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Customer Focus is a bi-monthly update about the Department of Administrative Services for Iowa state government agencies. For more information about DAS, please visit our website at <http://das.iowa.gov>.

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Contact the editor at DASnews@iowa.gov or 515-281-7056. We encourage your feedback.

Customer Focus

A service update newsletter for valued DAS customers

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 3

MAY/JUNE 2010

State Employee Retirement Incentive Program Update

The State Employee Retirement Incentive Program (SERIP) has been successful if judged by the number of applications received in DAS. As of the April 15 deadline, there were 2,117 applications received from executive and legislative branch employees. Approximately 1,300 of those employees are scheduled to retire in the June 11-24, 2010, pay period. Even more SERIP applications will be reported soon from the eight districts for Community Based Corrections.

What do you need to know if you submitted an application?

SERIP applicants have the right to revoke their applications within seven calendar days after they sign it or up to and including the date of their retirement, whichever is later. SERIP

applicants completed a Beneficiary Designation Form with their application; DAS-SAE staff is reviewing these forms now to ensure they are original signed documents and that they have been thoroughly and accurately completed. A SERIP applicant will be contacted for additional information if needed or if a copy of the form was received, rather than the original.

What has been going on with SERIP?

The focus of the SERIP program to-date has been on the determination of eligibility of applicants, the verification of years of state service, the establishment of a new health insurance option called Gold Preferred, and providing information and assistance regarding the process as

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Public Safety Building Earns LEED Certification

On April 23, 2010 – during the week-long celebration of the 40th anniversary of Earth Day – DAS and the Department of Public Safety were awarded LEED certification for the DPS Building, which is at the corner of East 7th and East Court. The building, originally constructed in 1915, was renovated in 2005 to become the new home of the

Department of Public Safety. Previously it had served as the Records and Property Center for the State, and was often called the "Harvester Building" due to the fact

that it was originally built as a regional center for the International Harvester Company.



Ray Walton (DAS), Courtney Greene (DPS) and Michael Morman (USGBC)

When DAS assumed the task of re-purposing the building to serve as office space for DPS, a concerted effort was made to add a number of energy efficient and "green" features to the structure. After construction and renovation were

complete, an application was made to the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)

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SERIP Update

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employees explored their options.

Going forward, work will continue for DAS staff in the Human Resources, State Accounting and Information Technology enterprises on the actual processing of the information and documents on the State's HRIS/Payroll system. The monthly billing process of the insurance premium payments for this special retiree group is being finalized.

Another important component of SERIP is the annual payment of one-fifth of the retiree's combined years-of-service incentive and their unused vacation balance. DAS will process those payments in the last week of each September, beginning in September 2010 through September 2014.

Additionally, provisions of Senate File 2062, the legislation that established the State Employee Retirement Incentive Program, included reporting requirements of the departments of Administrative Services and Management. The annual reports to the General Assembly, the Legislative Services Agency and the Legislative Council are required starting October 1, 2010. The reports shall include information concerning the number of program participants, the costs of the program - including the payments made to participants - the number of positions not filled pursuant to the program and the number of positions vacated that have been refilled.

If you are a SERIP retiree

Please remember, answers to your questions are only an e-mail or phone call away. All program materials and a detailed document containing "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)" can be found at <http://benefits.iowa.gov/serip.html>. There are many people at the Department of Administrative Services who are involved in the successful implementation of SERIP, from its start-up to its conclusion in 2014. If you would like to talk to someone concerning the program benefits, contact Rachel Orris at rachel.orris@iowa.gov or 515-281-6124. If you would like to talk to someone about your last regular payroll warrant or the five annual payments which will be made, contact Jean McPherson at jean.mcpherson@iowa.gov or 515-281-3976.

We sincerely wish each and every SERIP participant the best of everything that retirement can bring as you move on to this exciting new chapter in your lives. Thank you for your years of service to the State of Iowa and its citizens.

