February 26, 2021

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
107 East Madison Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Re: Improved Delivery of Reemployment Assistance Benefits

ISF, Inc. is pleased to provide our Final Report to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity’s Improved Delivery of Reemployment Assistance Benefits project. This report consolidates and summarizes all tasks as outlined in the project Scope of Services, as amended.

ISF, in collaboration with the Department, performed a study to include assessment of the CONNECT system built in 2013, actions taken to stabilize the performance of the system in 2020, and comparison of solution options to enable immediate usability improvements and a sustainable continuous modernization path.

The results of the current state assessment, selected solution options, recommended projects, and associated project cost and risk are included in the Schedule IV-B for presentation to the Legislature. ISF and the Department have identified and defined projects that collectively represent the RA Modernization Program. The scope, duration, and cost of the Modernization Program is contained within the Schedule IV-B Documentation.

Key Findings

1. The Department continues to perform tirelessly to ensure benefits are provided to claimants.
2. The CONNECT system was not built to process the volume of claims received during the pandemic.
3. Substantial investments were made during 2020 to stabilize and scale out the system.
4. Those investments resulted in necessary increases to annual RA IT base budget.
5. Additional cloud migration investment is needed to realize performance and cost optimization.
6. Software architecture investment is needed to enable timely implementation of user-focused services.
7. Business Process Optimization (BPO) and user interface investment is necessary to streamline the user experience.

As a result of these findings, ISF provides the following recommendations for the Department’s consideration.
Procurement of Professional Services

ISF recommends the Department initiate procurement of the following professional services in the first quarter of FY 2021-22 to ensure the scope, schedule, and budget for the RA Modernization Program are planned and managed with minimal variance:

1. System, Software, and Integration (SSI) service provider to plan, manage, and execute the Cloud Migration and Customer Experience Transformation projects.
2. Independent Validation and Verification (IV&V) service provider to provide oversight of the RA Modernization projects and ensure minimal project cost, schedule, and scope variance.
3. Strategic Planning Office (SPO) service provider to function as the single point of contact for budget, schedule, scope, and status reporting and ensure continuous and efficient stakeholder engagement.

RA IT Modernization Requirements Documentation

In preparation for procurement of support from multiple third-parties, ISF recommends the Department document all RA Modernization functional, technical, and non-technical requirements. RA Modernization requirements will provide the level of detail necessary for prospective providers to plan and estimate efforts the Department may request. Beyond RA Modernization requirements, ISF recommends the Department also prepare requirements for oversight of RA Modernization efforts, as required for projects of the expected magnitude and complexity of the RA Modernization.

Schedule IV-B Documentation

ISF recommends annual updates to the Schedule IV-B to refine RA Modernization plans with regard to technology, budget, implementation, and other considerations that are part of long-term system updates.
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1. Executive Summary

Florida’s unemployment system is administered by the Department of Economic Opportunity (Department) using the CONNECT system, which was deployed in 2013 to provide a modernized, web-based system and to replace a mainframe system. The CONNECT system is primarily developed in .Net using an Oracle database, and it resides within the State Data Center. CONNECT is based on the Unemployment Framework for Automated Claim and Tax Services system (uFACTS) also deployed in Massachusetts and New Mexico. The deployment of CONNECT was challenged with delays and cost overruns. As a result, a reduced-scope solution was deployed in 2013. Since the deployment, the Department has been focused on resolving a backlog of technical issues and adding required functionality while accumulating technical debt across 75 proprietary products that make up the CONNECT system. Florida is not the only state to experience challenges; according to the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA), of the 21 states considered technically modernized, nearly a third are “considering” a re-modernization or replacement effort, and another third are already “considered” to be engaged in a re-modernization effort. Prior to COVID-19, the Department completed a self-assessment of the risk and technical debt of the CONNECT system and identified the need for enhancements to the system. It is critical for the Department to be able to improve the timely delivery of Reemployment Assistance benefits to effectively serve eligible claimants.

In February 2020, the unemployment rate in Florida was 2.8%, and the top priorities of the Department were controlling costs associated with the Reemployment Assistance program and ensuring proper payments were being made. Mitigation efforts intended to slow the spread of COVID-19 had significant economic impacts to the state and caused a dramatic increase in the number of Floridians requesting Reemployment Assistance within a short timeframe. Due to the significant load this public health crisis placed on the CONNECT system, the Department’s top priority was re-established to pay Reemployment Assistance benefits as quickly as possible to eligible claimants. By March 2020, Florida’s unemployment rate had risen to 4.4% before rising further in April 2020 to 13.8%. In that same timeframe, initial claims influx increased over 100-fold from less than 5,000 claims per week to over 500,000 per week. In the 11 months that followed March 2020, the CONNECT system would receive a million more claims than in the last eight years combined.

Between November 2020 and February 2021, ISF completed an assessment of the CONNECT system while COVID-19 substantially impact the need for, and delivery of, RA benefits. ISF provided feedback on options to improve the delivery of RA benefits, including a phased approach to ensure the Department can meet current and future demands and also provide near-immediate changes to better serve the needs of RA claimants, employers, and partners. The assessment provides an overview of the current state of the CONNECT system, recommended actions to be considered by the Department to enhance the delivery of RA benefits including a proposed implementation roadmap, and project timeline.

The assessment of the current state of the CONNECT system includes:

1. Ability to meet current and potential future RA benefits demand.
2. Time and effort required to re-modernize the RA IT system.
3. Comparison of COVID-19 performance and capabilities against similar programs and systems in other states.
4. Evaluation of the Department’s ability to meet RA program requirements.
5. Cost estimates of potential RA benefits solutions.
6. Ability to respond to natural disasters and adjust or "scale" the RA benefits system based on sudden fluctuations in demand for RA benefits.

