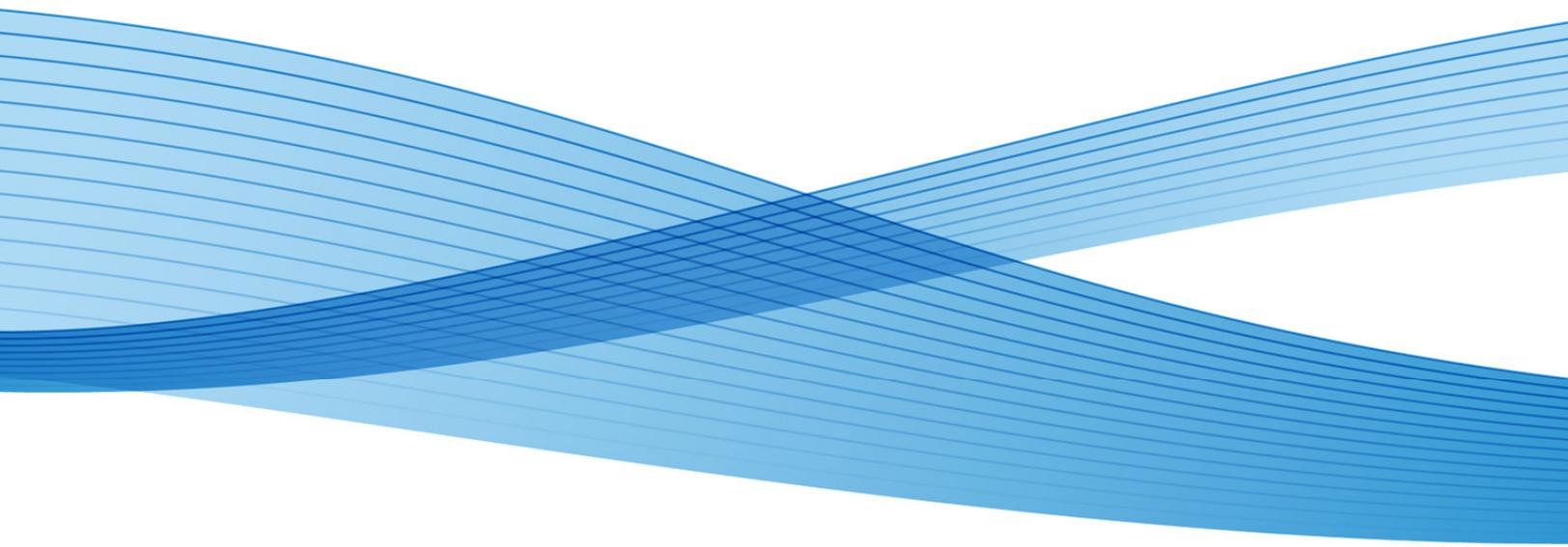


Public welfare agency burdened by paper processes. Xerox delivered needed relief.

Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare's conversion to a digital repository with automated workflows speeds delivery of services to stakeholders.



The health and human services industry is paperwork intensive.

For every 2.1 employed people in Pennsylvania, one person is receiving a benefit.



Background

The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare (PA DPW) is a statewide enterprise that provides care and support to the state's most vulnerable citizens. It works to promote, improve and help maintain the highest quality of life for Pennsylvania families by providing access to services that keep citizens safe and healthy. There are 2,754,000 unique individuals who receive a service from a PA DPW program. This means that for every 2.1 employed people in Pennsylvania, one person is receiving a benefit from PA DPW.

There are seven program offices within the PA DPW. Services provided to citizens make up all parts of life – from healthcare and assistance for low-income families to adoption and foster care, to housing and caring for older adults. Each program is responsible for screening, determining eligibility and enrolling participants in the assistance programs related to their services. Many of these services are delivered by more than 90 county assistance offices across the state.

The Challenge

As a state agency, PA DPW has many stakeholders: the citizens it serves, the federal government it receives money from, and the people it employs. However, the health and human services industry is paperwork intensive, and it became a significant challenge to manage all the documents and unstructured data the agency requires to perform its functions in an efficient manner. For example, the agency receives 78,000 welfare client appeals annually, requiring hundreds of hours of photocopying, collating and documenting cases.

The traditional, paper-based system presented several challenges. Employees had difficulties locating information in a timely manner, with files in cabinets that were spread across the state. Security was also a concern, as much of the data in the documents maintained by the states contains personally identifiable information about clients.

"Our applicants and clients are required to provide us with information ranging from their income details to their health records to their Social Security number – and they count on us to keep that data secure," said James A. Weaver, acting chief information officer for the Departments of Public Welfare, Insurance and Aging. "We needed to transition from paper-based document management to a modernized, secure digital program to make sure we were managing data responsibly."

The Solution

In 2005, the case load volume for each of PA DPW's 155 statewide offices was heavy, and the agency struggled with a cumbersome, error-prone, paper-based approach to screening and enrolling applicants for assistance programs such as Food Stamps and public housing. In some cases, DPW employees spent more time handling paperwork for applications than reviewing the applicant's eligibility. PA DPW engaged SRC Solutions to deploy Xerox® DocuShare in 2005 in an effort to convert its paper documents to digital. The agency planned to re-engineer processes for case workers and others, and gain control of the vast amounts of documents flowing through its offices.

