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Calendar

May

Mother's Day	13
Office Cleanup	17
Judges Board Meeting	24

Tight budget requires changes

Recent staff reductions required operational adjustments to ensure continued exceptional service to our members.

- Days of operation for CSC phone calls are temporarily changing from May 4 through September 28; staff will be available to accept calls Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This change allows phone staff to assist in processing efforts on Friday.
- CSC staff will assist in scanning and indexing. It is critical to our customers that those efforts remain current.
- The management and staffing of the walk-in area will shift to CED beginning May 7.
- CED will have responsibility for the front desk duties including forms fulfillment. CSC will support the walk-in effort during peak periods but will not have the primary responsibility.
- The Detroit outreach office is closed for the remainder of the fiscal year. Retirement counselors **Joy Bartell** and **Chuck Simpson** are now working in our Lansing office.



Three representatives from Indiana Teacher's Retirement Fund paid a visit to WDRA on May 10. They came looking to glean from our experience in managing and implementing large technology projects. From left to right, they are: **Matt Myers**, **Siva Perumal**, and **Alvin Wilson**.

The changes have required flexibility and quick response across processes these past few weeks. Staff have met the challenges with determination. CSC's Lori Hickman said it best, "we will continue to work together as a team to exceed our customers' expectations."

"Fone Free Fridays" are a win-win for all

During the first "Fone Free Friday," five Contact Center representatives took 37 emergency calls. Between calls, they completed address changes, federal withholding requests, and answered customer service email. The number of representatives will be adjusted as required.

Other Contact Center staff will work in other areas of CSC to accept new challenges and learn more about our work. **Joyce Weber** and **Lori**

Friday phone message

"Our contact center is temporarily closed for phone calls on Fridays"

State Employees Board Meeting	24
Memorial Day	28
June	
DMB Excellence Awards Deadline	8
Flag Day	14
Public School Employees Board Meeting	14
Father's Day	17
Blood Drive	20
9th Annual Tiger Baseball Outing	26
State Employees Board Meeting	28

On the Horizon

- WDRA Staff Picnic August 16

Quick Links

- [ORS Member Website](#)
- [ORS Employer Website](#)

Commonly Used Acronyms

AST	Application Support Team
BLA	Business Leadership Assembly (EPC, BPOs, and BPLs)
BPD	Benefit Plan Design
BPL	Business Process Leader
BPO	Business Process Owner
CED	Customer Education and Development
CSC	Customer Service Center
DIT	Department of Information Technology
DMB	Department of Management and Budget
EPC	Executive Process Council (Phil, Laurie, Tim, Anthony, and

Hickman reviewed CBTs and assigned staff to areas they chose as part of their Individual Development Plans (IDPs).

Several staff are learning the retirement application process. These folks will ensure day forward processing of the pre-application step so potential retirees will receive benefit summaries and estimates within a few days of submitting their applications. When staff learn the closeout portion of the process, it will ensure members receive their first pension payment.

“Contact Center staff say helping in other areas helps them to understand how the work is processed and it will help to reduce the number of tickets they initiate each day,” Joyce Weber said.

“It will prove to be a win-win for the CSC phone staff and the CSC processing staff.”

“And it’s a win-win for our customers,” **Raini Majeske** adds, “because we’ll be responding to their requests faster.”

beginning May 4 through September 28.

Please call back Monday through Thursday from 8:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

If this is an emergency, such as, unable to get your prescription filled or if you have not received your pension check this month. Please hang-up and call 517-636-0925.

For non-emergencies such as forms request or publication information visit our website at www.michigan.gov/ors. Again that is www.michigan.gov/ors.

Thank you for calling the Office of Retirement Services”.

Celebrate Michigan Week!

Michigan Week is May 19 through May 25. Michigan Week began in 1954 as an annual tribute to promote state pride among citizens and to celebrate the heritage and unique features that make Michigan special. The celebration was started by the late Don C. Weeks, then director of the Michigan Department of Economic Development, along with a number of citizens who formed the nonprofit Greater Michigan Foundation.

In 2001, Michigan Week was transferred from the Department of State to the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL). HAL's mission for Michigan Week is to inspire people—at the local level—to embrace, explore and celebrate the history, resources and opportunities that set Michigan apart as an ideal state to work, play and thrive.

[Click to view the many statewide activities](#) to celebrate Michigan Week.

Taken in part from <http://michigan.gov/hal>



Michigan scenes

New postal rates on the way

On May 14, the United States Postal Service (USPS) is increasing postal rates. Mail & Delivery Services estimates the state's postage costs will increase over \$1 million annually.

The increase is based on the complexity of processing mail and the space required to transport it—called **Shape-based pricing**—instead of a uniform increase for all types and classes of mail. The increases range from 8 to 15 percent. Rates for letter-sized mail that can be presorted

First-class stamps increase from 39¢ to 41¢ on May 14.

