

Year 2000



658 Days



ORS Look Out



March 13, 1998

Volume 1, Issue 16

ORS-wide customer survey begins March 16

In the coming weeks, you'll have an opportunity to participate in surveying ORS customers about the service they receive.

At the suggestion of customer service consultant Barbara Glanz, ORS will conduct a four-week experiment to gauge customer perceptions about the quality of service they received from ORS staff.

As a staff person, your contribution to the survey will be two-fold. First, you will contribute the name of a customer you served during each week of the experiment. Later, you will select another staffer's customer, call that person and walk him or her through a brief survey.

Beginning the week of March 16, every ORS staff member will complete one Customer Follow-Up Survey form detailing an encounter with an internal or external cus-



Rosemary Baker of the Customer Services Division examines a basket of customer service survey forms.

tomers. Two survey forms are included in this newsletter to get you started.

All the forms will go into a basket near the photo display on third floor or by the mailboxes in Finance and Administration on first floor. Each week every staff person will pull a form (not their own) and call the customer, asking the questions from the back of the form. The completed survey form will go back to the

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DC Unit opened for business March 9

The Defined Contribution Call Center is open for business and taking calls.

The Center opened Monday and took 64 calls its first day.

Center staff, who came to ORS as loaners from other State agencies and temporary employees, are assisting State employees contemplating transfer to the defined contribution retirement plan. The Center is located on the third floor, B wing of the General Office Building.

By calling the Center at 1-888-804-9782, callers can get the

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Thought for the Day

"To love what you do and feel that it matters – how could anything be more fun?"

- Katherine Graham

ORS debuts retiree newsletter

This month, every ORS pension recipient will receive the inaugural issue of *ORS Connections*, the first-ever ORS-wide retiree newsletter.

Connections will be inserted into every pension recipient's March pension check or electronic funds transfer statement. ORS will publish the newsletter twice yearly, with the second issue scheduled for publication in September.

The first issue of the four-page newsletter will contain a summary of the Annual Report information for each recipient's respective retirement system, as required by law. The remainder of the issues will feature helpful information for pension

recipients about how to do business with ORS.

The contents include EFT enrollment information, an article introducing the Customer Information Center, instructions for contacting ORS by telephone or mail and instructions for retirees to change their address.

Also, this issue contains an article about Medicare eligibility and solicits retirees' advice to help former colleagues about to retire. A

collection of retiree feedback will appear in a future issue.

ORS Director Chris DeRose said he is pleased to be able to offer this service to retirees.

"Connections gives us another opportunity to reinforce the message that we're here to help our retirees," he said. "By making it easier for retirees to do business with us, we can further our goal of becoming a customer focused organization."

Copies of each version of *Connections* will be distributed to staff by next week. We can thank Student Assistant **Dave Schupbach** for the new ORS logo design.

Customer survey begins

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staff person who served that customer, providing feedback about the quality of service.

The benefits of the survey are also two-fold, ORS Director Chris DeRose said.

"First, we want to let the customers know that we care about them and the quality of service we provide," he said. "We also want to use the feedback to tell ourselves how well we're doing."

Chris said he expects every staff member to participate during the four-week trial.

"This involves a time commitment of only a few minutes per week," he said. "If you don't submit a customer's name, you're not going to get that important feedback about how you're doing. If you don't make your follow-up call, someone else who needs that important feedback isn't going to get it."

After the four-week experiment ends, the Customer Service Division will evaluate the survey process to determine whether it is meeting the objectives.



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Office moves help integrate systems

Have you walked over to someone's office and discovered someone else there? With the recent round of staff moves, many of the people you work with have been relocated to be closer to co-workers who are performing similar duties.

Rather than separating staff on retirement systems lines, these moves have integrated staff from each of the systems into the operational structure ORS Director Chris DeRose laid out last November.

"These moves will make it easier for staff to communicate with others in their

divisions, since they are now physically located next to their co-workers who have been handling the same tasks, but for a different system," Chris explained. "Realigning the offices will encourage the cross-training necessary to

serve all the retirement systems."

Thanks go to **Mary Burmis, Greg Gates and Colleen Daley** for coordinating this massive undertaking and making it happen so smoothly.

Cindee Clouse from ORS Operations mentally counts the cereal in the jar for ORS' St. Patrick's Day contest, sponsored by EMPAC, the employee activity committee. The top three people who most closely guess the number of Lucky Charms in the jar will win prizes. First prize is dinner for two at Bennigans; second prize is an ORS t-shirt; and third prize is the jar of Lucky Charms. The contest display is located outside Conference Room N.



DC unit opened for business March 9

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information they need to calculate their actuarial present value, or APV. Your APV is the present value of your defined benefit pension. If you transfer to the defined contribution plan as a vested employee, that amount of money goes into your DC account.



Grace Bonofiglio

"If someone is thinking about transferring to the DC plan,

one of the first steps they should take is to determine that APV amount," Call Center Team Leader **Grace Bonofiglio** said. "I think most State employees are going to want to see that number, so I expect we'll get a lot of calls."

Call Center staff members can provide State employees with all the information needed to perform the APV calculation.

"To do the calculation, you need your years of service, final average compensation (FAC) and current age," Grace said. "We're able to

give them everything they need. And we'll walk them through the calculation."

The APV calculator is also available on the State Employees Retirement System homepage on the World Wide Web, Grace said. The address is: www.state.mi.us/dmb/sers.

