

NEW

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Directions

New administrative support model will

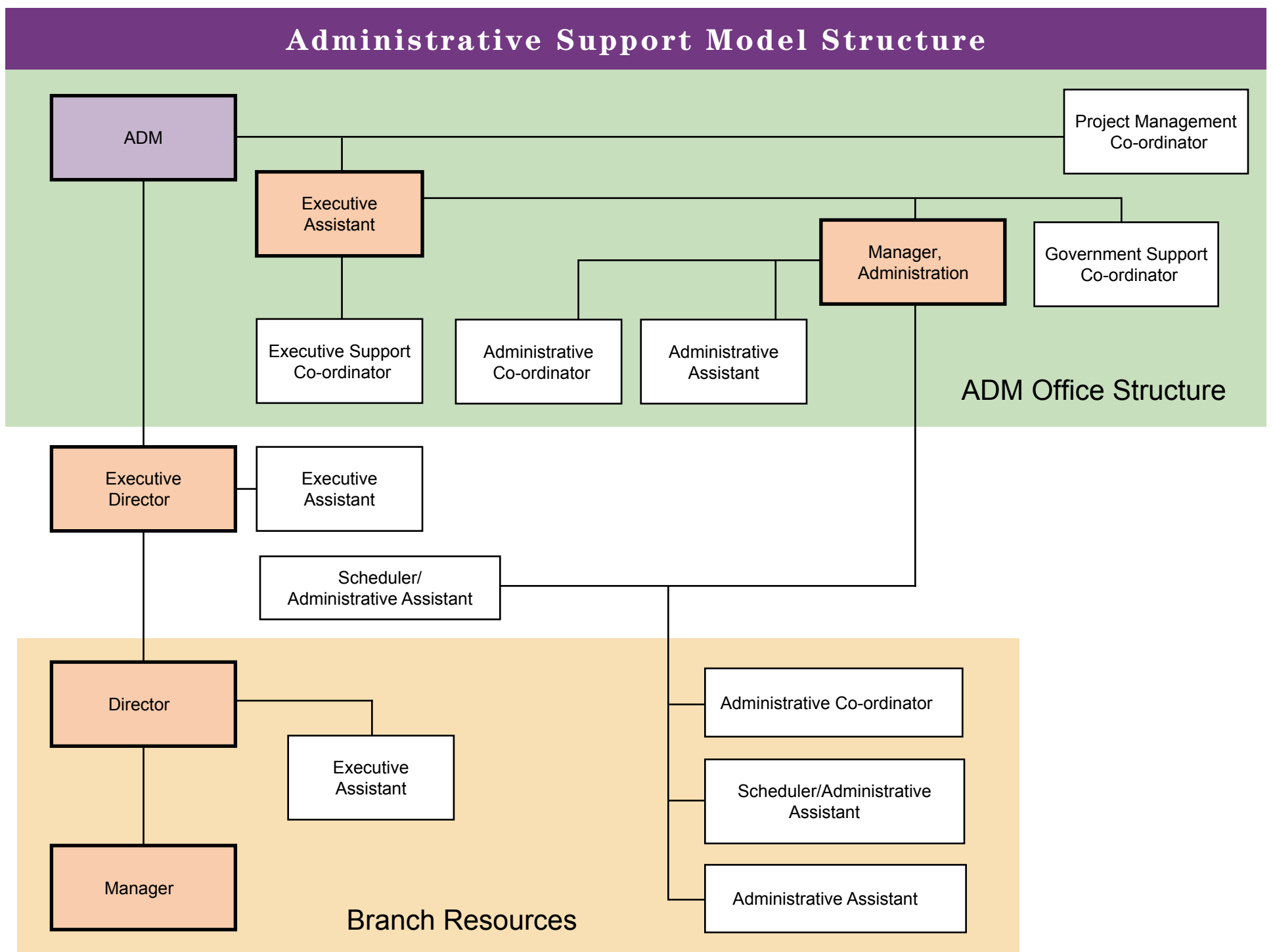
strengthen stewardship

The ministry is introducing a new administrative support model that will enhance the organization's ability to collaborate and work cross-functionally, Deputy Minister Ron Sapsford announced today.