-OR-

Freeze your mailing prices against all future increases

	<i>Kathy)</i>
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
ORS	Office of Retirement Services
PRIM	Preretirement Information Meeting (<i>public school employees</i>)
PRO	Preretirement Orientation (<i>state employees</i>)
PS	Process Support
SME	Subject Matter Expert
T&T	Tools and Technology
WDRA	Workforce Development and Retirement Administration

will not increase as much as rates for flat mail like 9x12 envelopes and parcels.

DMB Mail & Delivery Services provides the following example to show the importance of our mailing choices. The postage for mailing 10,000 two-ounce letters in 9x12 envelopes will be \$9,700. The same two-ounce letter folded in a letter-sized envelope that can be presorted would cost \$4,600. That's a savings of \$5,100.

CED can help you coordinate any mailing that you have, or Mail & Delivery services offers free consulting services if you need further assistance.

by buying 'Forever' stamps. Buy them now for 39¢ each. When prices increase May 14, the forever stamp will sell for 41¢ until the next price change.

Go to www.usps.com for more information.

Defined contribution retirement plan and intervening military service

A state employee in the 401(k) Defined Contribution Retirement Plan (DCRP) who serves in the military will be granted service credit for the time he or she is in the uniformed services. The employee will also receive the 4 percent employer contribution for time spent in uniformed service. Additionally, if the employee wants to make employee elective contributions missed during military service, the state will match those contributions up to 3 percent.

A new ORS form, *Defined Contribution Application for Military Leave of Absence Credit (R717G)*, will soon be posted to the state employees DC website. Employees returning from uniformed service must complete and submit the form along with a copy of their DD214 to be credited for their uniformed service time and 401(k) DCRP funds. Keep an eye on future *Business Briefs* in the *LookOut* for more information.

Civil Service defines the uniformed service as the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, Reserves, National Guard, and the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service. For more information and a list of frequently asked questions, go to the [Civil Service](#) website.



Reengineering DMB update

The Reengineering team recently completed reengineering the parking assignments process, during which 1.3 Full Time Employees of savings were identified. This week, they started reengineering the predictive maintenance process in Building Operations within the Facilities Administration.

School employers can now track final salary affidavits (FSAs)

Reporting units can now access an online report of FSAs that have been sent to them but have not been returned to our office. The report will be updated weekly and sent via email to employers to track outstanding FSAs. If a reporting unit needs a duplicate copy of an FSA they can call our office and request one. FSAs for those retiring as of July 1 will be sent within the next ten business days.

Paper files moving

Graphic Sciences, Inc., the state's imaging vendor, spent Thursday and Friday packing and moving paper and microfiche files offsite. PS staff will no longer be able to provide a paper or microfiche file. Instead, the image(s) will be uploaded to Claret upon request. Response time is expected to be the same as before.

Updated Your Retirement Plan now available

Your Retirement Plan: A Member Handbook for Michigan's Public School Employees (R611C) has been updated. The March 2007 version features a new cover photo and layout; there are no significant content changes. Please use the existing copies of the March 2006 version until stock is depleted.

Newsletter posted to employer website

The May 2007 issue of the school employer newsletter, *Retirement Times*, was posted to the employer website on May 9. Topics include upcoming final salary affidavits, what to do if an employee dies, and more. If you would like to view the newsletter, go to www.michigan.gov/psru and click on the newsletter link.

DMB Communication Survey

The *DMB Communication Survey* will hit the e-mail trail starting May 14th and will be available to complete through May 25. This survey is an opportunity for everyone within DMB to provide input on the communication processes in our organization. It's a quick survey and only takes a couple minutes to complete, but provides valuable feedback to DMB leadership on this important issue. Please take the time to give your thoughts.

Contact Survey Mailed

The May 2007 *Customer Satisfaction Survey* was mailed May 3. The survey was sent to 2,200 customers who have contacted ORS within the last six months. The survey is a self-mailer offering our customers the option of returning by postage-paid U.S. mail or going online to respond. Reminder postcards will be mailed next week.

Spring Cleaning – Thursday May 17th

Not only is May 17 an extra casual day, but also a day to get work stations squeaky clean. Supplies will be available throughout the office for everyone to use. Make sure your supervisor knows what time you plan on attacking those dust bunnies; it shouldn't take more than two hours. Call-center staff will use their dust-busting skills May 18.

Update staff resource tool

Spring is a time for cleaning **and** updating. Do you have a new cubicle, phone number, job duty, or specialty? If you do or don't, please open the staff resource tool and ensure that your information is up-to-date and correct. If you'd like to add this as a desktop shortcut, drag the file *F:\Process Support\Phones\shortcut to Phone_ResourceTool.mdb* to your desktop.