ISF documented several key findings and made several recommendations upon completion of the above assessment activities which are summarized in the following section.

1.1 Project Findings and Recommendations

ISF reviewed and documented the actions the Department completed to stabilize the performance of the system in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, and ISF compared several solution alternatives to enable business processes and system usability improvements along a sustainable and continuous modernization path.

The results of the current state assessment, selected solution alternatives, recommended projects, and associated project cost and risk are included in the Schedule IV-B located within the appendix of this Final Report. ISF and the Department have defined, scheduled, and estimated resource needs (human, hardware, software, and hosting) for projects collectively representing the RA Modernization Program. The scope, duration, and cost of the RA Modernization Program is contained within the Schedule IV-B documentation.

Key Findings
ISF provides the following key findings as a result of the assessment efforts completed between November 2020 and February 2021. The key findings include:

1. The Department continues to perform tirelessly to ensure RA benefits are provided to claimants both accurately and timely.
2. The CONNECT system was not designed nor developed to process the volume of claims received during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Department completed substantial crisis response actions to stabilize the RA staff and the CONNECT system and implement required Federal RA benefit programs as they were defined by the US Department of Labor (USDOL).
3. Substantial investments were made during 2020 to stabilize and scale out the CONNECT system.
4. Investments to stabilize the CONNECT system result in an increased need for annually recurring RA IT base budget.
5. Additional RA IT system cloud migration investment is necessary to realize both system performance and cost optimization as well as insulate the RA benefits system from future sudden and dramatic increases in claims processing due to external events such as natural disasters and pandemics.
6. Software architecture investment is needed to enable timely implementation of user-focused services and resolve technical challenges where technology has not been adequately invested to sustain a stable technical environment.
7. Business Process Optimization (BPO) and user interface investments are necessary to streamline and improve the RA benefits end-user (claimants, employers, and Departmental staff) experience which impacts the efficiency and effectiveness of providing RA benefits.
As a result of the above findings, ISF provides the following recommendations for the Department’s consideration.

**Procurement of Professional Services**

ISF recommends the Department initiate procurement of the following professional services in the first quarter of FY 2021-22 to ensure the scope, schedule, and budget for the RA Modernization Program are planned and managed with minimal variance:

1. System, Software, and Integration (SSI) service provider to plan, manage, and execute the Cloud Migration and Customer Experience Transformation projects.
2. Independent Validation and Verification (IV&V) service provider to provide oversight of the RA Modernization projects and ensure minimal project cost, schedule, and scope variance.
3. Strategic Planning Office (SPO) service provider to function as the single point of contact for budget, schedule, scope, and status reporting and ensure continuous and efficient RA benefits stakeholder engagement.

**RA IT Modernization Requirements Documentation**

In preparation for procurement of support from multiple third-parties, ISF recommends the Department document all RA Modernization functional, technical, and non-technical requirements. RA Modernization requirements would provide the level of detail necessary for prospective partners to plan and estimate efforts the Department needs. Beyond RA Modernization requirements, ISF recommends the Department also prepare requirements for oversight of RA Modernization efforts, as required by established rules for projects of the expected magnitude and complexity of the RA Modernization.

**Schedule IV-B Documentation**

ISF recommends the Department perform and submit annual updates to the RA Modernization Program Schedule IV-B to further refine RA Modernization plans and cost estimates with regard to technology, budget requests, implementation risks, and related considerations supporting multi-year, complex technical and functional RA benefits system improvements.

### 2. COVID-19 Response Performance Report Summary

The COVID-19 Response Performance Report provides a detailed report of assessment findings, including, but not limited to, a baseline of Florida’s RA performance and a comparison of Florida’s RA performance to the performance of other states. Available documentation related to the Department’s COVID-19 activities and the CONNECT system was reviewed along with publicly available US Department of Labor (USDOL) performance reports to identify and compile the performance data used in creating summaries within this report. Interviews with Department leadership and key stakeholders throughout Florida’s RA Program supported the development of an understanding regarding the Department’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This report is limited to the following information:
• Florida performance baseline
• Comparison to other states’ performance
• Summary of Florida Response Timeline and Milestones

The key finding within the COVID-19 Response Performance Report documents Florida’s RA benefits initial claims volume increase by a factor of more than 100 from the week ending February 29, 2020, through the week ending April 18, 2020.¹ Two data points related to Florida’s performance stand out from an observational standpoint.

• **10,340%**
  The percentage change in new claims received over a period of less than seven weeks between USDOL reporting week ending February 29, 2020, through reporting week ending April 18, 2020.

• **$22,084,929,251**
  Between March 15, 2020, and February 4, 2021, the Department distributed more than $22 billion in federal unemployment benefits.

The CONNECT system was not designed nor developed to process the volume of claims received during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Department completed substantial crisis response actions to stabilize the RA staff, the CONNECT system, and implement required Federal RA benefit programs as they were defined by the US Department of Labor (USDOL).

