GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION

Issues to Consider in the Proposed Reorganization of the Office of Personnel Management

What GAO Found

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and General Services Administration (GSA) have generally not addressed key practices for agency reform efforts as they have moved forward with their proposal to reorganize OPM. They have not established outcome-oriented goals, developed a cost-benefit analysis or implementation plans, and have not fully involved or communicated their efforts with the Congress, employees, and other key stakeholders. OPM and GSA also have not shown how they will address management challenges that may affect their ability to successfully reorganize the government’s central human capital functions.

Proposal to Transfer OPM Functions

OMB, OPM and GSA have not identified specific actions, as of May 17, 2019, that can be taken administratively versus those that will require legislative action to reorganize OPM. The administration has acknowledged the need for additional statutory authority to execute certain transfers of functions from OPM to GSA and the Executive Offices of the President (EOP), but has also stated that it will rely on existing authority to move certain functions administratively. Without additional information from OMB and agencies, GAO cannot assess the legal authorities the administration is relying on to implement the reorganization.

As the Congress and administration consider whether or how to restructure OPM, it will be important to retain the capacity to execute certain government-wide, strategic human capital functions, regardless of the decision made about the organizational arrangement. These capacities include an ability to identify future workforce trends and to effectively collaborate with stakeholders—for the purpose of creating, executing, and overseeing human capital policies and programs, and enforcing civil service laws and regulations. This is particularly important because GAO continues to designate strategic human capital management as a high-risk area.

View GAO-19-575T. For more information, contact Triana McNeil at (202) 512-6806 or McNeilT@gao.gov.