

# How Hamilton County Shifted Payroll from Hands-on to Hands-off

## The challenge

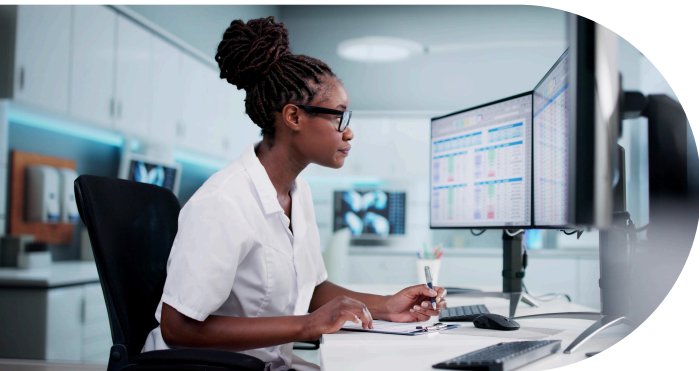
Hamilton County ran payroll the way many government organizations do when they've built their systems over time. The work was hands-on, the processes were specific, and the stakes were high. Dottie Carlson, Hamilton County's payroll and benefits administrator, and her team printed and folded 1095s by hand. They processed W-2s in-house — printed them, folded them, sorted them by department, and coordinated pickup with colleagues across the county. It was manual, and intentional — but it was theirs.

Tax season brought its own pressure. An auditor was watching to make sure everything was handled correctly. Compliance wasn't negotiable. The work had to be done right, and it had to be done on time.

When it came to evaluate a Workday partner, Dottie faced a real dilemma. She had functions that were deeply embedded in how her team operated. She needed someone who wouldn't just implement software, but who would genuinely understand what she was doing and why. Someone who would listen.

"The other vendors, I feel like they were talking at us and not talking to us."

That's when OneSource Virtual (OSV) showed up differently.



## Overview



**HAMILTON COUNTY**  
INDIANA

Hamilton County is a county in Indiana. It is part of the Indianapolis metropolitan area and is the second most populous county in Central Indiana.



**Headquarters**  
Noblesville, IN



**Industry**  
Government



**Employees**  
1,400+



**OSV customer since**  
2022

"There was something about that connection I had with OSV and then my boss, my auditor, and then the chief deputy and a couple of the IT folks who were there. We just felt like they heard us, where others hurt us," notes Dottie.

It might sound like a basic expectation. But when making a significant investment in a Workday partner, especially one touching every part of your payroll operation, being heard matters. It's a foundation of trust.

## From hands-on to hands-off

Handing off these functions came with a real risk. What if the partner didn't understand the nuances? What if something got lost in translation?

"There's just the small things for some people that might think, 'oh that's not a big deal', but it's a big deal for us. We've just had 1095s — we do those manually; we printed those, we folded those. So, when I'm telling you it's hands-on, it's totally hands-on."

Because OSV works in-tenant, they're able to understand how Hamilton County actually operates. They weren't imposing theoretical best practices or pushing the county toward "how things should work." They were working within the realities of how the team functioned.

When they went live in 2024, Dottie admitted she felt some skepticism. By early 2025, Dottie's perspective had shifted. "We had a few learning curves for us," Dottie notes. "But everybody was gracious and kind, and walked us through. This year we're like, 'Huh, this is pretty good.'"

The payroll forms that once required printing, folding, and physical distribution disappeared. The manual compliance work that had been tied to the county's internal processes began running on its own. The burden was lighter.



The worry that had loomed over tax season, the constant checking and double-checking, the responsibility that sat on someone's shoulders from January through April — it wasn't gone entirely, but it had evolved. Visibility replaced anxiety and trust replaced manual verification.

"It's been nice not to have that looming over our head," Dottie says. "We also processed W-2s in-house. So, we did it all. We printed them, we folded them, we sorted them. We have the departments come pick them up and pass them out. We don't do that anymore. And again that's like, 'Oh my gosh, by the eighth of January, taxes are done.'"

## The relationship that's just there

OSV committed to monthly check-in calls for that first year. But more than that, Dottie's point of contact didn't disappear after the initial support phase ended. They stayed connected, checking in by email each month, letting her know the status, and keeping themselves available if questions surfaced.

"I like the fact that for the first year, we had monthly check-in calls," explains Dottie. "My person that checks in with me, they still check in with me on an email every month and says, 'Hey, not a lot of cases, nothing outstanding, nothing I see — but still willing to take a call if you want to schedule on.' But a few times we've had to, because I've said, 'Hey, I'm not quite sure what to do about this.' And they've given me direction."

When Dottie has questions, responses are prompt. The support model isn't a ticket system she fires messages into, hoping for a reply. There's an actual person on the other end of the line. "If I have a few questions, I can email and they get right back."

## Tax season without the dread

If there's a season that tests payroll operations, it's tax season. The pressure compounds when you're managing multiple jurisdictions, ensuring accuracy, and staying ahead of deadlines. For Hamilton County, tax season had always been something you just survived.

One of Dottie's team members put it simply during the first full tax cycle with OSV: "You know, it's kind of nice knowing that we look to make sure that the taxes on the OSV side — on the portal — we can see that they pulled our funds right. They can see that there's nothing waiting, and I don't have to worry — they're done."





**"That's why we chose OSV, because they truly do nothing but Workday. So when I talk to them, it's the Workday language ... When they did the introduction, I felt like, 'Okay, this is somebody I could work with.' They're not talking above my head. I wanted somebody that I felt like I clicked with, and OSV happened to be that."**

- Dottie Carlson, Payroll and Benefits Administrator, Hamilton County

That continuity matters when critical functions are handed off. It matters when tax season is approaching. It matters when a question surfaces that hasn't been encountered before.

### **It clicked because it's Workday**

Dottie had clear preferences going into the vendor selection. She wanted someone who focused exclusively on Workday, not a provider juggling multiple platforms and competing priorities. For nuanced Workday discussions, a partner who lives in that language every day makes all the difference.

"That's why we chose OSV, because they truly do nothing but Workday," says Dottie. "So when I talk to them, it's the Workday language. And of course, if all we're doing is Workday, I didn't really want, to be honest, to go with another provider that was having all this other software. And when we had the one-on-ones, and when they did the introduction, I felt like, 'Okay, this is somebody I could work with.' They're not talking above my head. I wanted somebody that I felt like I clicked with, and OSV happened to be that."

The partnership works because both sides understand what's at stake. Dottie knows her payroll operation matters. It touches every employee, every tax deadline, and every compliance requirement. OSV knows exactly why they exist: to partner with customers who care about getting payroll right.