¹ Calculation of the difference (501,817 initial claims) between the week ending 2/29/2020 (4,853 initial claims) and the week ending 4/18/2020 (506,670 initial claims), expressed as a percentage change.
2.1 Summary of Findings

**Figure 1: Unemployment Claims since January 1, 1990**

- **Recession of 1990 - 1991**
- **Aftermath of World Trade Center Attacks** (9/11/2001)
- **Dot-Com Bubble** (3/10/2000)
- **Hurricane Andrew, CAT5** (8/24/1992)
- **Hurricane Dennis, CAT3** (7/10/2005)
- **Hurricane Frances, CAT2** (9/5/2004)
- **Hurricane Ivan, CAT3** (9/16/2004)
- **Hurricane Ivan, CAT4** (8/13/2004)
- **Hurricane Jeanne, CAT3** (9/26/2004)
- **Hurricane Jeanne, CAT4** (9/10/2005)
- **Hurricane Wilma, CAT3** (10/24/2005)
- **Hurricane Michael, CAT5** (10/10/2018)
- **US Financial Crisis ("Great Recession") Start**
- **US Financial Crisis ("Great Recession") End**
- **COVID-19 March 2020**
- **Connect System Goes Live** (10/15/2013)

**Florida Weekly Initial Unemployment Claims since January 1, 1990**


**Historical Record Low State Unemployment Rate**
- (February 2020)
- Week ending February 29, 2020
- 4,853 initial claims filed

**Historical Record High State Unemployment Rate**
- (April 2020)
- Week ending April 18, 2020
- 506,670 initial claims filed

10,340% increase from 2/29/2020

**COVID-19 March 2020**
- Start
- End

**Recession of 1990 - 1991**
- **Hurricane Andrew, CAT5** (8/24/1992)
- **Hurricane Dennis, CAT3** (7/10/2005)
- **Hurricane Frances, CAT2** (9/5/2004)
- **Hurricane Ivan, CAT3** (9/16/2004)
- **Hurricane Ivan, CAT4** (8/13/2004)
- **Hurricane Jeanne, CAT3** (9/26/2004)
- **Hurricane Jeanne, CAT4** (9/10/2005)
- **Hurricane Wilma, CAT3** (10/24/2005)
- **Hurricane Michael, CAT5** (10/10/2018)
- **US Financial Crisis ("Great Recession") Start**
- **US Financial Crisis ("Great Recession") End**
- **COVID-19 March 2020**
- **Connect System Goes Live** (10/15/2013)
The sudden influx of new RA claims depicted in Figure 1 is remarkable when viewed in comparison to other major state and national events that occurred within the 30-year timeline. Major Category 4 and 5 hurricanes impacting Florida, such as Andrew, Irma, and Michael, do not appear to have a significant presence on the timeline when compared to the spike in new claims resulting from COVID-19. Neither the aftermath of the World Trade Center attacks on September 11, 2001, nor the impacts of the “Great Recession” from 2008-2009 produced comparable increases in Florida’s new RA claims. COVID-19 resulted in an unprecedented increase of more than 10,000 percent in new RA claims over a period of less than seven weeks. Nothing before it provides a valid basis for comparison.

The surge in claims beginning in March 2020 resulted in an unprecedented increase in work required to process those claims. The historic efforts of the Department staff resulted in the distribution of more than $22 billion in federal unemployment benefits between March 15, 2020, and February 10, 2021. As illustrated in Figure 2 below, the number of new RA claims submitted during the nearly 11-month COVID-19 period (March 15 through February 10, 2021) greatly exceeded the number of new RA claims submitted during the entire eight-year period (more than 84 months) prior to the COVID-19 observation period. The volume of claims during the tracking for this report, both new and continued, were processed by the Department’s employees using the same base operating system (CONNECT) that was in production for the preceding eight-year period.

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2 Data for initial claims during the COVID timeframe were gathered from the Reemployment Assistance Claims Dashboard. (Reemployment Assistance Claimants by County and Industry (labormarketinfo.com)) Data for initial claims for prior years was gathered from USDOL Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims Data (Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims Data, Employment & Training Administration (ETA) - U.S. Department of Labor (doleta.gov)).
FIGURE 2: INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS IN 11 MONTHS VS PREVIOUS 8 YEARS

Initial Unemployment Claims

8 Years
1/1/12 - 3/14/2020

11 Months
3/15/2020 - 2/10/2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>323,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>363,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>428,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>420,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>483,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>702,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>717,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>744,755</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 4,245,966
- 5,346,114

Ui Claims 2012-2019

Ui Claims 2020

- 2012
- 2013
- 2014
- 2015
- 2016
- 2017
- 2018
- 2019
- 2020
- COVID
From March 15, 2020, through February 10, 2021, the Department distributed $22,084,929,251 in total payments to more than two million claimants among the following programs as follows:

- $4,254,534,135 in State Reemployment Assistance Benefits (RA)
- $2,029,505,566 in Federal Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (FPEUC)
- $2,278,738,695 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (FPUA)
- $13,522,150,855 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) / Lost Wage Assistance (LWA)


Florida's COVID response is representative of that of other states, simply scaled larger due to Florida's size and proportional share of tourism and hospitality as a percentage of state gross domestic product (GDP). This resulted in a hundred-fold increase in claim volume. Ultimately, Florida would receive more claims in nine months than it had in the previous eight years combined. This unprecedented stress test revealed weaknesses in the CONNECT system that must be addressed. In response, Florida scaled up the CONNECT system and staff and employed additional solutions like implementing robotic process automation, virtual waiting rooms, and a new system just for receiving new claims.

Substantial investments were made during 2020 to stabilize and scale out the CONNECT system. Investments to stabilize the CONNECT system result in an increased need for annually recurring RA IT base budget.

ISF's assessment went beyond the COVID-19 response with a deeper evaluation of RA benefits business processes and the CONNECT system. The CONNECT Current State Assessment summary is provided in the following section.
3. CONNECT Current State Assessment Summary

The CONNECT Current State Assessment contains an assessment of the current CONNECT system. It incorporates a review of documentation related to CONNECT, results of interviews with DEO Subject Matter Experts (SME), DEO leadership, and key stakeholders throughout the RA Program, and descriptions of business processes supported by the current CONNECT system.