Xerox® DocuShare is an innovative document and content management system that helps customers lower costs, increase productivity, and leverage corporate assets. DocuShare enables organizations of all sizes to dynamically capture, share, manage,

Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

Headquarters - Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Industry - State Government

Applications - Document management and forms management, automated processes (such as correspondence tracking)

Products - Xerox® DocuShare®.

"We needed to transition from paper-based document management to a modernized, secure digital program to make sure we were managing data responsibly."

-James A. Weaver, Acting CIO, Departments of Public Welfare, Insurance and Aging

retrieve, and distribute information, regardless of its source, user skill level, location, or corporate structure. Highly intuitive and secure, DocuShare is designed for speed of deployment and ease of administration and use. It is our own “open” or cross-platform document management solution that significantly reduces Information Technology (IT) requirements, resulting in lower total cost of ownership and providing a rapid return on investment.

PA DPW originally used DocuShare to address two issues. It was used as a digital filing cabinet to store forms for all the county assistant offices throughout the state. Forms previously had to be reprinted each time an address changed or a policy was updated, wasting paper and costing thousands of dollars per office. With DocuShare, changes to forms are automated and made digitally to nearly 400 forms, and print is done on-demand. The new workflow saves the agency hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Paternity Acknowledgments

The state is also responsible for tracking paternity acknowledgements for all children born out of wedlock. Xerox® DocuShare is now leveraged to store this confidential and sensitive information, reducing the time employees need to process a request for information from days to seconds, with postage costs dramatically reduced because the data is available online.

Correspondence Tracking

The work has expanded since 2005 to include many additional applications. DocuShare is used to manage correspondence tracking – the secretary’s office files all questions and concerns from constituents in DocuShare. Certain types of correspondence legally require a response within a specific timeframe, so an efficient workflow is important. Each piece of correspondence is given a code for the department best suited to address it. After the department responds, the correspondence is digitally routed back to the secretary’s office for final approval, and sent back to the constituent.

Audit Preparation

The agency also uses DocuShare to help it prepare for federal audits. As a state agency that receives federal funds, it is subject to audits at any time. Prior to DocuShare implementation, when the federal government requested information, employees had to physically weed through boxes of files.

DocuShare now tracks every time someone accesses every document, an important record to be able to show during an audit given the sensitive, personally identifiable information contained within the documents. With the input of several search terms, the agency can be prepared to provide a comprehensive report in response to a federal request.

Disaster Recovery and FEMA

Another important use of DocuShare is to store information related to disaster recovery and FEMA. A collaboration of information between agencies expedites efficient payment to individuals, so there is no interruption in services in the event of a disaster.

PA DPW uses Xerox® DocuShare® in the following applications:

- Track and process public correspondence
- Digitize, store and retrieve aid applications and case files
- Publish most recent agency forms
- Store information on child fatalities and near fatalities
- Projects for managed care
- Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program
- Store licenses that were previously housed in Harrisburg to improve ease of access and disaster recovery protection
- Generate reports that are automatically distributed throughout the state
- Court records, adjudications and audio files of case resolutions



The Results

In July 2012, PA DPW was recognized by the state with the Governor's Innovator Award for dramatically reducing the work hours and processing time it takes to send welfare client appeals to the court system.

- By handling the 78,000 annual claims electronically via Xerox® DocuShare®, the agency will save 80 hours of staff work per month, and reduce the time it takes to get a case to Commonwealth Court from eight weeks to less than one week – an almost 90 percent decrease in processing time.
- There are approximately three million documents currently stored in DocuShare, and more than 13,000 total DocuShare users at PA DPW, in headquarters and offices statewide.
- The improvement in document security is significant – there is less risk involved with the maintenance of documents containing personally identifiable information.
- The agency is also always prepared for a federal audit as they can deliver detailed reports about who accessed what information and when, at a moment's notice.
- Agency employees have also noticed an increase in ease of access to information. Documents and information can be located within seconds, rather than having to dig through physical filing cabinets and mail copies of documents between offices. And since employees can simply access any document they need on DocuShare, information

overload and network traffic have been reduced as people upload documents to DocuShare instead of sending mass emails with attachments.

- Paper reduction has also cleared agency office space: for one project alone, 17 file cabinets were eliminated when documents were digitized and stored in DocuShare.

“We were in a situation where we had filing cabinets full of data that was unavailable and vulnerable – virtually useless.” said Weaver. **“DocuShare was the complete turnaround to digital that we needed. We now have responsible document management practices and we’re confident that we’re meeting the requirements of all our stakeholders.”**

- The DocuShare digital filing system also protects the agency against data loss in the event of disaster, and response time during an unforeseen interruption. For example, when Pennsylvania experienced severe flooding in September 2011, the workflow in place was able to ensure that clients continued to receive payment and services in a timely manner.



Summary of Results

Number of users:
13,000

Number of documents stored:
3,000,000

Annual claims processed:
78,000

Staff hours saved per month:
80

Documents Retrieved in Seconds

File cabinets removed:
17 as a result of just one project.

Dollars saved:
Hundreds of thousands

For more information, call [1.800.735.7745](tel:1.800.735.7745) (North America), or visit docushare.xerox.com.

