



FOLLOW-UP REVIEW • REPORT NUMBER 21-17 • SEPTEMBER 2024

Human Resources Administration

Action taken to improve enterprise-level human resources functions

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Why we did this review

This follow-up review was conducted to determine the extent to which the Department of Administrative Services Human Resources Administration (HRA) addressed recommendations from our January 2022 special examination (Report #21-17).

The special examination evaluated the efficacy and value of services related to hiring practices, market salary information, employment trends, and training. We also sought to determine whether there were duplicative functions within state agencies and whether any services offer savings through economies of scale.

About HRA

Established in fiscal year 2013, HRA supports executive branch state employers across Georgia, while also serving state entities within the legislative and judicial branches. HRA's mission is to provide agencies the resources and tools they need to attract, develop, and retain a high-performing workforce.

HRA is responsible for administering the flexible benefits program, drafting and disseminating State Personnel Board rules and interpreting policy, establishing and maintaining state job classifications, tracking employment trends, providing a performance management tool, and administering Georgia's State Charitable Contributions Program.

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What we found

Since our 2022 special examination, the Department of Administrative Services (DOAS) Human Resources Administration (HRA) has made progress toward addressing several findings related to recruiting and hiring platforms, shared HR contracts and training services, and enterprise-wide workforce challenges. The General Assembly has not made changes to require all state agencies to post jobs through HRA. It has also not clarified HRA's responsibilities related to maintaining market salary information.

DOAS continues to work on implementing the state's new enterprise resource planning system (GA@WORK), which includes a human capital management module. It should be completed in April 2025. The module will include talent acquisition, compensation, and learning management system functions (see below for more detail).

Centralized Recruiting and Applicant Platform

In the original report, we noted Georgia's shift to a more decentralized model for human resources, which gave agencies more control over human resources decision making. For example, while Team Georgia Careers serves as a central registry for vacancies and job announcements and an applicant portal, state agencies have used the site to varying degrees.

As part of the GA@WORK implementation, HRA is working with human resource representatives from several state agencies to ensure the new job posting and applicant portal site (which will replace Team Georgia Careers) meets their needs. HRA incorporated these state agencies' talent management needs into the list of desired system capabilities, such as the ability to track the source of job applicants (which allows state agencies to determine where job applicants learned about prospective positions and identify commonly used sites for particular job types).

Following the GA@WORK implementation, state agencies will continue to have the flexibility to use other job sites (e.g., Indeed, LinkedIn, Handshake). In addition, certain external recruiting sites (e.g., NEOGOV, a human resources platform specifically designed to meet public sector needs) may still be necessary for agencies to meet specific hiring needs.

Shared Contracts and Training Resources

At the time of our original report, HRA did not monitor human resources-related contracts procured by individual state agencies. This practice would allow HRA to identify opportunities for shared contracts and minimize duplication across the enterprise, which could reduce costs. For example, many agencies had adopted learning management systems (LMS) to deliver, track, and report on learning and training programs. A previous assessment identified potential cost savings (\$600,000 at the time of the study) by purchasing a centralized learning management system.

GA@Work is expected to include an enterprise-wide LMS to deliver DOAS trainings. This system will also allow state agencies to leverage for their own training needs instead of each agency procuring its own LMS (though agencies may elect to continue using their existing LMS). HRA continues to work with a group of agency training directors and LMS administrators on the design and configuration of the new LMS, which should help ensure it meets their needs. If used by most state agencies, the centralized LMS will allow HRA to gain information on the use of management training across the enterprise and determine whether statewide contracts are needed. According to HRA, state agencies' use of human resources consulting services will also be monitored to identify opportunities to share contracts and/or deliver services in-house.

Enterprise Approaches to Workforce Challenges

Our original report identified other human resources activities that would benefit from an enterprise-wide approach.

- ***Assessments of Market Salary*** – The previous audit found that while HRA could provide some market salary information upon request, state agencies were procuring market salary data on their own for various reasons. For example, some agencies were not aware that salary information was available from HRA. Since then, HRA has taken steps to raise awareness of its market salary data available and gain feedback on state agencies' needs. HRA has also used additional channels to communicate the availability of market salary information, including through its quarterly meetings with human resources professionals across state government.
- ***Assistance with Workforce and Succession Planning*** – In the previous audit, we identified opportunities for HRA to better highlight statewide workforce issues and meet stakeholder needs. In July 2023, HRA's new Recruiting and Retention Unit was established to focus on enterprise recruitment and retention issues. This unit is continuing the work of HRA's Workforce Strategies Initiative, launched in 2022 with the purpose of addressing the state's workforce challenges at an enterprise level, including boosting interest in specific job types. In addition, HRA used feedback from key stakeholders to update the data points included in the annual Workforce Report. Stakeholders had concerns about the lack of comprehensive information in past reports.

DOAS's Response: *DOAS generally agreed with the current status as stated in the report. DOAS provided clarifications regarding the use of the statewide platform (e.g., Team Georgia Careers) for job posting. A detailed response to this recommendation is included on page 1.*

The following table summarizes the findings and recommendations in our 2022 report and actions taken to address them. A copy of the 2022 special examination report (#21-17) may be accessed at [Human Resources Administration Special Examination Report](#).

