

INSTITUTE OF ARCTIC BIOLOGY

A Department Level Human Resource Solution

BACKGROUND

UAF departments have experienced several years of across the board reductions to their Fund 1 budgets. The impacts of these cuts have been felt mostly in the administrative support areas. With additional across the board reductions anticipated as part of the BOR's compact plan with the Governor for FY20-FY22, Deans and Directors will again look to find cost savings and efficiencies in their already depleted departments. This department level shared services proposal is a potential model for departments to partner with IAB to address staff reduction in administrative support functions.

PROPOSAL

IAB is proposing to create a shared/collaborative HR/Personnel model to process department level human resource administrative and transactional tasks. Departments proposed to be served:

Biology & Wildlife Identified as a department to be served because 34 out of 38 faculty have a joint appointment between IAB and Biology & Wildlife. Providing all HR functions throughout the academic year and

Tech/Travel Coordinator, etc.) that make it difficult to be subject matter experts in all areas of responsibility. The ability to partner with IAB HR will help partner departments to focus on other high priority support functions such as PIO, student recruitment, fiscal management, proposal development, and others.

Estimate Cost Savings

Estimated costs savings for collaborating departments will depend on the level of service provided by the IAB HR office. For short-term agreements such as filling in during extended absence (FML), real dollars savings will depend on the difference between the hourly rates of the HR Coordinators as well as the number of work request received. It is harder to quantify the savings to a department for maintaining continuity of HR processes without any gaps in service. For long-term agreements with partners to provide the full range of HR services, the savings is anticipated to be at minimum a .5 FTE. At a grade 77 step 12 that equates to a \$37,239 savings per year.

Funding

IAB HR/Payroll will be appropriately staffed, funded and supported by the Institute of Arctic Biology

IAB HR/Payroll shared services is funded by each partner department based on the processing volume for their employees.

It is recommended that payment is made by cost transfer instead of direct charging labor to partner departments.

Proof of Concept

Since December 2019, IAB HR has successfully provided departmental HR support for CFOS after the departure of their Fairbanks based HR Coordinator. IAB HR has received positive feedback from CFOS regarding the responsiveness and accuracy of the services provided. On-going full HR support, there is a potential savings of \$50,000 (.5 FTE) for each partner department. In addition to the increase functionality of the department not having to train a new HR Coordinator which could take six months to a year.

SWOT Analysis

Strength:

- Department level solution to help address ATB reductions
- Potential cost savings for partner departments
- Accountability by using a Service Level Agreement
- No requirement UAF Central Administration to reallocate funds
- Maintain direct, customer focused services

Weakness:

- Solution is not initially scalable beyond the departments proposed. Additional half or more FTE may be required if more than 1 or two partner departments are serviced.
- Loss of supervisory control for departments being serviced

Opportunities:

- Department level solution can be duplicated by other departments for various administrative functions
- Encourages the sharing of best practices between departments