In order to receive broad support, Information Technology projects must support the RA Program’s mission, requirements, and services. This initial perspective supporting a comprehensive business case provides a broad analysis of the current state of RA services and begins to support the planning of the recommended path forward for modernizing the RA benefits system. This is essential to facilitate buy-in from all RA stakeholders, including Legislative, Department, and public individuals with an interest in Reemployment Assistance services. This document clearly identifies the current situation leading to the need for the proposed project and summarizes the business requirements that must be met by any proposed business solution.

3.1 Summary of Findings

During the COVID-19 performance period, an unprecedented volume of services and program benefits were provided by the Department’s RA Bureau. The historic efforts of Department staff were supported by a seven-year old system augmented with newer supplemental information technology assets needed to meet the sudden surge in demand for program benefits. Challenges remaining with the system include an outdated programming and data access framework, lack of a data warehouse to allow for backup and purge of production data, and lack of a service-oriented architecture and APIs that enable the timely implementation of business-driven services.

Historically, during times of lower unemployment, as was the case during the period preceding the pandemic, federal funding tends to be lower overall which impacts the Department’s ability to support projects which could improve the delivery of RA services. The impact to RA workload resulting from economic crisis in response to COVID was pervasive nationwide. Many of Florida’s RA services were negatively impacted, ranging from inability to establish a claim to being able to talk to program staff and delays in the provision of RA benefits. While the system supporting RA was never intended, designed, nor implemented to support the workload it experienced during the COVID-19 period, the increased load exposed weaknesses in the RA system and business processes.

Changes were required to stabilize the system and were completed with generally successful results. Urgent issues were largely remediated; however, they consumed valuable time and human resources as the crisis persisted for many months. While unemployment levels have been trending downward since a peak level in mid-April of 2020, there is still a large backlog of work, new federally required programs to implement, and extensions of existing programs that continue to heavily burden the RA program and CONNECT in particular. The best or most utilitarian solution to accommodate and resolve this large remaining workload is to continue pursuing the Department’s pre-COVID plan toward continuous modernization and progress towards a sustainable, healthy, responsive, and ready RA program with the proper technical enablement and functionality needed to satisfy service level requirements.

Before the above scenario unfolded, RA was already on a path towards continuous modernization of CONNECT. Substantial resources were previously expended to begin migration to a cloud-hosted model for core infrastructure. Software, becoming aged, was also being contemplated for eventual replacement as it had well begun its loss of a designed modular architecture which over time has become highly interconnected.
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Moving forward, detailed requirements definition is necessary as a first step to a phased long-term modernization approach. RA needs to organize and re-establish core system documentation, procedures, and capabilities to return to the continuous modernization path they were on pre-COVID. The necessary system changes require an accounting with regard to the functional and non-functional requirements of the system in order to best position for any future 1 in 500-year event, low unemployment, and any scenario in between. It is clear, when unemployment is high and surges quickly, there can be no delay in providing the RA benefits and services claimants and employers are due by federal and state law, and this includes the agility to implement federally mandated programs in very short order.

ISF’s assessment activities continued in the period between November 2020 and February 2021 to identify and compare solution alternatives as well as define a recommendation for an implementation roadmap for a modernized RA benefits system. The next section provides a summary of the RA benefit modernization program.

4. Future State Recommended Approach and Implementation Roadmap Summary

There is no “silver bullet” turnkey RA system or solution for achieving the Department’s goal of organizational agility and creating a sustainable culture of continuous modernization. The goal of continuous modernization is not an end point, but an ongoing journey that will require a transformation of institutional vision, commitment, effort, and discipline.

The recommendations set forth in this document divide the modernization initiatives into realistic, viable, and achievable projects. Critical projects include the immediate transition to the cloud to enable system scalability and elasticity, establishment of a service-oriented software development architecture, transition to a modern user authentication service, and essential business process re-engineering and user experience transformations for citizens and employers.

Federal laws and regulations, as well as Florida statutes and administrative rules, provide the foundation for RA business objectives, processes, system capabilities, functions, and performance requirements. RA requirements provide the regulatory and system performance drivers for the RA business processes and functions enabled through the future RA IT environment.

4.1 Summary of Findings

Due to the pace of technology advancement and the fluidity of citizen and employer RA needs, the modernize and freeze approach is not sustainable. The initiatives and projects recommended in this document address the immediate need to improve RA system performance and usability while establishing the architectural framework and processes necessary to implement future business process and technology change efficiently and effectively.

Modernization projects are organized within each of the initiatives illustrated in Figure 3: Continuous Modernization Initiatives. Collectively, the projects identified within this document represent the scope of the RA Modernization Program.
The vision for the modernization program is to implement immediate system performance and functional improvement needs while positioning the Department with a secure, scalable, and sustainable system architecture and agile support processes.

To realize this vision for immediate improvement and long-term sustainability there are technology and resource investments necessary in fiscal years 2021-22 and 2022-23. The investments will result in long-term benefit to Citizens in immediate process improvement and long-term benefit to the Department in reduced system maintenance time and cost.

To ensure the most efficient and effective implementation of projects included in the modernization program, it is recommended that the Department acquire the services of a third-party Systems, Software, and Integration (SSI) service provider experienced in the planning and implementation of multi-year system modernization initiatives. Modernization project teams will be comprised of a combination of Department and third-party resources.

Projects are governed by the Department. The governance process ensures an integrated process, vertically and horizontally, for requesting new projects and funding. It is further recommended that the Department acquire third-party services to support the Strategic Planning Office (SPO) and acquire third-party Independent Validation & Verification (IV&V) services to ensure projects are executed with minimal cost and schedule variance.

The SPO serves as the single point of contact for budget, schedule, scope, and status reporting. A critical role and function of the SPO ensures approved projects effectively engage stakeholders and maintain a high level of efficient, coordinated, and productive collaboration.