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Status: 4 Findings			
Fully Addressed: 1	Partially Addressed: 3	Not Addressed: 0	No Recommendation: 0

<p>Finding 1: Most agencies use Team Georgia Careers to post jobs and track applicants, though some agencies have procured additional tools.</p> <p>Partially Addressed – As part of the state’s new Enterprise Resource Planning system, GA@WORK, HRA is establishing a new hiring platform with input from state agencies, which will include system requirements designed to address the limitations of the existing Team Georgia Careers. The new platform is expected to be operational in April 2025. The General Assembly has not taken action to require all state agencies to post jobs through HRA. It has also not changed HRA’s responsibilities for maintaining a central registry.</p>	
Original Recommendations	Action Taken
<p>1.1 HRA should work with state agencies to determine what hiring platform needs exist and whether it is more cost-effective to meet these needs through Team Georgia Careers or an external website. This may require a needs assessment process similar to what was used in 2013.</p>	<p>Fully Implemented – According to HRA, it has worked with a group of state agencies to determine their job posting and applicant tracking needs, which were incorporated into the requirements for the state’s new talent management platform.</p>
<p>1.2 HRA should track where job applicants are coming from (e.g., Team Georgia or another job posting site). This information could be useful in determining what job platforms work best to attract applicants in general and for specific job types.</p>	<p>Fully Implemented – HRA is now able to track applicants in the existing Team Georgia Careers site. In addition, this feature is part of the system requirements for the new hiring platform.</p>
<p>1.3 The General Assembly should consider either removing HRA’s responsibility for maintaining a central registry of all job announcements or requiring all agencies to post every job announcement on Team Georgia Careers.</p>	<p>Not Implemented – The General Assembly has taken no action on this recommendation. As a result, HRA is still required to maintain a statewide central registry of employment vacancies and job announcements in state government, but agencies are not required to use it.</p> <p><i>DOAS Response: DOAS/HRA supports the recommendation to require all agencies to post job announcements on Team Georgia Careers to “allow for better and more comprehensive promotion of state employment opportunities” and “more complete enterprise and recruitment data and analysis.” HRA reported that it has contacted agencies that currently use NEOGOV (four at the time of the original audit) to learn more about their recruiting requirements and ensure GA@WORK meets agencies’ needs. HRA noted that “all but two agencies have agreed to transition to the GA@WORK recruiting platform.”</i></p>

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Finding 2: Market salary data is available to state agencies, but some procure this information separately.

Partially Addressed – HRA has taken action to ensure state agencies are aware of the market salary data available and that such data meets the needs of state agencies. The General Assembly has not taken recommended action to clarify HRA’s responsibilities related to market salary information.

Original Recommendations	Action Taken
2.1 HRA should assess agencies’ market salary data needs to determine whether modifications to the surveys it purchases annually are necessary to reduce the risk for duplication and/or reduce the need for agencies to procure salary survey data separately.	Fully Implemented – HRA has surveyed state agencies about their market salary data needs. HRA plans to follow up with state agencies regarding their feedback on market salary data needs and to update the annual market salary survey report provided to the General Assembly.
2.2 In addition to current methods, HRA should use other channels to communicate the availability and utility of market salary information to agency HR staff, such as through its quarterly newsletters, podcasts, community meetings, and its website.	Fully Implemented – HRA used the recent state agency survey to communicate on the availability of market salary information to agency HR staff. In addition, HRA has discussed the availability of the data in its quarterly meetings with the HR community as part of discussions on compensation and classification.
2.3 If the General Assembly wishes to have complete information for every job in the state, which would include relevant market salary information for independent pay plans, it should consider clarifying HRA’s responsibilities in this regard.	Not Implemented – The General Assembly has taken no action on this recommendation.
Original Recommendations	Action Taken

Finding 3: HRA provides employment trends through its annual workforce reports.

Fully Addressed – HRA continues to take steps to ensure the Annual Workforce Report captures desired information for users of the report.

Original Recommendations	Action Taken
3.1 HRA should work with state budget offices, legislative staff, and state agencies to ensure all desired information is captured in the Annual Workforce Report or available through another means.	Fully Implemented – HRA has taken action to ensure annual workforce reports capture desired information for users of the report. HRA solicited feedback from state agencies in preparing the fiscal year 2022 and 2023 workforce reports and added sections on recruiting, compensation, and performance, as well as more than 50 additional workforce metrics. In addition, HRA has contracted with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government to assist with the preparation of the fiscal year 2024 Workforce Report to provide more extensive information and highlight helpful trends for state budget offices, legislative staff, and state agencies to address the feedback HRA received.

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Finding 4: HRA provides trainings and consulting support but could improve efficiency of state agency contracts for training and consulting.

Partially Addressed – HRA has taken steps to ensure the learning management system (LMS) within the GA@WORK system will provide HRA the information needed to improve the efficiency of state agency contracts for training and consulting. However, it is not known how well HRA will be able to address opportunities for shared contracts until the new system is fully operational and the LMS moves beyond a pilot program.

Original Recommendations	Action Taken
<p>4.1 DOAS, through its State Purchasing Division and HRA, should periodically assess state agencies’ contracts for management training and human resources consulting to determine common services and vendors and the utility of establishing statewide contracts for these services.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. As an alternative, DOAS should determine the feasibility of using its planned cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning system to track state agencies’ contracts for training and human resources consulting.</p>	<p>Partially Implemented – DOAS/HRA is actively working to ensure the GA@WORK system (both LMS and contract management functionalities) can track state agencies’ contracts for training and human resources consulting. It is still unclear what the end capabilities related to this will be.</p>
<p>4.2 HRA should leverage information it has on state agencies’ training needs and plans—which could be obtained through its audit assessments, surveys, or other means—to encourage agencies to coordinate with HRA and other state agencies when possible prior to contracting for training services.</p>	<p>Partially Implemented – No action has been taken to obtain information on state agencies’ training needs and plans. However, HRA continues to work on the design and configuration of the new enterprise-wide LMS, which is expected to assist with monitoring participating agencies’ training activity and identifying opportunities to coordinate.</p>

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