Employee appreciation

Employee appreciation week kicked off on Monday, May 7 with a visit from DMB Director Lisa Webb Sharpe and Chief Deputy Director Ed Dore.

Staff enjoyed a pancake breakfast hosted by the BPLs on Tuesday morning, and those who could, attended an open meeting hosted by Governor Granholm. If you'd like to hear the message delivered by the Governor, an additional session is being held on Wednesday, May 16, Noon to 1:00 p.m. in the Constitution Hall Atrium, Lower Level, 525 W. Allegan, Lansing, (517) 241-2708. Please check with your supervisor if you wish to attend.

The BPOs wrapped up the week with a candy bar thank you.



Above: Governor Granholm talks with state employees. [Click for more employee appreciation photos.](#)

DMB Employee Excellence Awards

You have until June 8 to submit a nomination for the DMB awards. Visit the [DMB intranet](#) for nomination samples and details.

Do April showers bring May money trees?

We didn't think so! That's why we'd like to provide you with some facts on why you should convert your recent two percent pay increase into your future nest egg.

Let's face it, the facts are scary:

At age 50:

- 75% of the population has less than \$5,000 in the bank for retirement.

At age 65:

- 45% of Americans depend on relatives.
- 30% depend on charities.
- 23% are still working (most work until they are no longer physically capable).
- Only 2% are self-sustaining.

Don't find yourself depending on others. Prepare today by following the suggestions in CitiStreet's [Small Steps Can Help You Retire Big](#).

Facts provided by the [Senior Job Bank](#).

CED wins national award

For excellence and creativity on a tight budget, CED took 2nd place in the Shoestring Budget category for its two online tutorials for public school employees. The honor was presented by the [National Association of Government Communicators](#) (www.nagc.com) in its annual Blue Pencil—Gold Screen Awards competition.

The pool of 550 applicants included government organizations like NASA, Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian Institute. CED was thrilled with their award. "We had wonderful teamwork and collaboration to make this happen," said

Fred Covert. "It's a great way to get the information to our customers and a great way to illustrate the innovation and creativity that comes from our staff."



The team (**Joy Bartell, Fred Covert, Ray Fleming, Robert Glennon, Connie Morse, Angie Schrauben, and Erica Waltmire**) stretched their dollars and technical skills to produce these products at virtually no cost to Michigan citizens. Using existing software and hardware and their own knowledge, talents, and determination, the team accomplished the following:

- Outlined and developed the script; rehearsed with subject matter experts and test audiences.
- Researched tools and equipment needs.
- Presented (Joy Bartell is the presenter/actor).
- Recorded and edited video; added closed captioning.
- Created supporting slides and graphics; synchronized with video.
- Prepared for web and made arrangements for hosting.
- Tested and researched solutions to technical hurdles.

- Designed and deployed web launch pages and redirect pages.
- Designed post-video “what did you learn?” quiz and success tracking methods.

Based on survey responses, the [online tutorials](#) have proved to be a valued education tool for our members. With award-winning success such as this, CED staff will continue to explore new avenues to deliver retirement information to our customers.

A big congratulations and thank you to all of the CED staff and SMEs throughout WDRA who assisted with the project.



Comings & Goings

Jaime Abednego will be leaving on May 18 for a new job with the Office of the State Employer. Please join us in wishing Jaime all the best in her new position.

Farewell and best wishes to **Jessica Cain** and **Jasmine Dawson** of PS. Their last day is today, May 11. Both were crucial to the completion of a Blue Cross project and will be missed.

Interoffice moves

Bernie Lucas, **Joanne Masarik**, and **Ann Schneider** have been temporarily reassigned. You can now find Bernie assisting CSC and CED; Joanne will step out of her BPL role to work on ER improvements; and Ann will be filling in as BPL for ER.

As part of the continuing organizational transition, **Lori Edwards** and **Michael Zingsheim** have joined CED.

ORS Mission:
We are a customer-focused organization that serves members and employees today and prepares them for tomorrow.

ORS Vision:
Empowering people for a successful today and a secure tomorrow.

The *LookOut* is published by Workforce Development and Retirement

Blast from the past

This article appeared in the July 2, 1998 issue.



As the crunch of a Y2K deadline approached for Common Pension Payroll (CPP), team members took the suggestion literally (almost), "Sometimes you just have to roll up your sleeves, bring in your jammies and get it done!" Early morning risers included (from l to r): Fred Covert, Margo Keeler, Sylvia Maat, Lisa Reed and Laurie Abraham.

Administration, Department
of Management and Budget,
State of Michigan

Director:
Phil Stoddard
Edited by Customer
Education and Development

Thanks for reading!!

Note: Because some of the links in this newsletter point to resources within ORS, some of the links may not work if you are outside of ORS.