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INTERNAL CONTROL NEWS

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The purpose of this quarterly newsletter is to provide departments with articles on good business practices, internal controls, and responsibilities. Through articles intended to promote educational and professional development opportunities for employees, this newsletter seeks to raise awareness across state government on the importance of internal controls. We hope that by providing this array of information, we can keep you informed of internal control related activities, and help you implement and maintain effective controls in your areas of operation.

New Department of Finance and Management Website!

On November 22nd, the Department of Finance and Management (F&M) launched its new website! Over the last 8 months, a special project team comprised of key individuals from the department have been diligently working on creating this new site. Our goal was to create a much more user-friendly and appealing site for our audience, with a streamlined design and new color palette. Additionally, our VISION and VANTAGE logos were completely redone by our talented marketing office (thank you to Heather Pelham and her team) to reflect our new website and color scheme. We hope that you find it easier to navigate!

Please make sure to update your department's website, documents and bookmarks **if** they contain any links to F&M webpages or documents as it's most likely those *old* links no longer work correctly. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the webmaster at: FIN.Webmaster@vermont.gov.

Delegation of Authority Forms – Due February 15, 2017

In April of 2015, the Secretary of Administration distributed a memorandum regarding the "Delegation of Authority for Signing Documents" as an addendum to Bulletin 3.3: Delegation of Authority. The purpose of the memo was to provide procedures concerning the delegation of authority for signature authorization. Each year, departments must submit an updated and signed copy of the Delegation of Authority form (*located under VISION Security*) to the Department of

Finance and Management between January 1st and January 15th. However, due to the administration change, the Secretary of Administration is **extending the submission period and deadline for this year to January 1st through February 15th**. This annual update is required from **every department**, even if there has been no change in the Appointing Authority or their designee(s). Throughout the year, departments need to revise and re-submit the form whenever staff changes occur with the Appointing Authority or their designee(s).

Please be on the lookout in the new year for the memo from the Secretary of Administration and subsequently send in your form during the submission period. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the VISION Support team at: VISION.FinHelpdesk@vermont.gov.

Project Manager Hired for the Upgrade of VISION

The Department of Finance and Management is pleased to announce that we recently hired Rob Bromley, a seasoned Project Manager, to oversee our efforts on upgrading VISION from version 8.8 to version 9.2! Rob comes to the State with 20+ years of Project Management experience. Rob's role will be to manage all aspects of the upgrade project (scope, schedule and budget) as well as to ensure that our selected implementation vendor will deliver all requirements per our Request for Proposal (RFP) and contract. Currently, the RFP for an implementation vendor has been posted and bids are due by January 5th. Rob will also play an active role in assisting the department in the review and ultimate selection of the vendor. Please help us in welcoming Rob to the team as we embark on this exciting and much-needed upgrade initiative!

Employee Expense Reports - Explanation of Late Filing Form

In recent months, there has been an increase in the number of "Explanation of Late Filing" forms (*located under Expense*) being sent to the Department of Finance and Management (F&M) for review and approval. However, there have been some questions about the necessity and distribution of this form, including ***when does it need to be sent to F&M***? The business rules for this form are:

- ✓ Per Bulletin 3.4: Employee Travel and Expense Policy, this form must be completed and retained **whenever** an employee files an expense report that is **more than 60 days after** completion of the travel event or incurrence of a business expense. Then…

   a. If the employee is **requesting a waiver of taxes** under the "***reasonable exception***" clause, the department's expense coordinator must send the completed form to the Commissioner of Finance and Management for his/her approval or denial. After the commissioner's decision the form is returned to the employee and expense coordinator.

   or

   b. If the employee is **not** requesting a waiver of taxes, the form does not get sent to F&M but still needs to be completed and retained as part of the employee's expense report documentation.

The bottom line is filing expense reports timely should be the objective of all employees and departments, thus eliminating the need for this form. The processing of "late" filed expenses creates additional administrative effort for all involved parties and usually results in wasteful spending as both the employee and their department incur taxes (*per IRS regulations*) that in most all circumstances could be avoided.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the VISION Support team at: VISION.FinHelpdesk@vermont.gov.

F&M Happenings

- Rob Bromley began work on November 28 as the Project Manager for the VISION upgrade (*see article on page 2*).

Internal Control News is published quarterly by the Dept. of Finance & Management. Please contact Kevin Gilman with comments or suggestions. For past issues please visit: http://finance.vermont.gov/reports-and-publications/internal-control-newsletters