DPS Building Earns LEED Certification

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for LEED certification. The LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design - Building Rating System is a voluntary, consensus-based standard to support and certify successful green building design, construction and operations.

At the April 23 ceremony, Michael Morman of the Iowa Chapter of the USGBC confirmed that the building had met the LEED requirements. The DPS Building is the first building on the Capitol Complex to achieve LEED certification. Another new building currently under construction at the corner of East 14 Street and East Court Avenue is designed to meet LEED Platinum certification. It will house the Iowa Utilities Board and Office of Consumer Advocate; the intention is to have a "model green building" for other Iowa businesses to emulate.

Also speaking at the ceremony, moderated by Courtney Greene, DPS public information officer, was Stu Crine, DPS building code commissioner, and Ray Walton, Director of DAS.

Director Walton said that the DPS Building – and its LEED certification – are a prime example of "what can happen when smart, thoughtful, committed state employees put their minds together to achieve a goal."

The award and LEED seal are on display in the main hallway on the first floor of the DPS Building. They are housed in a wooden frame built by the DAS Construction Shop.

Fiscal Year Close

Year-end activities for Fiscal Year 2010 are underway in DAS' State Accounting Enterprise. Close Letters detailing the instructions for closing out FY10 are being emailed to agency financial managers. These letters contain important deadline dates, forms and processes to use, and reminders of specific procedures to be reviewed. Also being emailed to financial managers are the corresponding Opening Letters for Fiscal Year 2011.

All letters can be found on the SAE website at http://das.sae.iowa.gov/close_letters/fy_end.html.



IT Consolidation Moves Forward

Progress continues on IT Consolidation efforts, originally enacted by Governor Culver's Executive Order 20 and further mandated by legislation passed during the most recent session.

At work are four cross-agency teams, each focusing on a specific area: Email Consolidation; Help Desk Services; Network Services; or Desktops, Laptops and Thin Clients. Department leaders including directors and CIOs are also involved and have met with the Center for State Innovation, Pew Center and Center for American Progress along with IT Leaders from Michigan, Indiana, and Colorado – states that have already consolidated IT services. The meeting was intended to assist senior policy makers with implementation strategies related to EO20.

The next important steps for agencies include:

- Planning is underway to consolidate agency IT hardware and software as well as how to best utilize IT personnel.



- Enterprise Email Consolidation will move from the planning phase to implementation phase. Agencies impacted will be provided with an estimated transition schedule.

DAS-ITE is also exploring opportunities related to cloud computing to gain a better understanding of costs, benefits, security considerations etc. Also, opportunities to work more closely with Regents Institutions to benefit Enterprise IT processes and functions are being explored.

A major shift in operations – such as changing your IT system or procedures – can be a difficult transition. Everyone participating on the four work teams express their appreciation to all agency personnel working on IT consolidation. It is hoped that, together, we will build strategies for state government that are beneficial to all agencies, and a cost-savings for Iowa taxpayers.

Changes and Updates at the Capitol

A number of projects are underway or on the horizon for the Capitol building, including an exciting restoration project that will "fill in" the first floor rotunda circle. Read on for more information!

First Floor Rotunda – In 1915, the glass block floor system was removed from the existing large hole in the center of the Capitol's first floor rotunda. This year the Capitol Restoration Project will put that glass block floor back with a historically correct replica. The existing brass handrail will be permanently removed. This will all be done by October 1, 2010 – in time for the World Food Prize.

Flag Cases – The four battle flag cases in the corners of the Capitol's first floor rotunda will temporarily be vacated so the floors of the cases can be temporarily removed to install fire suppression and electrical for the ground floor spaces directly below.

South Elevator – The south elevator is currently out of service as work is underway to replace it. It will look like the north rotunda elevator when the project is complete, which should be by December 1, 2010.

Tour Guides – By December 1, 2010, the Capitol Tour Guides' Desk will be relocated from the Capitol's first floor rotunda to the northwest quadrant of the Capitol's ground floor rotunda.