To ensure fiscal responsibility, the SPO and established governance teams will adjust operational cost needs for fiscal year 2022-2023 based on additional information obtained from the cloud migration and procurement projects initiated in the first quarter of fiscal year 2021-2022. As projects are completed, operational costs shift away from managed third-party service providers and back to Department personnel and Staff Augmentation support needs.
The timeline provided below depicts each of the recommended projects, an estimated duration, and expected dependencies between projects.

The following section provides a summary of the Department’s Schedule IV-B for RA IT Modernization as an overall business case resulting from the assessment activities and recommendations summarized above. Within the appendix of this Final Report is the Schedule IV-B in its entirety.

5. Schedule IV-B Summary

During the COVID-19 response period, an unprecedented volume of services and program benefits were requested of and provided by the Department’s RA Program. The impact to RA workload resulting from economic crisis in response to COVID was pervasive nationwide. Many of Florida’s RA services were negatively impacted, with issues ranging from inability to establish a claim to inability to talk to program staff, and delays in the provision of RA benefits. While the system supporting RA was never intended, designed, or implemented to support the workload it experienced during the COVID-19 period, the increased load exposed weaknesses in the RA system and business processes.

The historic efforts of DEO staff were supported by a seven-year old system that required immediate technology investment to meet the sudden surge in demand for program benefits. The following substantial changes were implemented during 2020 to address the unprecedented demand for program services:

- Additional staff augmentation personnel
- Pooling of staff resources from a number of partner agencies
- Implementation of 72 dedicated web servers and load balancing in the cloud
- Implementation of a cloud-based Customer Portal to accept initial claims submissions
- Expansion of Contact Center staffing and acquisition of additional Contact Center technology licenses
- Additional software including Identity Proofing Services and a Virtual Waiting Room
Improved Delivery of Reemployment Assistance Benefits

The base IT budget for the RA system is approximately $12 million. During the 2020 emergency response, approximately $39 million in emergency funding was utilized to implement the above staff augmentation, hardware, and software changes. As a result of the emergency spend, there is a recurring funding need within this budget request for fiscal year 2021-22 of approximately $29.3 million dollars. The recurring $29.3 million dollars is requested for inclusion in the base budget starting in fiscal year 2021-22, resulting in a new base budget of $41.3 million.

Modernization projects that were initiated pre-pandemic were placed on hold due to the focus directed at handling the increased demands. The modernization projects recommended and prioritized within this document collectively represent the RA Modernization Program and represents the funding need established within this budget request for fiscal year 2021-22 of approximately $32.9 million. Project costs for FY 2022-23 are $40.4 million. Base budget and ongoing maintenance costs will be re-evaluated post-COVID and in advance of each fiscal year's annual budget request. Additional information on the scope of the projects within the Modernization Program are available in the technology planning and Cost/Benefit sections of this document.

5.1 Summary of Findings

RA benefits modernization projects which were initiated pre-pandemic were placed on hold due to the focus directed at handling the increased demands stemming from the effects of COVID-19 upon Florida’s economy and workforce. The modernization projects recommended and prioritized within this document and the RA Modernization Schedule IV-B collectively represent the RA Modernization Program and represents the funding need established within the Department’s budget request for fiscal year 2021-22 of approximately $32.9 million. Project costs for FY 2022-23 constitute an additional $40.4 million.

The following four options are alternatives similar state of Florida system modernization efforts have considered in recent years and are considered for this RA Modernization.
1. Retain Existing System (do not modernize)
2. Custom development (modernize and enhance)
3. COTS/SaaS (utilize where feasible)
4. Other State Agency System

The recommended alternative is a combination of alternatives two and three, utilizing COTS/SaaS where feasible, while modernizing and enhancing the current RA system in situations where COTS/SaaS solutions are not feasible. A cloud-based solution that enables timely enhancements and customizations provides the best alignment of business needs with technology optimization and flexibility moving forward.

Although business solution alternatives two through four may all be viable, the proposed approach and solution is independently supported by information received during multiple meetings with the Technology Director of the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA).

Among key observations from those meetings, it was noted that migration away from the historical data center model to a cloud environment will become a strategic imperative for all state UI programs in order to scale up or down as necessary to adjust to dramatic fluctuations in future workload demands.

The flexibility of any platform adopted to continuously evolve and adapt to changes in technology, as well as market conditions that drive demand for program services, was also observed as a necessary strategic consideration. The proposed solution set forth in this document satisfies these strategic objectives.

An update to the Schedule IV-B in the fall of 2021 is anticipated to refine future year budget requirements and maintenance costs. Base budget and ongoing maintenance costs will be re-evaluated post-COVID and in advance of each fiscal year’s annual budget request. Additional information on the scope of the projects within the Modernization Program are available in the technology planning and Cost/Benefit sections of the Schedule IV-B.

