

Department of Housing and Community Development

DHCD Evolve

An Introduction and Overview of Operational Changes at DHCD

Department Mission

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) coordinates and oversees the implementation of the state's housing policy, works to support vibrant and resilient communities, promote safe and affordable housing for all, protect the state's historic resources, and improve the quality of life for Vermonters.

What is DHCD Evolve?

DHCD Evolve seeks to realign existing department resources and staff grouping to create efficiencies, build greater cohesion across programs, and allow for cross-training in key functions to strengthen department resilience over the long-term.

The Goal: Allow DHCD to operate as one unified Department rather than distinct divisions, to preserve staff capacity, and better deliver on our mission to improve the quality of life for Vermonters.

What will DHCD Evolve look like?

The Department will move from the current division structure to a team structure that aligns team members by job functions to increase the opportunity for built-in redundancy, cross training, and support.

DHCD Admin

Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner

General Counsel, Executive Assistant, Data and Information Project Manager

**Policy
Development**

**Reporting to
Commissioner**

**Program
Management**

**Reporting to
Director of DHCD
Programs**

**Grants
Management
and Compliance**

**Reporting to
Director of DHCD
Grants
Management and
Compliance**

**Division for
Historic
Preservation**

Reporting to SHPO

New Team Responsibilities

Policy Development

Focused on legislative engagement, developing legislative proposals, supporting legislative testimony and preparation, policy research and development, serving as Secretary/Commissioner designees or representing DHCD on Councils, Boards, and legislative study committees, other special projects related to new policy or program development.

Program Management

General management of programs, establish program guidelines within statutes, external communication, promotion, and education related to DHCD programs. Provide technical assistance to applicants and awardees, respond to general inquiries about programs and potential applications, application intake, scoring, award decisions, grant agreements. Development of announcements of awards and annual program reports.

Grants Management and Compliance

Program monitoring and compliance for HUD and state programs, Environmental Review, technical assistance to grantees, finance team liaisons, federal draws, grant amendments, grant closeout, audit management, and overall budget management for life of the grant.

New Team Responsibilities



Cross-team coordination: Policy Dev & Program

Discuss needs or shortcomings of existing programs and systems to craft legislative proposals; work together to shape new programs in alignment with legislative requirements and intent; coordinate on one-time efforts and legislative studies that relate to programs.

Cross-team coordination: Program & Compliance

Program team help draft grant agreements once awards are made and facilitate handoff to compliance team for finalizing grant agreement (with award conditions as appropriate) and to get agreement signed; ongoing feedback loop regarding program finances and any significant grantee issues.

But Why?

Knowledge-sharing, redundancy, and cross training: Many team members have expressed to DHCD leadership over the last several years that there is a lack of backup for individualized knowledge or expertise within programs.

Capacity: DHCD is a small department which has historically been organized into smaller divisions and there is little capacity within those divisions as individual work portfolios ebb and flow or special projects get added to the department's plate.

Better internal controls: This realignment provides an opportunity for a cleaner division of duties between those overseeing the program and those monitoring compliance.

But Why?

Program alignment and coordination: The DHCD Evolve framework is intended to provide an opportunity to iteratively assess how all DHCD programs can better serve the intended beneficiaries and explores way to better complement one another.

New Department Programs and Unifying Grants Management: DHCD has been entrusted with new permanent programs in the form of VHIP and MHIR. By late 2027, the majority of DHCD programs will be managed through the Agate IGX grants management software.

Professional Development Opportunities: Cross training will provide opportunities to add variety to work portfolio and for professional growth under this structure.

But Why NOW?

New Permanent Programs: We are managing more funding programs than ever before.

Leadership desire to be responsive to staff concerns and staff stress-levels: Feedback in employee engagement surveys and meetings with team members have highlighted increased levels of stress, often related to lack of coverage, cross-training, and capacity.

Limited-service position sunsets: The return to staffing levels closer to our pre-COVID size requires long-term thinking about sustainability and resource management.

What does this actually mean for me?

Our goal: minimize or eliminate impact to actual job functions for most individuals.

For most, your work portfolio will not change, and for many, your reporting line will not change. Over time, some shifts to portfolios may happen as team members identify opportunities for efficiency or process improvement but not out of the gate. New reporting lines will be in effect in November but workflows across teams will continue as they always have.

Timeline

While DHCD Evolve is being announced today, the vision is for this new team structure to be put in place in a methodically over the next few months to a year.

- **August 19, 2026:** Announce plan to staff.
- **August 19:** Meet with staff in small groups for feedback.
- **August 20 – September 2:** Meet with staff individually for specific Q&A.
- **September – October:** Continue to work through questions, work process adjustments, team feedback.
- **November 2, 2026:** New reporting lines official, and live.
- **November – March:** Wrap up lingering one-time efforts.
- **March 2027:** Check-back with teams and individuals. How are things going?
- **Spring 2027 and beyond:** Hear ongoing staff feedback, improve as necessary, and iterate.