"The new model will ensure that administrative support staff is organized to make the most effective use of their skills and talents and that the vital resources they provide are available when and where they are needed most," Sapsford said.

Approximately 350 ministry administrative support positions will be touched by this change, which is expected to come into effect in stages over the next four months.

...continued on page 2



...continued from cover

Shared-Service Model

The new administrative support model is a shared-service model. Administrative support staff will be assigned to a branch, but also may be temporarily assigned to projects, teams or work across branches or other divisions. These assignments will be made on the basis of need and staff capacity. “This approach will support the ministry’s new way of working in collaborative teams,” said Debbie Fischer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Transition.

The new model will also allow administrative staff to gain knowledge about a broader scope of the ministry’s work, so staff can apply this new knowledge in a variety of work environments and help them to work cross-functionally, she noted. It will be implemented across all divisions, with some exceptions such as branches/units that have a dual reporting relationship, have an arms-length relationship with the ministry, or where divestment or migration is being considered.

All ministry positions that provide administrative support to divisions, branches or units will be reviewed as the ministry transitions to the new model. If a substantial portion of any job description is not administrative or if it involves a business function that is clerical in nature — for example, customer service clerks — then the position will not be considered in this review.

Administrative support includes purchasing, contract management support, asset management, record retention and management, administrative support and services, reception duties, scheduling, travel claims, p-cards and invoice processing, and creating and typing letters and presentations.

New Manager of Administration

Under the new model, administrative staff will report to a new position called the manager, administration. Administrative staff will be assigned primary responsibility to a branch, but will report directly to a divisional manager, administration.

The manager of administration will work closely with directors and managers to:

- Oversee and co-ordinate the administrative support workload within a division
- Ensure administrative staff is deployed wherever necessary to meet the demands and priorities within units, branches and the overall division
- Ensure administrative staff has the skills needed to work in a stewardship environment.

Depending on the requirements of a division, each manager, administration will oversee 15 to 20 administrative support employees. This new position, in turn, will report to the executive assistant to the divisional assistant deputy minister. Job postings for the positions of manager, administration will be available in early August.

Executive assistants in assistant deputy ministers’ offices will oversee and work closely with the manager, administration as well as with their ADM’s executive support co-ordinator.

“These changes will result in more effective and equitable distribution of administrative support resources,” said John McKinley, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health System

Information Management and Investment. “We are taking a team approach to carrying out the work of the ministry. If a manager has an extra initiative or a high priority project on their desk, administrative support will be shifted to meet the required goals. When you are a manager in need, you’ll be able to get additional help. Flexibility is the strength of this new model.”

As administrative staff gain experience and knowledge working across program areas and divisions, it will strengthen their contribution to the ministry and also open up opportunities for career development.

Much work has already been done on the project. The assessment phase of the administrative support model was completed in 2007, followed by approval of the project’s high-level design. The transition team is now working with each division to determine how best to implement the model. This process takes into account aspects like administrative workload, links between units and branches, as well as their geographic location.

The detailed design phase of the new structure will be completed by the end of July. Human Resources will then finalize job descriptions and classifications and begin employee matching following the same principles that have been applied throughout the transition. It is anticipated that matching will be completed in fall 2008. Administrative support staff will receive updates on the progress of the project over the next few months.

Advancing skills development and training

New opportunities for administrative support staff to work on projects across the ministry will require consistent skills, competencies and knowledge levels. To meet these needs, learning and development opportunities will continue to be offered and new ones introduced through programs specifically aimed at administrative support staff.

This focus on training will help standardize administrative support functions across the ministry, as well as create greater career opportunities.

“Administrative support is what keeps this ministry ticking. We would be lost without our administrative staff,” Fischer said. “This new model provides them with greater variety and more satisfying work. It also requires us to look at our administrative support resources strategically and make decisions that deliver the best results for the ministry as a whole and help us all be better stewards.” ■

Administrative support model streamlines roles

In the new model, functions and responsibilities for administrative support roles will be clearly delineated and consistent job classifications and specifications created. The ministry’s numerous administrative job titles and positions have been streamlined into the following roles:

- executive assistant
- manager, administration
- executive support co-ordinator
- administrative co-ordinator
- scheduler/administrative assistant
- administrative assistant