

**SERVICES AND ENTERPRISE SUPPORT
ADMINISTRATION**



Administrative Hearings Legal Management System

2015-17 BIENNIAL BUDGET

Request	FY16	FY17	15-17
FTE	0.0	2.3	1.2
GF-State	\$0.00	\$2,628,000	\$2,628,000
Total	\$0.00	\$3,204,000	\$3,204,000

DECISION PACKAGE SUMMARY

The Services and Enterprise Supports Administration (SESA) requests funding for FTEs and contract costs to procure software and personnel services to implement an Administrative Hearings Legal Management System for DSHS. By funding this request, SESA is expected to improve the timeliness and accuracy of the administrative hearings process, electronically provide information and evidence to Administrative Law Judges at the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), as well as reduce the need to mail hard copy documents between DSHS and OAH.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In 2013, there were about 21,500 requests for administrative hearings regarding decisions made by DSHS. These hearings are conducted by OAH Administrative Law Judges (ALJs) with participation from staff from DSHS administrations. DSHS has no electronic database to track administrative hearings from hearing request to completion of the final order. In addition, DSHS currently provides documentation for the hearings almost entirely in paper format. This is very inefficient. OAH is implementing a new electronic data system that will require DSHS to supply case materials electronically. In addition, DSHS must improve its ability to track and report the timeliness of administrative hearings. Recent court decisions have clarified that it is a constitutional right to have the hearings process completed within 90 days whenever it is mandated by federal law.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The requested funds will be utilized to procure, configure, test, and implement a data system for managing the legal cases which result from administrative hearing requests that appeal DSHS decisions. The request includes 2.25 FTEs for a project manager and staff to document requirements for the system as well as system developers, and ongoing IT support for the data system. In addition, funding is included to purchase software, and Quality Assurance (QA) services to support the design and implementation of the system. Work on the project is assumed to begin in July 2016 with implementation of the system occurring by February 2018.



DSHS VISION
People are healthy • People are safe • People are supported • Taxpayer resources are guarded

DSHS MISSION
To transform lives

DSHS VALUES
Honesty and Integrity • Pursuit of Excellence • Open Communication • Diversity and Inclusion • Commitment to Service

SERVICES AND ENTERPRISE SUPPORT ADMINISTRATION



Administrative Hearings Legal Management System

EXPECTED RESULTS

This request impacts programs across DSHS and will help ensure that clients as well as providers who appeal DSHS decisions receive a timely hearing; the request supports multiple DSHS goals including:

- Goal 2: Safety – Each individual and each community will be safe
- Goal 3: Protection – Each individual who is vulnerable will be protected
- Goal 4: Quality of Life – Each individual in need will be supported to attain the highest possible quality of life

The request impacts accomplishment of a variety of Strategic Objectives including:

- AL TSA's Strategic Objective 2.1: Affirm Adult Family Homes, Assisted Living Facilities and Nursing Homes are providing quality care and residents are safe through timely licensing re-inspections.
- AL TSA's Strategic Objective 3.1: Protect vulnerable adults living in their homes through timely responses to allegations of abuse and neglect.
- DDA's Strategic Objective 1.1: Identify individual health and welfare needs in a timely manner in order to support individuals to have healthy and active lives.
- DDA's Strategic Objective 4.1: Increase access to home and community-based services.
- ESA's Strategic Objective 1.1: People below 125 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) will have greater access to Basic Food assistance.

This investment supports the Results Washington:

- Goal 5: Effective, efficient and accountable government

While this decision package does not directly fund any of the activities listed above, a timely hearing process is essential to ensuring that DSHS actions regarding clients and providers is appropriate and in alignment with program requirements and DSHS's strategic goals and objectives. Whenever a DSHS decision is appealed, the client or provider must wait for a determination of whether their complaint will be upheld. In many cases, clients continue to receive benefits as they wait for a decision, but they may then be asked to repay those benefits if their appeal is unsuccessful. The longer the process extends the greater the overpayment. For providers, their ability to provide services may be stopped while the review of the DSHS decision occurs. For example a provider of long term care services might appeal a DSHS decision to revoke their license. This decision might be appealed and the outcome determines whether the provider can serve clients in the future. In some cases, the appeals process exceeds the prescribed 90 day timeframe.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) is working toward increasing automation of the appeal process. OAH will likely support this investment by DSHS as it will assist them in accomplishing their goals regarding automation. Advocates and clients will support this request.



DSHS VISION
People are healthy • People are safe • People are supported • Taxpayer resources are guarded

DSHS MISSION
To transform lives

DSHS VALUES
Honesty and Integrity • Pursuit of Excellence • Open Communication • Diversity and Inclusion • Commitment to Service