West Windows – By October 1, 2010 – in time for the World Food Prize – all exterior windows around the Capitol's west central projection will be completely stripped and repainted. Scaffolding began going up May 3, 2010.



Project Labor Agreements Already Paying Off

While containing costs with any large-scale project is important, it is even more critical when public funds are involved. Scheduling challenges, delays in delivery of materials or labor disputes can quickly skew deadlines while increasing costs of projects already totaling many millions of dollars.

Maintaining better control over large-scale public projects was the purpose behind Governor Culver's Executive Order 22. This order requires all executive branch departments and agencies to consider using Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) for construction projects of \$25 million or more.

PLAs are becoming more common for public projects throughout the Midwest. Such large-scale endeavors involve many subcontractors and it's critical to coordinate the progress of each participant. Being off schedule by even a day can cost many thousands of dollars.

In the case of two large projects for the Department of Corrections – building a new state penitentiary in Fort

Madison and updating the women's correctional facility in Mitchellville – DAS was involved in forming two PLAs. For the project in Fort Madison, negotiations were held with the Southeast Iowa Building and Construction Trades Council, representing trade unions from throughout that region. For the project in Mitchellville, negotiations were held with the Central Iowa Building and Construction Trades Council.

These efforts are already paying dividends. At the groundbreaking ceremony for the state penitentiary, it was announced that site package work – which entails leveling ground, building roads and preparing for other infrastructure features – was bid at \$4.2 million by Foundation Service Corporation, which was 31% (\$1.9 million) below the amount budgeted (\$6.1 million).

"This is a great step for Iowa taxpayers," said DAS Director Ray Walton, who was involved in negotiating the PLAs. "These agreements ensure quality jobs and quality work for much needed facilities."

State Reduces Passenger Vehicle Fleet

The Department of Administrative Services, following the directive of Governor Culver's Executive Order 20, took action to reduce the number of under-utilized vehicles in the state passenger vehicle fleet. This past January, the Fleet Services Division reviewed the number of miles driven by each of the 1,369 vehicles in the DAS fleet from July 1 through December 31, 2010. Using the benchmark cited by Public Works, LLC in their Iowa Efficiency Review Report, vehicles that were driven less than 7,000 miles in this six month period were to be returned to DAS Fleet for sale or reassignment. The 7,000 mile threshold (or 14,000 miles annually) is the number of miles required to be driven in a state-owned vehicle before its cost of ownership is less than the state mileage reimbursement rate of \$.39 per mile. Trucks, vans, and enforcement vehicles were excluded from this review.

So far, working in cooperation with other state agencies, the total state fleet count has been reduced by 117 vehicles. The reduction in fleet numbers may save state agencies up to \$791,550 annually in fuel, maintenance, accident, depreciation, and insurance costs, if the miles driven by those 117 vehicles are transferred to other less utilized fleet vehicles.

DAS realizes that changing the number of vehicles used by an agency can be a difficult or inconvenient adjustment for the agencies and their staff. **Thank you for working with us to fulfill the requirements of Executive Order 20, and hopefully save money in the process.**

Capitol Complex Calendar of Events

May 2010

May 8

MS Walk – West Capitol Terrace

May 15

Asian Festival – Grimes Grounds (Lot #15)

May 31

Various Memorial Day events on the Complex

June 2010

June 13

Capitol City Pride Parade – Finkbine Street

June 13

First *Music Under the Stars* event of the season – West Mall (every Sunday evening this summer)

June 15

Botanical Center Walk around the Capitol

June 19

Heart Walk – West Capitol Terrace

July 2010

July 1

Yankee Doodle Pops Concert by the Des Moines Symphony – West Capitol Terrace

Save Money by Purchasing OfficeMax-brand Office Supplies

State agencies have already seen significant savings using the OfficeMax contract for office supplies. Effective May 1, 2010, a new cost-saving measure was put into place to save agencies even more.