5.2 Schedule IV-B RA Modernization Projects Cost Estimation Summary

The points below summarize the projects recommended to complete the RA Modernization Program where the details of project cost estimates are included as Appendix 6.6. The following list identifies the key architectural and cost data points for the RA Modernization Program:

- Business Process and Customer Experience (CX) Transformation project represents the highest cost.
- Cloud Migration project represents the second highest cost, and is the core foundational modernization effort to insulate RA from future sudden initial claims increases due to circumstantial events.
- Software architecture modernization is a pre-requisite to the CX Transformation project.
- All projects are scheduled to complete by the end of fiscal year 2022-2023.
- The total two-year modernization cost is approximately $73 million.
- Human Resources are the largest cost (61% of total), then software (27%) and hardware (12%).
- Maintenance costs are expected to decrease beginning in fiscal year 2023.
6. Appendix

6.1 Project Plan and Basis of Understanding
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Improved Delivery of Reemployment Assistance Benefits

Deliverable #1: Project Plan and Basis of Understanding

February 26, 2021
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## Acronyms

<table>
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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>API</td>
<td>Application Program Interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COTS</td>
<td>Customizable Off the Shelf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DED</td>
<td>Deliverable Expectation Document</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEO</td>
<td>Department of Economic Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMBOK</td>
<td>Project Management Body of Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Reemployment Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAID</td>
<td>Risks, Action Items, Issues, Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBS</td>
<td>Work Breakdown Structure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Project Overview

The Reemployment Assistance (RA) Improvement project will examine and assess the delivery of RA benefits in the state of Florida to include an assessment of CONNECT, Florida’s system providing the intake and processing of RA claims, and identification of recommendations to improve RA claims processes. The basis of understanding for the assessment will be formed through a review of CONNECT and RA business processes, DEO staff interviews and work sessions, and review of additional artifacts provided by DEO.

CONNECT is Florida’s RA claims system, used by DEO staff, claimants, employers, and third-party administrators (TPAs). CONNECT was launched on October 15, 2013, and serves as the central repository to track, view, and file RA claims. The system functions as the core benefits administration platform for DEO staff and provides online access for claimants to apply for benefits, view and track claims, set up payment information, and file an appeal. For employers, the system allows access to inquiries regarding claimants for response and to protest a benefit charge or file an appeal. Additionally, the system allows employers to grant third-party administrators access to perform specific functions.

This document is deliverable one of five and provides a plan for the assessment of the current state of RA operations and CONNECT including business processes, infrastructure, software, documentation, and organizational culture to address areas of concern and provide potential opportunities for improvement. Future deliverables are intended to focus more deeply on recommendations to improve the future state of RA services and the information technology and human resources supporting the delivery of RA services. This project will develop the deliverables defined in Table 1: Project Deliverables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>A detailed project plan, including, but not limited to, project schedule, tasks, objectives, anticipated DEO resource needs which must be approved by DEO. Project plan and execution thereof, must adhere to Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 60GG-1, Project Management and Oversight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>COVID-19 Response Performance Report</td>
<td>A detailed report of assessment findings, including, but not limited to, a baseline of Florida’s RA performance and a comparison of Florida’s RA performance to the performance of other states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>CONNECT Current State Assessment</td>
<td>An assessment of the current state of RA operations and CONNECT including business processes, infrastructure, software, documentation, and organizational culture to address areas of concern and provide potential opportunities for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Future State Recommended Approach and Implementation Roadmap</td>
<td>An overall recommendation and potential approaches for CONNECT in the form of an implementation roadmap and a recommended model of governance to enable the improved delivery of RA services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 1.1 The Challenge

The Department of Economic Opportunity uses the CONNECT system to administer Florida’s unemployment program, providing Reemployment Assistance benefits. The CONNECT system was launched with a scope lacking the processing capabilities needed for overall success under the conditions the state recently experienced during CY2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19.

With a sharp increase in unemployment in Florida due to the COVID crisis, DEO needs a thorough assessment of the current system, with the objective of providing a full set of recommendations and the development of a Schedule IV-B for the funding and procurement of a recommended solution, e.g., enhancement of the current system or procurement of a different solution. Requirements for a recommended solution come from many sources including federal partners, federal and state laws, regulations and rules, end-users and customers. Any recommended solution must be developed and tested to anticipate unexpected and severe increases in system usage and other potential changes in system demand with the potential to impact program and system performance expectations.

DEO requires ISF to perform and report upon process and technical assessments, strategy, recommendations, and a market scan developed with a broader perspective of system performance requirements to serve the impacted population of a large state with a population of greater than twenty million. While smaller states may have unemployment systems capable of providing adequate RA services for small to medium populations of five to ten million, larger states like Florida face challenges when unemployment rates rise quickly and unexpectedly.

## 1.2 Project Objective

ISF will complete an assessment of the CONNECT system and make recommendations to improve the application process and delivery of RA benefits in the state of Florida. Recommendations will include solutions to address sudden increases in claims and claim-related activity for system performance, rapid load increases, and changes to operational workflows. Options to provide an enhanced user experience for Floridians applying for and receiving RA benefits will also be explored.

The performance expectation of the RA system to address a sudden spike in unemployment must be addressed from initial solution planning through implementation. Business processes exercised under normal volume and routine workflows, as well as emergency operations, will be evaluated for process changes necessary to avoid performance degradation during extenuating circumstances. The mechanisms enabling increased performance capacity may vary by events or circumstances; however, the careful documentation of expectations begins during planning and must remain in focus to ensure mission readiness and accountability for meeting future solution...
requirements. Future solution requirements must also account for the potential need to rapidly enact new Federal RA programs and requirements which have the potential to delay planned system upgrades and further constrain limited human resources.

The solutions ISF will research and ultimately recommend – whether improvements to the existing system or procurement for additional integrated solutions or for complete replacement of the current system – will examine and consider the new requirements to implement Federal programs as well as the experience of other states with volume and system requirements comparable to Florida (to the extent possible and to the extent such comparative information can be obtained within the timeframe given for this project). Workforce factors unique to Florida, such as recent tourism layoffs, serve to further underscore this challenge and critical need.
# 2 Scope of Work

The Scope of Work is set forth below:

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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Final Report and Schedule IV-B</td>
<td>A final report with documentation stating recommendations, risk assessment, and supporting information. Schedule IV-B report, including system/program analysis, functional/technical requirements, benefits realization, cost benefit analysis, risk assessment, and technology and project management planning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1 Out of Scope Items

- Implementation plans, implementation support for any recommended solution, and implementation or execution of any recommended solution falling outside the scope of this project.

