

Welcome to Beacon 7.0!

Arriving just in time to support your end-of-year needs, we're proud to offer a major release that includes some long-awaited improvements across the board.

We've also revised this document's format in response to user feedback. We hope you find this more informative.

Highlights from this release

- **Big improvements to FLOW**, including: routing MOUs between ICs; more flexibility in designating review, approval, and notification steps; and ability to send back to any prior step.
- Beacon Finance adds the Summary Document Number to transactions. Use it to group transactions that couldn't be grouped by Order Number or Document Number alone, either from the Transactions screen or via a new Excel Add-In function.
- Beacon HR offers PMAP, Telework, Fellowship Appraisals, and Emergency Tier paperless e-Form workflows, supporting streamlined tracking and reporting for all your employees.
- Beacon HR also adds a new HR One Sheet screen, consolidating key personnel info. It also fixes bugs in FTE-to-Contractor conversions and Supervisor start and stop dates.
- Beacon Excel Add-in is now self-service. Just get IT to remove the old version, and you'll be able to update yourself as new versions are released.
- Systems Administrators can now define Points of Contact in both HR and Finance modules, to ensure we coordinate with the right people.
- New! Near real-time Beacon API in support of downstream system feeds. Contact us for details.
- Coming soon... near real-time Finance integration with unposted transactions

Specifics

Module	What we did	Why we did it
Beacon	Added Points of Contact fields to HR and Finance Admin screens, so your Systems Administrators can designate POCs for key IT stakeholders as well as both intramural and extramural key business stakeholders.	Maintaining points of contact within the user community can be challenging as people change jobs or retire. We want to ensure we're reaching out to the correct business and IT stakeholders with updates, information, and outreach. System Administrators, please take a moment to update the new POC fields.
Beacon	Added support for near real-time API calls for downstream systems.	You asked for more frequent updates. We delivered. Please contact us for more information.
FLOW	Added support for routing workflows between institutes for approval or signature by any designated employee. (Works for any institute that has Beacon HR.)	It's often hard to track paperwork that involves other institutes – things like MOUs, personnel actions, and other inter-agency paperwork. This leverages a

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		shared service amongst ICs, so things don't get lost in the noise.
FLOW	Added ability to send a package back to any prior step in the workflow for corrective action.	Previously, you could only send packages back to the step immediately before yours. For more complex routings, this quickly became noisy and inefficient. The new option is streamlined and removes unnecessary communication.
FLOW	Added ability to define Reviewer or Approver roles in any order as part of the workflow.	Routing was limited to a series of Reviewers, followed by a series of Approvers. In practice, workflows are often more complex, with multiple stages and actors. Adding flexibility here allows you to more accurately replicate your existing rules and processes.
FLOW	Provided the option to identify notification steps in any given workflow. Designated recipients will get a quick status update email with no FLOW action item.	Sometimes, you just need to notify someone that a packet has reached a particular stage without asking anything of them. Previously, only Reviewers and Approvers had visibility to FLOW status information.
HR	Enabled Beacon HR PMAP, Telework, Fellowship Appraisals, and Emergency Tier workflow tracking between FLOW and HR.	Redundant data entry, inefficient paper routing, and labor-intensive reporting were routine problems for common HR forms. Now all employees can use the same tools, which track efficiently and allow for easy reporting.
HR	Added ability to filter on any available HR column, even if it's not shown in your Positions List screen.	Previously, you could only filter on columns you selected to display on the Positions List screen.
HR	Added date and user filters to the Audit Log screen.	While the HR Audit Log was useful when tracking data discrepancies, it was sometimes hard to find what you were looking for. Now you can see what changes happened during a specific time period, or were made by a specific user.
HR	Extended the GetCustomEDie(NEDID) function to allow you to pull back any non-sensitive HR data field.	Previously, this function was limited to NAME, CAN, or SUPERVISOR fields.
HR	Added the new Beacon HR One-Sheet view, which consolidates key Personnel record info onto a single screen.	Personnel data was spread over multiple screens, which meant users had to click into multiple screens for each nugget of information. This puts the most pertinent Personnel info at your fingertips.
HR	Fixed an issue with FTE to Contractor conversions.	Under some circumstances, FTE to Contractor conversions created duplicate

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		employee records within Beacon HR. We've fixed that.
HR	Fixed an issue with Supervisor start and stop dates.	Supervisor start and stop dates weren't always accurate. How that information was reflected in the raw data made it a challenge to map accurately. In some cases, changes in supervisor and direct report data weren't being interpreted correctly. We fixed the defect.
Finance	<p>Added Summary Document Number to Transactions. This value can be used to group transactions that couldn't be linked via Document Number or Order Number.</p> <p>Added Group by Summary Document Number option to Transactions screen. Added a new Excel function to do this as well.</p>	In some cases, related transactions lacked a common Document Number or Order Number. Adding the Summary Document Number ensures that related transactions can be tied together when other options may not work.
Finance	Fixed an issue with the Current FY Funded OC Detail screen when displayed by allocation category.	The Monthly, Quarterly and YTD numbers weren't matching up correctly when grouped by allocation category. We fixed the defect.
Finance	Beacon Finance offers embedded analytics view of Allocations data directly accessible from the Allocations screen.	It's hard to get an at a glance view of complex financial data. Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words.
Beacon Excel Add-in	Reworked the Add-in to remove the need for IT to install or update it. It is now self-service, once you've had IT remove the old one.	Previously, updates to the Add-in required support from your IT desktop support teams. Even with great IT support, it took a while to get releases out, which was frustrating for users. We rebuilt the Add-in to allow it to be installed and updated by individual users, and it no longer requires an administrator to install it.