

## Report on Boards & Commissions

Department: Inspector General

Secretary: Elizabeth Smith

The purpose of this report is 1) prompt and analysis of the Boards & Commissions in your Department and to identify efficiency (cost savings) and effectiveness (better results) opportunities and 2) to propose and develop to deliver efficiency and effectiveness improvements.

### Boards & Commissions Project Proposal

1.1 List all boards, commissions, etc. within your department.

- A. The Arkansas Fair Housing Commission is a regulatory enforcement agency charged with receiving, initiating, investigating, conciliating, and litigating fair housing and fair lending violations occurring within the State of Arkansas.

1.2 What state resources support each board, commission, etc.? What is the total cost associated with each board, commission, etc. broken down by general revenue and by all other sources?

- A. The Full Commission is made up of 13 Governor and legislative appointees who are charged with hearing fair housing cases upon administrative adjudication. Commissioners are appointed from each of the state's four Congressional Districts and represent industry and public interests. The Commission is staffed with an Executive Director and support team made up of 1 Chief Investigator, 3 Investigators, a Fiscal Support Manager, a Public Information Officer and Executive Assistant. The Arkansas Attorney General is responsible for providing technical, legal and enforcement assistance.
- B. The total cost for the Board is the state stipend for Board member attendees per meeting (\$110) plus mileage. We currently have 12 Board members, including a state employee who is therefore ineligible to receive a stipend. The meeting stipends and mileage are paid through Arkansas Special Revenue Fund, HUA022F. In prior years, lunches were served for each Board meeting at Commission expense. This fiscal year, in order to increase efficiency and reduce expenses, the practice of purchasing lunch was discontinued and the ability to participate via telephone will be allowed, reducing mileage expenses as well. Our meetings will be held quarterly to coordinate with any administrative hearings scheduled.

1.3 What are the key results, outcomes, performance indicators and /or success measures for each board, commission, etc.?

A. Performance indicators and/or success measures are the number of cases closed by the Fair Housing Commission each year. The goal is to close a minimum of 100 cases per year in order to maximize federal funding. As of January 31, 2020, our agency has closed 146 cases; 70 cases more than were closed in FY '19. Therefore, we will far exceed our minimum goal of 100 cases closed for FY '20.

1.4 After a thorough analysis of boards, commission, etc. within your department, identify key opportunities you would propose for more effective operations, improved services, and/or efficiencies.

A. Board meetings will be held quarterly in conjunction with Administrative hearings or telephonically to create efficiencies and cost savings. In prior years, the Commission provided lunch for each Board meeting. This practice has been eliminated. Scheduling Administrative hearings in conjunction with the Board meetings will create efficiency by requiring only one travel day per quarter for the members, or if a hearing is not necessary, the meeting could be conducted by telephone resulting in less mileage reimbursement.

B. As a result of Transformation, the Fair Housing Commission staff physically joined the larger Department of Inspector General, reducing rental expense of \$34,356 per year and creating efficiencies within the Department. We now share space and resources, such as Fiscal, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Legal Counsel. Conference space is also shared with the Department which saves money and provides a dedicated intake conference space which was not available in the previous location.

C. All of the Fair Housing paper files are currently being digitized in order to reduce file storage space and allow for an efficient document management system.

1.5 Identify any obstacles to the implementation of these proposals.

A. Fair Housing is currently seeking to procure an efficient document management system.

1.6 What would be key action steps for these proposals?

We have identified Laserfiche as the currently preferred document management system. One hurdle is determining whether the quote of approximately \$10,000, is a fair and appropriate cost for this solution. Another hurdle is be determining whether this solution could be available to the entire Department as an enterprise solution.