- The value of any recommended solution rests in material part upon the ability of DEO or third parties working on behalf of DEO to execute and implement a given solution. The resources and ability of DEO or third parties working on behalf of DEO to successfully execute and implement any recommended solution also fall outside the scope of this project.

- Items not specifically identified and clearly described as deliverables falling within the Scope of Work are also excluded from this project

2.2 Project Assumptions

Given the constricted timeframe required for this project, it is critical all tasks are executed on schedule. All tasks are "critical path" and any delay to their completion puts the success of the project at risk.

General Assumptions:

- DEO will designate a project manager to act as the primary point of contact for this project. DEO Project Manager is expected to work closely with the ISF employees as needed and will: (a) facilitate the scheduling of ISF interviews with appropriate DEO personnel; (b) notify ISF in writing of any project or performance issues; and (c) assist in resolving project issues.

- DEO will schedule the DEO resources for project activities and provide meeting facilities, as may be necessary.

- DEO personnel will be available per the approved project schedule.

- All deliverables will be developed using Microsoft products (e.g., Word, Excel and PowerPoint).

- Approvals required from DEO will not be unreasonably withheld.

- Meetings and work sessions will be conducted with full cooperation and transparency between the parties. Full disclosure will be given of all attendees, participants and observers in meetings and work sessions. Attendance of meetings will be limited only to invitees and meeting invitations may not be shared or extended to others without prior written permission of the meeting organizer.

Data Collection:

- Current state assessment data will be reasonably available via interviews and documentation review. DEO staff will provide timely access to all information and data requested by ISF to perform under the contract and satisfy deliverable requirements, including deliverable due dates.
• DEO will provide timely access to all appropriate personnel to be interviewed. These personnel will provide data necessary to complete this project, answer questions, provide existing documentation and attend working sessions. In the event DEO personnel are not available; a change of scope may be necessary.

• Florida’s Legislative Session may begin or occur in parallel with the project and may impact the availability of some DEO key stakeholder’s or staff members during this project. DEO will make reasonable accommodations to ensure necessary access to DEO personnel and resources needed to ensure this project is completed successfully and on schedule.

• DEO will arrange all sessions with DEO staff.

• All data collection and interviews / work sessions will take place via Microsoft Teams, telephone or in person at DEO offices located in Tallahassee, Florida or as agreed to between DEO and ISF Project Managers.

• If necessary information or data for this project is not received from third parties by ISF in a timely manner, DEO may extend deliverable due dates or excuse incomplete performance that is a direct and proximate result of delay or non-cooperation by third parties in providing essential information or data needed by ISF to meet deliverable requirements.

• Feedback from DEO following reviews of deliverables will be consolidated by DEO into a single document to eliminate redundancy and facilitate an efficient and timely turnaround of DEO feedback into final approved deliverable documents.

• For purposes of this section, the word “timely” shall mean an amount of time sufficient to allow ISF to meet deliverable due dates as set forth in the approved Project Schedule.

Place of Performance:

• Except for meetings, DEO staff interviews and work sessions, all ISF services will be performed remotely.

• Travel is not anticipated and was not included in Project pricing.

• Office space will be made available on a reasonable basis to ISF at DEO’s location(s) for on-site project time that may be necessary, if any.

Deliverables and Changes to Scope:

• ISF has developed our pricing using the Management Consulting rates on file in our Florida State Term Contract for Management Consulting. Any changes to ISF project team members will follow the State Term Contract for Management Consulting.

• DEO will provide guidance and explain risk tolerance levels applicable to any recommended solution (e.g. usage and capacity parameters for a recommended solution should anticipate a 1 in 100-year
catastrophic market event that could cause a 500% or greater spike in weekly claims lasting over a period of 24 months).

- Any requests for additional information or resource (beyond the details described in the tasks above) that are made by DEO will be considered a change in scope for this engagement.

- Assumptions may change and may need to be amended as information is provided to ISF by DEO in documentation and during staff interviews and work sessions.
2.3 Project Phases & Methodology

The project will follow a structured, proven methodology for conducting large-scale strategic planning efforts. The methodology aligns to Florida's Rule 60GG-1 and supports DEO to be successful in IT initiatives, through project management knowledge consistent with PMBOK guidelines and recommendations that are practical and attainable given DEO RA mission, goals, current processes and technologies.

Figure 1: Project Phases below illustrates the phases we will complete to ensure project success in alignment with Rule 60GG-1. Each project phase is subsequently described in the remained of this section.

### 2.3.1 Initiate

The purpose of the initiate phase is to begin the project and develop a project plan to guide project activities, and conduct the project kickoff meeting with DEO stakeholders. The primary objective of this stage is to ensure DEO stakeholders and project team members are familiar with the scope, goals, work plan and activities, along with the expected outcomes of the project.

ISF will complete the following project tasks during the Initiate phase:

- Develop a Project Plan
- Plan and conduct kickoff meeting

**Milestones:**

- ✔ Project Kickoff Meeting
- ✔ Project Plan
2.3.2 Plan

After the project kickoff meeting, planning activities will commence. This phase involves ISF making formal requests for relevant project documentation and other project information including organizational charts, business process and CONNECT system documentation, scheduling meetings, and additional preparations necessary to prepare for and complete work during the Execute phase of the project. ISF's unique expertise and qualifications enables the ISF team to minimize ramp-up time and allow for expedited reviews across the different RA program areas.