"If someone already has the information they need to do the calculation, they can go directly to the web page or call the dial-up calculator at 888-804-9782," she said. "If they need to get their service and FAC first, they can call us."

Supplemental payments go out in March

Eligible public school and State pension recipients will receive a supplemental payment included along with their regular March 25, 1998 pension payment.

Both MPSERS and SERS will have between 15,000-16,000 pension recipients who will be receiving a supplemental payment. Each person receiving a supplemental payment will receive a letter detailing the process.

Supplemental payments are paid in years when pension fund investments exceed the assumed rate of return. To determine the amount each pension recipient receives, ORS uses a formula based on

the retiree's years of service and number of years retired.

Each year of service or year retired is one unit. By adding all the eligible units and dividing the excess earnings by that amount, ORS arrives at a "unit value."

To calculate individual supplemental payments, multiply the unit value by the number of units the pension recipient has accrued.

When applicable, payments are offset/reduced by cumulative pension increases.

The unit value for MPSERS is \$23.79 and \$83.85 for SERS.

The values are different because the method for

calculating supplemental payments is changing. The change will cap excess earnings at .75% and carry the surplus over to the following year. The change, which will apply to SERS in 1999, is intended to make supplemental payments more regular and predictable.

"By changing the method, we expect eligible pension recipients will receive supplemental payments on a more regular basis," ORS Director Chris DeRose said. "The MPSERS Board voted to apply the change this year, while the SERS Board voted to apply it beginning in 1999."

Comings and goings in ORS

Sue Kessler will temporarily replace **Pam Ward** as the Director's secretary.

Michelle Twitchell will serve as a back up to Sue on an as needed basis.

Brandy Matteson also accepted a temporary secretarial assignment in ORS administration.

Thomi Engel, from Kelly Services, is working in the Operations Division. She previously worked for Green Spring as a receptionist.

Connie Lyles, also from Kelly Services, joins the Operations Division to work on disabilities.

Barbara Maner, joins the Finance and Administration Division as an accounting specialist.

Michael Sandretto is a new temporary employee in the Information Technology and Reengineering Division.

Carli Hagedon is a new student employee in the Operations Division.

Mary Miller leaves March 13 to accept an assignment with the Office of the State Employer.

Tania Cianfarani, a member of the Defined Contribution Call Center Team, left last week to accept a job with Chrysler Financial Corporation in the Accounting Department.

Janelle Jenkins has a new job as an Office Manager with Media One.

Delegate tasks to maximize efficiency

Do you perform work for your customers that they could perform more efficiently for themselves? Or do you require your customers to perform work that you could perform more efficiently for them?

When we examine the division of labor between ourselves and our customers, we often find inefficiencies resulting from the wrong person doing the work.

In their book, *Reengineering the Corporation*, reengineering consultants Michael Hammer and James Champy stress performing the work where it makes the most sense.

"...the customer of a process can perform some or all of the process in order to eliminate handoffs and overhead....Sometimes, though, it's more effective when the supplier to a customer process performs some or all of the process on behalf of the customer."

For instance, ORS employees used to perform pension estimate calculations for State employees.

"During the reengineering process, the team determined it would be more efficient to give employees a tool that allows them to perform their own pension estimate calculation," Reengineering Team member **Angela Gilmore** said. "The result was a telephone and internet pension estimate calculator that allows users to generate their own calculation, freeing staff to perform other functions."

On the flip side, retiring public school employees used to be responsible for forwarding a final salary affidavit to their employer, who completed it and sent it to ORS.



Is the Right Person Doing the Job?

"Some employees were more diligent, and more successful, at this than others, causing delays in getting the less successful employees on the payroll," Angela said. "While reengineering that process, the team determined it would be more efficient to deal directly with the employers, rather than requiring employees to make these arrangements."

Staff continues to find examples of this idea. Another recent example came to light during planning for the Defined Contribution transfer period.

Some employees lack the information or expertise to perform their own actuarial present value calculation. For them, the Defined Contribution Call Center (see related article, page 1) is in place. For those who have the necessary information to perform this calculation themselves, the internet APV calculator is in place.

Look at the tasks that are crucial to your function. Consider whether someone else, either staff or the customer, could perform them more efficiently.



Barbara Glanz, nationally recognized customer service consultant and author, above, returned to ORS March 3 to provide additional training for the Customer Information Center staff.

Mahlow hosts session for staff considering DC move

ORS employees considering transfer to the Defined Contribution (DC) retirement plan had an opportunity to learn the details of the program Wednesday.

Linda Mahlow of ORS Customer Services hosted informational sessions for ORS employees before and after work Wednesday.

"It was an opportunity for people who might be considering the DC plan, but didn't have a chance to attend one of the informational seminars, to get their questions answered," Linda said. "I'd be glad to do it again, if there's an interest among the staff here," she said.

Linda has been conducting informational seminars for State employees over the last several weeks.

Six Weeks to Wellness is coming!

Are you looking for some motivation to get back in shape for summer – and improve your overall health? Six Weeks to Wellness, a State sponsored program for promoting more

healthy habits, will soon be back. Start now to recruit your team members from your co-workers or your family members. It's lots of fun and good for you too!

Do you think you can solve this scramble?

This week's scramble reads, "fi ouy knith uyo anc, oyu cna. fi oyu inkht ouy tanc, ureoy girth."

If successful, you'll see how true the message really is.

The unscrambled poster will hang on first and third floors next week.