The "Auto-Subbing" initiative will automatically substitute OfficeMax-brand products for their more expensive name-brand counterparts on more than 50 items. So, for example, if you order a box of 1,500 name-brand mailing labels, you will automatically receive OfficeMax-brand mailing labels instead – and save \$7.12 in the process. All of the substituted products will match the quality of the name-brand item; they will just cost you less!

In 2009, agencies spent approximately \$66,000 on the office supplies now included in the Auto-Subbing program. If OfficeMax-brand items had been purchased instead, agencies would have collectively saved \$31,000 – 47% of what was actually spent.



This program was introduced at the purchasing meeting on April 8. It is similar to the Auto-Subbing program currently in place for HP printer cartridges. On average, customers order one cartridge every other month. If their particular cartridge is available in an "xtended" or dual pack, the dual pack will be ordered, resulting in a lower per-page printing cost and less hassle in frequently ordering cartridges. In the last two years, buying cartridges this way has saved agencies approximately \$80,000.

All agencies participating in the OfficeMax contract are automatically enrolled in the Office Supplies Auto-Subbing program. When you order supplies, your agency (and ultimately, the taxpayers) will reap all of the savings as a result of purchasing OfficeMax-brand supplies.

If you have any questions or would like more information, contact Dave Kaili, DAS purchasing agent, at dave.kaili@iowa.gov or 515-281-4774.

Upgraded Mechanical Systems = More Comfortable Office Temperatures

If you're a state employee on the Capitol Complex, perhaps you've noticed that this year's transition from cold weather outside to warmer weather – and from heating to cooling the buildings – has been smoother, with far fewer extreme temps inside the buildings.

What's the reason for this? DAS has made several operational improvements that allow us to start mechanical cooling on very short notice. Gone are the days of having to entirely switch the system from heating to cooling, with no going back. Now the heating and cooling of buildings can be adjusted as fluctuating outside temperatures dictate.

In order to save money and help meet the goals of Governor Culver's Executive Order 6, DAS maintains the buildings within a temperature range of 68 degrees (heating) to 78 degrees (cooling). Temperatures will be set back at night (after 5:00 p.m.) until the temperature in the space reaches 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Fan coil units, air handling units and exhaust fans will be shut down after 5:00 p.m. as well. If you believe the temperature in your space is warmer than 78 degrees or cooler than 68 degrees during normal business hours, please call the DAS Customer Service line at 515-242-5120 and select option "3" to speak to a technician.

FedEx Training

The Department of Administrative Services Mail Center is transitioning its ground delivery service contract from United Parcel Service (UPS) to Federal Express. A very recent rate analysis showed that FedEx would, on average, cost the state less money than UPS. In addition, the FedEx rates will remain the same until August 27, 2011.

On Monday, May 10, 2010, DAS will provide training sessions at two different times for state agency mail coordinators. These training sessions will be held at the location and times listed on the right. If you are responsible for mail in your department, please plan on attending one of these sessions.



Monday, May 10, 2010
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

OR

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Hoover State Office Building,
Level A, Conference rooms 5 and 6

DAS Customer Service Line Upgraded to Automated System

DAS implemented a new system for the Customer Service Help Line number (515-242-5120) on April 5, 2010. Calls to that number are now answered by an automated system that provides five options for connecting you to the proper staff. Customers will not have to go through numerous phone tree options to talk to a real person, but

I want you to know how pleased I am with how the new process works for reporting items to the Customer Service Help Line. We have reported a few items and found it to be helpful to talk to someone who is part of the process and can give us updates. I have even received emails of confirmation that items have been resolved.

*Karen C.
Iowa Department of Education*

by this simple filtering of calls, with one press of a button you will be put directly in touch with the person who can best meet your needs.

In addition to adding the automated system, DAS is reworking some of its customer service procedures behind the scenes to serve you better. One of the major changes is to redirect

some staff members' time to answering technical assistance calls directly. So, for example, if you're calling to report that the temperature in your building is too hot or too cold, the person answering your call will be able to pull up our system and look at the temperature on your floor and adjust as necessary, while on the phone with you.

