

Task Force on the Modernization of the State Personnel Management System

Meeting Minutes

Date: 10/31/2023, 10:00am-11:30am (Meeting #6)
Location: Web: Microsoft Teams Meeting
Video Conferencing: [Meeting Recording Link](#)
Presentation link: [Link to Presentations](#)
Task Force email: spms.taskforce@maryland.gov

Members Present: Secretary Tisha Edwards, Chair
Secretary Serena McIlwain, Member
Cindy Kollner, Member
Dianna Rosborough, Member*
Erin McMullen, Member
Rianna Matthews-Brown, Member
Tara Nelson, Member
Gwen Schindler, Member
Aaron Jacobs, Member
Denise Gilmore, Member
Jerry Smith, Member
Rosemary Wertz, Member
Joel Martinez, Member
Kimberly Prescott, Member

* Lisette Smith substituted for Diana Rosborough from the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)

Members Absent: Dianna Rosborough, Member

Staff Present: Raquel Coombs
Laura-Vykol Gray
Max Pierce

Presenters: Paul Webb, Director of Classification and Salary (CAS), Department of Budget and Management (DBM)
Lissette Smith, Human Resources Director, MDOT
Logan Dean, Program Manager, Maryland Apprenticeship and Training,
Maryland Department of Labor (Labor)

Call to Order: Secretary Tisha Edwards, Chair, called the third meeting of the Task Force on the Modernization of the State Personnel Management System (SPMS) to order at 10:00am via Microsoft Teams web video conferencing. The Chair introduced herself and the members of the Task Force and welcomed all participants and members to the meeting. The Chair reminded all attendees that this meeting is being recorded. The Chair reminded the body of the charges put before the Task Force and that we will soon be working towards a final report.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

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Presentation #1 Classification and Salary Overview: Paul Webb, Director of CAS, DBM presented. Mr. Webb gave an overview of the current ways an employee can progress within State government, the current work to review and where appropriate reduce minimum qualifications, and their current process for developing working titles.

Task Force Discussion of Presentation #1: The Chair opened the discussion by asking for more clarification around DBM's involvement in the development of working titles and noted that the current roll out seems inconsistent. Mr. Webb answered this is currently a work in progress and hopes to have this project completed by the end of Spring of 2024. Kimberly Prescott asked for more information on what documents/tools the State uses for developing working titles. Mr. Webb stated that they primarily use the MS-22 and position descriptions form. Ms. Prescott followed up asking if the internal controls are representative of the external labor market and what continuity standards are set internally within the state. Mr. Webb answered that DBM works closely with HR managers across the agencies to work for uniformity and standardization. He noted that this is a work in progress. Rosemary Wertz asked if DBM was looking to fully replace internal titles with working titles. Mr. Webb clarified that working titles are meant to only supplement the use of internal titles which are used for all HR functions. Denise Gilmore commented that, while CAS is doing this work, we should aim to reduce disparities between similar titles. Ms. Gilmore then cited an example

where a disparity currently exists between working classes upon request of the Chair.

Presentation #2 Choosing Job Titles: Lisette Smith from MDOT presented on MDOT's efforts to update job titles to be more attractive in job postings. MDOT tries to have their working titles match the broader labor market, that the working title matches the expected level of experience (entry, mid, top) and match the working title to salary expectations (*e.g.* they would not want bottom salary scale position called a director). MDOT emphasizes that their job titles are meaningful, relevant, and clarifying to help recruit and retain staff. Ms. Smith then went through a list of current jobs and their working/internal titles. She went on to explain that MDOT lists both the class title and working title in all job specifications/job advertisements.

Task Force Discussion of Presentation #2: The Chair thanked Ms. Smith for her presentation and asked that industry applicable titles be reflected in the record as a standard the State should seek to replicate universally. The Chair went on to elaborate that internal titles are often not clear to most people. The Chair also expressed her full support for the guiding principles of MDOT in how they post jobs. The Chair then asked Ms. Smith for a status update on MDOT's implementation of working titles uniformly. Ms. Smith answered that MDOT had completed this initiative and the only times where you will find a posting without a working title is if the internal title is already clear. She went on that this is an established practice and, to ensure consistency, they have their class/compensation team review all specifications pre-posting. After further prompting of the Chair, Ms. Smith explained that working titles are listed in their class specs to ensure work isn't lost. The Chair then opened the floor to discussion by the body. Aaron Jacobs asked if in MDOT's job listing they always put the working title first. Ms. Smith responded yes, as their intent is to attract applicants. She responded further that many applicants search by working titles or key words and if that these terms are not in your title then your job may not come up.

Denise Gilmore commented that bargaining unit status should consistently be added to all job postings. Tara Nelson asked if the noncompetitive promotional series are posted on job listings. Ms. Smith responded in the affirmative. Ms. Prescott asked if job descriptions are also being reviewed and updated as working titles are being changed and emphasized that jobs

should be posted to be clear to outside state applicants. Ms. Smith responded that all forms (MS-22, position descriptions) are updated pre-posting. Ms. Prescott further emphasized that all aspects of the posting need to be clear to attract qualified applicants. The Chair commented that DBM can set strong expectations and provide examples of ideal job postings for other agencies to replicate with minimal modifications. The Chair then closed the discussion and introduced the final presentation.

Presentation #3 State Apprenticeship Opportunities: Logan Dean of the Maryland Department of Labor presented on the current practices of State Apprenticeship. Mr. Dean went over the advantages of apprenticeship, the core components of state apprenticeship, the structure of registered apprenticeship programs, and went over some funding possibilities including State grants. He also gave current examples of existing apprenticeship programs in the State of Maryland.

Task Force Discussion of Presentation #3: Joel Martinez expressed his support of workforce development programs and encouraged the body to think about balancing of the workforce and considering how many apprentices/trainees are feasible for a given role/organization. Mr. Martinez further asked if the State has done any rotational work for apprentices to expose them to numerous fields before making them choose. Mr. Dean responded that this is the function of the youth program, but full registered apprenticeship is not the best model for rotations. Labor is looking to try and connect to other programs which can offer this flexibility, like Service Year and the Maryland Corp program.

General Discussion: The Chair then opened the floor for general discussion of the work of the Task Force and asked if the body had anything they would like to discuss. Rianna Matthews-Brown asked the body to consider the implementation of working titles and that we focus on consistency and agencies still maintain the necessary flexibility to function. The Chair responded that she doesn't believe in standardization but does believe in standards and welcomed the comments. Erin McMullen said she has enjoyed the presentations. Ms. McMullen went on to say that it is important to advertise noncompetitive promotional series and automate these planned reclassifications whenever possible. This could look like an automated process or an alert to the managers. Rosemary Wertz commented that the State should focus on the MS-22 language when developing working titles and not position descriptions as

they may be more useful. Denise Gilmore suggested we continue to continue to work with our labor unions and that there is more we can do with our classification promotional opportunities so people do not bottom out in their careers. Gwen Schindler explained that some job classification trees are overly complex with up to seven legs and that a clearer progression is a goal her agency is working towards with their classification teams. Ms. Schindler stated that the Department of Agriculture has been adding leads/advance positions to some classifications to help retain people. The Chair expressed her support for internal clean up in agencies.

Minute Approval: The minutes were unanimously approved by those present.

Closing Discussion: The Chair then asked the body to fill out the follow-up survey with their comments and suggestions.

Next Meeting Dates (10:00am-11:30am):

- November 14, 2023
- November 28, 2023

Adjournment