the last year we have increased followers from 16,396 to 21,677 for a 32% increase. LinkedIn provides us the opportunity to reach the professional level positions that the other more “social” oriented platforms do not offer.

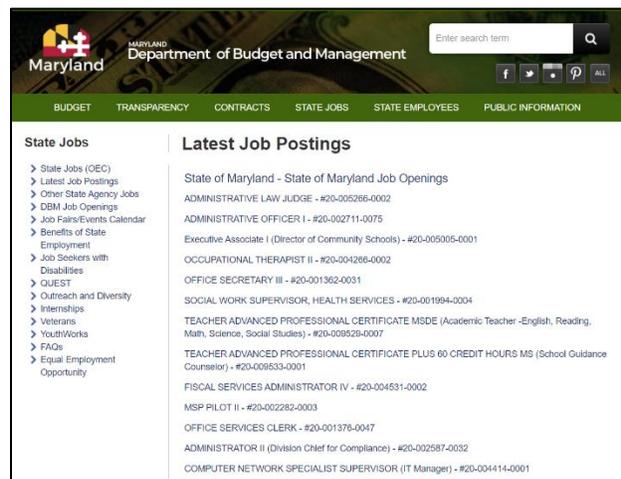


Pinterest

We created a Maryland State Jobs Pinterest account in 2016 as an experiment to make different state jobs available to people who are visually oriented. Although our followers are relatively low on Pinterest they reach a segment of our audience we don't reach within our other social media platforms. With 25% of our followers being 18-24 years old, Pinterest continues to be our best tool for promoting entry-level job openings. Pinterest operates on limited maintenance which provides us with time to devote to our higher volume platforms.

DBM Website

Our "Latest Job Postings" web page on the DBM website offers customers a user friendly and convenient way to follow the latest state government job openings. We link to the web page daily through our Facebook account and Twitter accounts. The Latest Job Postings page was viewed 16,329 times in July of 2018 and 13,248 times in July of 2019. We believe the lower number may be due to our expanding social media presence (see below).



**BACK COVER**