

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICIES AND STANDARDS

A Report Prepared for the
Legislative Finance Committee

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September 25, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

The Montana Information Technology Act (Title 2, Chapter 17, Part 5, MCA) assigned responsibility to establish and enforce statewide information technology policies and standards to the Department of Administration. Montana law also assigns the duty for monitoring information technology policies of the department to the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC). More specifically, to:

- Identify issues likely to require future legislative attention
- Evaluate proposed information technology policy changes and the fiscal implication of the proposed changes

In October 2005, a legislative audit of Montana enterprise information technology (IT) management was published. The audit found that the Department of Administration has fallen short in terms of documenting rules, policies, procedures, and guidelines used by the department since the inception of the Montana Information Technology Act. In response to the findings of the audit, the department has been developing policies and procedures for the various aspects of the act.

Documenting information technology policies and standards is not only required in the Montana Information Technology Act, it enhances the ability of the department to enforce the act by clearly identifying to state agencies the requirements and their roles for developing and managing IT resources. This report highlights the IT policies and procedures that have been proposed or approved since the June meeting of the LFC. These reports of new or changes to existing IT policies are made to the LFC because a new or amended IT policy or standard could potentially result in a significant fiscal impact to the state. Being involved as policies or standards are proposed or implemented allows the committee to influence the policy or be involved early to influence underlying fiscal policy or impacts.

No fiscal concerns are raised with any of the policies and standard highlighted in this report.

RECENT INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Since the June 2006 LFC meeting and in response to the legislative audit of Montana enterprise information technology and audits of other various IT related subjects, the Department of Administration has developed the following policies, standards, or processes:

- Policy for Establishing and Implementing Statewide Information Technology Policies and Standards
- Procedure for Establishing and Implementing Statewide Information Technology Policies and Standards
- Interim Statewide Information Technology Standard – Statewide Wiring
- Policy for Cellular Devices and Services

STAFF REVIEW

The department has provided copies of all proposed IT policies, standards, and processes to LFC staff and staff has reviewed the proposals on behalf of the committee. During the review of the above policies, standards, and processes, staff provided comments to the department, but identified neither issues of concern nor unusual fiscal impacts to bring to the committee's attention outside of the regular committee meeting schedule.

SUMMARY OF APPROVED POLICIES, STANDARDS, AND PROCESSES

Highlights of the above guiding documents are presented below. For further details, the complete guiding document for each is included in Appendix B along with a cover memo (email) from the department that explains why the document was developed, the fiscal impact, and relationship to the statewide strategic IT plan. All IT policies and standards can be viewed on the Department of Administration web site at: <http://itsd.mt.gov/policy/itpolicy.asp>.

Policy and Procedure for Establishing and Implementing Statewide Information Technology Policies and Standards

What the Document Does

The policy and the accompanying procedure for establishing and implementing statewide IT policies and standards were approved and went into effect on July 24, 2006. Together they established how the Information Technology Services Division of the Department of Administration will develop and implement all statewide IT policies and standard.

Fiscal Impacts

According to the department, the fiscal impacts are indirect and immeasurable. Staff review of the fiscal impact has not identified any unusual fiscal burden that goes beyond present law funding for the department or any other agency. Developing policies and procedures for present law are activities all agencies should already be structured and funded to do, so not additional fiscal burden should be imposed. Furthermore, since the policy and procedure establish the rules for how all other such guiding documents will be developed, the fiscal impact can not be determined until the specific guiding document is developed under these guidelines, but will be addressed with subsequent guiding documents of specific topics.

Statewide Information Technology Standard – Statewide Wiring

What the Document Does

The statewide wiring standard was approved and went into effect on July 25, 2006, as interim standards for all wiring and cabling installations connecting to the state's SummitNet network. The standards match national standards.

Fiscal Impacts

According to the department, these standards should not have any fiscal impact if followed. During staff review, it was identified that there would be no fiscal impact only if current installations met the standards that have existed for some time. According to the department, all current installations meet the standard.