The Department of Public Safety's Post 16 has taken over some of the duties previously handled by DAS, including parking and building access permits and door security systems.

We are also training staff on new procedures to report, track and, if necessary, escalate "trouble tickets" called in to our Customer Service Center. You can help us respond to your situation in the most optimal manner by being able to describe what the problem is when you call (for example, if someone noticed a strange odor, what does it smell like?), and being able to tell us the exact location of the problem (e.g., northwest corner of the third floor, by Jane Doe's office).

DAS customer service employees are currently closing out 15-20 "trouble tickets" per day, and making follow-up calls to ensure the matter was resolved to the customer's satisfaction.

As paying customers, we want you to know that this new system is cost-neutral, and is being funded through the existing Association Fees collected

Please convey my thanks and appreciation to the Facility Management Center staff who handled my recent requests through the new automated system. I am very impressed with the improvement in services and the personalized follow-up. Great job!!

*Susie V.
Iowa Department of Human Services*

from DAS customers. There will be no increase in fees paid by customers for this service.

Thank you for your understanding and patience as we transfer to this new system, and as we continue to make adjustments to ensure the system is working well for you. We believe it will help us serve our customers better and more efficiently.

The Customer Service Help Line is staffed Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except state holidays. During off-hours your call will be answered by a state answering service.

Now when you call our Customer Service Help Line at 515-242-5120, you'll have the following options:

- **Press 1** — To report an **emergency** and you'll be connected to Post 16.
NOTE: In an emergency, you can also contact Post 16 directly by calling 515-281-5608.
- **Press 2** — For **general information** regarding state government services, lost and found, or for directions to the Capitol Complex.
- **Press 3** — To report **building or grounds problems** on the Capitol Complex, such as building temperature issues, plumbing or elevator problems, etc.
- **Press 4** — For information about **parking permits, stickers, or building access** on the Capitol Complex.
- **Press 5** — For **employment or human resource** information.





A True Story... Iowa Code requires Agency X (who shall remain anonymous) to print Booklet B every year. Every year, Agency X has been using an outside vendor to print Booklet B. This year, Agency X discovered it could **save \$13,000 by using DAS Print** instead.

What could you be saving? Contact DAS Print at 515-281-5231 to get a quote and learn more about how DAS Print can meet all of your printing needs.

P.S. did you know... per Iowa Administrative Code, state agencies are required to include DAS in any print bids. Give us a try!



Upcoming Courses

Enroll now for upcoming sessions! Check out our website for available course offerings.

May Workshops

[Dimensions of Leadership](#)
(GI 230) May 11 - \$175

[Building a High Performance Workplace](#)
(GI302) May 20 - \$159

[Managing Effective Meetings](#)
(SC 242) May 21 - \$60

June Workshops

[Services Contracting](#)
(GI 148 & GI 149) June 1-2 - \$169 for both days

[Fundamentals of Supervision](#)
(NC 151) June 3 - \$99

[Professional Impact](#)
(GI 084) June 17 - \$115

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[May Calendar](#)

[June Calendar](#)

Certified Public Manager

If you have heard about the Certified Public Manager (CPM) program and have considered enrolling, the time is NOW! Cohort 14 is scheduled to begin in July.



Employees from all areas of state, county and local government, along with not-for-profit professionals are eligible and encouraged to enroll.

The Iowa CPM program qualifies for nine graduate hours towards the Drake University Master of Public Administration degree.

CPM is a Nationally Accredited program designed to:

- Improve efficiency, effectiveness, and cost-saving skills
- Innovatively approach and manage challenges
- Utilize best-practice management techniques
- Build high-performing workplaces

[Applications](#) are currently being accepted for CPM 14, which begins July 2010. Seats are limited and applications should be submitted no later than June 30, 2010. To learn more about CPM, visit our [CPM website](#), view the informational webinar or contact Judy Akre at judy.akre@iowa.gov or (515) 281-6383.