L.A. COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

ENHANCING CUSTOMER ACCESS: The DPSS Mobile App

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Background

• Emerging technology provided the opportunity to improve customer service by incorporating a self-service component.

• The DPSS App builds on prior IT investments:
  - DPSS Customer Service Center (CSC)
  - Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System
  - Electronic Document Management System (EDMS)
  - Your Benefits Now (YBN)
Why a Mobile App?

- It is not designed to mirror our YBN platform.
- It is not designed to allow online applications.
- DPSS elected to focus on specific issues identified as barriers to our customers:
  - Document submission
  - EBT account information
- Data showed us not only that over 60% of our customers are accessing YBN through their smartphone’s web browser.
Logging In

- Users can log in one of two ways:
  - Using their established YBN ID and YBN Password.
  - Using their Customer ID and PIN number.
Authentication

• Once logged in, the app will:
  ➢ Check account availability, and
  ➢ Request that the user agree to the User Agreement.
Mobile App Options

- DPSS Mobile App allows customers to:
  - View real-time EBT information.
  - Allow electronic submission of quarterly/semi-annual status report verifications using the phone camera.
EBT Information

• The Mobile App displays:
  • Available Balance
  • Transaction History
  • Status/Post Date
  • Transaction Amount
  • Merchant Information
  • Balance After Transaction
Electronic Submission of QR/SAR 7 Documents

• The Mobile App allows electronic submission of QR/SAR 7’s verification documents.

• The following verification documents can be submitted by use of the cell phone’s camera:
  - Income
  - Medical Costs
  - Dependent Care
  - Child Support
  - Property
  - Address Change
  - Other
Steps to Submit a Document

1. Take a Photo By the Mobile Device’s Camera
2. Select the Individuals and Document Type
3. Upload the Images and Submit
Usage and Initial Numbers

• Mobile App launched on Apple in May 2013.
  ➢ Over 4,000 downloads

• It launched on Google Play for Android users in May 2014.
  ➢ Over 700 downloads

• Feedback from Community Partners has been very positive
Upcoming Enhancements

• View current case status information
• Incorporating an ATM locator into the app
• Enhance the document upload feature beyond the status report structure and allow for any request for additional information.
Challenges

• Early data is mostly qualitative and not quantitative.
• Limited marketing – it can’t sell itself.
• Employee buy-in – if staff do not support it, we lose momentum.
• Ensuring business needs leverage technology and not letting the technology define the need.
• Must be part of a larger communication/service enhancement plan.
NACo 2014 Achievement Award

2014 ASPA – Winston Crouch Award for Innovation in Government

2014 Productivity and Quality Awards – Special Merit Plaque

2014 Digital Government Achievement Award – Government-to-Citizen Local Government Category

ISM 2014 Recognition Award for Excellence in Human Services Technology in the Application of New Technologies