

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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CMS Acting Director Janel L. Forde Shares Illinois' Best Practices at National Conference

WASHINGTON, DC – The Acting Director for the Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS), Janel L. Forde, shared CMS' most innovative methodologies on service accomplishments and mission delivery in Illinois, as part of a working panel for top state administrators at a conference on Wednesday, sponsored by the Federal Office of Management and Budget and the National Association of State Chief Administrators (NASCA). The conference provides a non-partisan venue for states to share best government practices in administration of service programs.

"We are sharing the vision of Governor JB Pritzker who has challenged his agency heads in Illinois this year to focus on the customer experience and the value of the services we offer our residents," Forde said. "The idea is to share experiences and find ways for Illinois, the federal government and other states to deliver administrative solutions that will better serve all Americans well into the 21st century."

Forde participated in a panel of experts that shared innovative service methodologies now being implemented in Illinois, Arkansas, Florida and Michigan. Forde also hosted and led a breakout session for participants on the importance of targeted process improvements to gain efficiencies and ensure effective customer service.

"CMS is a learning organization, and we love to share our experiences even as we continue our learning at events like this one," Forde said. "Mainly, we are sharing best practices in areas that are crucial to all states – the things we have done in 2019 to improve human resources, procurement, benefits oversight and the ways in which we involve all other phases of our operations."

Forde discussed the State of Illinois' Rapid Results Initiative and methodologies for training key staff in all agencies to analyze and improve operational processes routinely. Rapid Results is an efficiency initiative offered from the CMS Office of Operational Excellence that has trained more than 2,500 State workers and has helped 35 Illinois agencies to analyze and achieve process improvements through more than 1,500 individual projects that currently are recouping more than \$20 million a year from eliminated spending waste. The cumulative annual savings from the initiative grows with each project completed.

Forde also is looking forward to incorporating ideas other states have shared with her at the conference. "The best ideas to move forward quickly are ideas that are tried and true," Forde said. "We really gain a lot from working together, sharing ideas and helping each other move toward better and more efficient processes, and the most important outcomes for better living that we all are trying to achieve."

“Our plans for 2020 are simply to keep going up, keep expanding our process work, keep sharing the results with other agencies, keep working together to outline new or better approaches and to keep all the momentum moving forward,” Forde added. “This responsibility never really ends.”

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