Policy for Cellular Devices and Services

What the Document Does

The policy for cellular devices and services was approved and went into effect on July 21, 2006. The policy was established in response to a December 2005 legislative audit of state use of cellular devices. The policy applies to all Montana state government and sets the requirements for issuing, using, and monitoring the use of cellular devices for official state business. The policy assigns responsibility for regulating the use and selecting device requests and service providers to all state agencies. It also establishes the requirements for reimbursements of private device costs when the device is used for state business.

Fiscal Impacts

According to the department, the policy would imply costs for:

- Distributing the policy and educating employees (non-recurring at \$10 per supervisor)
- Requesting and authorizing devices (per-device and non-recurring at \$30 per device)
- Monthly costs for users and supervisors to review cellular device bills (\$15 per device)
- Monthly costs for cellular managers in each agency to maintain records, review bills, and resolve problems (\$300 per cellular manager)

Although these costs are itemized in the transmittal cover, the costs are similar to the current staff and program management duties of existing supervisors and managers, so should not impose a fiscal impact over and above present law funding. The policy doesn't establish new supervisor duties, but documents specific duties and responsibilities that should currently be taking place.

SUMMARY

A legislative audit of the enterprise information technology management in Montana state government found that the Department of Administration hadn't adequately documented rule, policies, procedures, and other guidance documents to implement the Montana Information Technology Act. In response, the department has begun developing and implementing such guidance documents. Four have been approved since the June 2006 LFC meeting. The four documents either define the policy or procedure for how other such guidance will be developed in the future or document the standards for existing processes. No issues have been identified in the review of the recently approved documents and no significant fiscal impacts have been identified.

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APPENDIX A

Process for LFC and DOA Interaction – IT Governance

Process for LFC and DOA Interaction – IT Governance

In previous interims, the LFC has adopted a process for interacting with the department in fulfilling its IT oversight duties. The LFC may wish to adopt the same or a similar process described below and developed with the following goals:

- Have a single source of official consolidated information on IT policy issues
- Provide written information in time to allow staff review and be included in committee mailings
- Determine committee consensus through a vote
- Review IT policy issues
- Review potential legislation

The previous process is as follows:

- All issues and information coming before the committee should be funneled through Montana's chief information officer (CIO)
- When bringing an IT policy issue before the committee, the CIO should assess the policy as it relates to the most current statewide IT strategic plan and determine the fiscal impacts of the issue
- The CIO should document the evaluation and fiscal impacts in a written report to the Legislative Fiscal Analyst (LFA) one week in advance of committee mailings that occur prior to each regularly scheduled committee meeting (mailings occur two weeks prior to committee meetings). Therefore, the CIO should schedule report delivery so the LFA receives it three weeks prior to the LFC meeting
- The mailings to committee members prior to LFC meetings should include any report prepared by the CIO and an accompanying summary, prepared by committee staff, that highlights key issues for committee deliberation and comment
- When deemed appropriate, the committee should deliberate the identified issues and reach a committee consensus on concurrence or concerns regarding the issues. The consensus position of the committee on IT policy issues shall be recorded in the committee minutes
- Following the committee meeting, staff shall, when the committee directs, prepare and distribute a written response to the CIO documenting committee concurrence or concerns regarding the IT policy issues discussed at the meeting
- The CIO shall update the committee, when appropriate, on the status and actions taken in regard to IT policy issues with which the committee raised concerns
- Updates should follow the process proposed above for CIO report mailings to the LFC
- For IT related legislation, the CIO should present proposals to the second regularly scheduled LFC meeting of each even-numbered year
- A copy of all communications sent to LFC members regarding IT policy issues shall be provided to the Legislative Fiscal Analyst

APPENDIX B

Policies, Standards, and Processes
Can be found @ <http://itsd.mt.gov/policy/itpolicy.asp>