

Unemployment Program Technology Investments

COVID-19 has brought many pressures to Vermont State Government unlike anything we have seen before, one of the most impacted was the unemployment program. Outlined below are strategic investments for technology in support of the unemployment program for the Covid-19 response and beyond. It is important to note that these are not a full modernization of the systems but looks to apply modular principles to the technology and reduce the effort to modernize the Unemployment Insurance system (VABS).

By the end of calendar year 2020 it is possible to modernize and gain needed efficiency for the UI system:

Technology Proposal For Claimants

An updated claimant portal general UI that would replace the 15-year-old system that couldn't support the peak volumes of weekly claims. The new system would be integrated with the new initial claims portal developed in Salesforce.

A replacement of Non-Monetary Adjudication System (NMAS) that is also an old and outdated technology that manages the tracking and resolution of claims with issues. This has been problematic for moving claims to resolution. This new system would also be based on the State's Salesforce platform.

Technology Proposal For Employers

Replacement of the outdated system employers use to inform VDOL when an employee returns to work. This would make it easier for businesses to use and will inform the State when benefits should end for a claimant. Again, this is planned to be a part of the State's Salesforce platform. Due to the high number of claims, this is needed to accurately inform businesses. Our current system does not need our covid-19 needs.

Employer new hire system is also old and outdated, like the system above it would provide an updated means for employers to inform the State when they hire a new employee. This is important for both determining if a claimant is returning to work and expectations for quarterly wage data.

Technology Proposal For VDOL Program Administration

VDOL currently does not have a technology solution for records management. Given the requirement for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) claimants to provide documents like their 2019 Tax Returns a records management solution to safely and securely manages these files is critical. The State has the OnBase solution for this would be implemented for the first time at VDOL to digitally manage these records.

Proposed Technology Plan

Building on existing platforms and working with trusted partners the work outlined above is anticipated to be completed by 12/31/2020 and require an investment of \$4,000,000 over the next 6.5 months. The claimant portion will require about \$2.2M; the employer portion approximately \$1.5M and the remaining \$300,000 for additional licensing.

Benefits

All of the investments outlined above move us towards a modernized unemployment technology environment, reduces the reliance on outdated systems , move claims through the process is a faster and more efficient way, and will provide a better experience for future claimants.