The Plan phase includes ISF performing the following:

- Research current CONNECT functionality, architecture, organization and environments
- Plan for information gathering sessions

**Deliverable:**

✓ **Deliverable #1: Project Plan and Basis of Understanding**

2.3.3 Execute

The Execute phase will comprise most of the project team’s effort. During this phase, ISF will complete those activities associated with the approved Project Plan, required to complete the planned deliverables and meet the overarching goals of the effort.

ISF will document, review and revise meeting notes and assessment activities to capture the results and form the basis for deriving opportunities for improvement and recommendations.

**Deliverables:**

✓ **Deliverable #2: Assessment of COVID-19 Performance**
✓ **Deliverable #3: CONNECT Current State Assessment**
2.3.4 Recommend

As part of the project, ISF will provide recommendations to DEO. Recommendations will help provide direction for CONNECT replacement planning. Our recommendations will provide insight on options to improve the delivery of Reemployment Assistance benefits to meet current and future demands and provide immediate changes to better serve the needs of Reemployment Assistance applicants, employers, and partners.

Deliverables:

✓ Deliverable #4: Future State Recommended Approach and Implementation Roadmap
✓ Deliverable #5: Final Report and Schedule IV-B

2.3.5 Close

In the Close phase, ISF will facilitate a project closeout meeting, identifying lessons learned. We will also complete the transfer in electronic format, final versions of all reports, documents, and any other artifacts or supporting documentation produced during the engagement to DEO.

Milestone:

✓ Project Closeout and Lessons Learned Meeting

2.3.6 Project Management

ISF uses a project management methodology based on the requirements of DEO and experience with similar engagements. Predictability, accountability, and flexibility are key elements that must be embraced by the overall project management approach to ensure DEO's satisfaction and project success. Successful project management must include active and visible leadership, multiple controls and checkpoints with measurable outcomes, and engagement with DEO. ISF believes strong project management is critical throughout the life of any successful project.

For this project, ISF’s project management will include the following specific elements, in addition to our standard methodology:

- ISF will advise DEO leadership including the CIO on areas of concern and will propose solutions to mitigate risk.
• With the exception of establishing open communication with third parties like other states and their system implementers, ISF will have primary responsibility with support from DEO, as requested, in managing all logistics.

• ISF will respond to inquiries or requests from DEO within one business day from receipt.

• In the case where additional time is needed for a task, ISF will provide an estimate, which must be approved by the DEO Project Manager.

• At the end of the contract, ISF will provide final copies of all reports in electronic format for archive purposes.

ISF’s project management approach utilizes the technical skills, tools, and techniques needed to succeed, as well as the dedication to accountability, resource commitment, and organizational focus. Project success will be the result of active communication among all individuals, understanding everyone’s role in the project, and clear delineation of responsibilities.

ISF believes successful project management hinges on the following:

• Clearly established project goals and requirements
• Ongoing assessment of quality against established standards
• Constant measurement of success against established deliverables and milestones
• Personal presence and commitment of key project leadership
• Proactive identification and communication of risks and issues

2.3.7 Quality Assurance

ISF follows a rigid quality assurance process. DEO’s project will follow these processes and procedures to ensure the highest level of customer satisfaction.

Quality Management. The ISF Client Partner’s primary responsibility is to provide oversight and ensure DEO satisfaction by conducting frequent communication with key management, business, and technical users.

The ISF DEO Client Partner is responsible for understanding project requirements and DEO expectations. A preliminary internal project meeting is held near the project start with DEO. This meeting will include a discussion(s) of task assignments to clarify the scope of work and how it will be accomplished. The following quality management activities will be completed for this project:

• **ISF Internal Kickoff Meeting** – Prior to project commencement, ISF ensured all team members understand the project’s requirements, scope, and quality control processes. This meeting included a discussion of task assignments to clarify the scope of work and how it will be accomplished. This awareness is maintained throughout the duration of the project within ongoing and as necessary ISF project team meetings.

• **ISF Internal Checkpoints** – ISF’s bi-weekly project inspections ensure all work elements are completed in accordance with DEO’s requirements and ISF’s standards.

• **ISF/DEO Checkpoints** – ISF’s DEO Client Partner/Project Manager will schedule regular contact with DEO’s Project Sponsor. This allows DEO to voice its perspective on the assignment progress and will serve as a resource the Department can call upon at any time over the course of the project.
• **Internal Deliverable Reviews** – Prior to submission to DEO, all deliverables will undergo a thorough review by the ISF Project Manager and the ISF quality assurance resource. This review includes technical editing, validation, clarity, and ensuring conformance to DEO standards and expectations.
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

Improved Delivery of Reemployment Assistance Benefits

Deliverable #2: COVID-19 Response Performance Report

February 26, 2021
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<td>Artificial Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWC</td>
<td>Combined Wage Claim Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAC</td>
<td>Florida Administrative Code</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPEUC</td>
<td>Federal Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPUA</td>
<td>Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPUC</td>
<td>Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAA</td>
<td>Higher Authority Appeals</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAA</td>
<td>Lower Authority Appeals</td>
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<tr>
<td>LWA</td>
<td>Lost Wage Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>ML</td>
<td>Machine Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Reemployment Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>RPA</td>
<td>Robotic Process Automation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SaaS</td>
<td>Software as a Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAN</td>
<td>Storage Area Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>UI</td>
<td>Unemployment Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDOL</td>
<td>United States Department of Labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFH</td>
<td>Work from Home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Reemployment Assistance Improvement Project

1.1 Project Overview

The Reemployment Assistance (RA) Improvement project will examine and assess the delivery of RA benefits in the state of Florida to include an assessment of the CONNECT system, Florida’s system providing the intake and processing of RA claims, and identification of recommendations to improve RA claims processes. The basis of understanding for the assessment will be formed through a review of the CONNECT system and RA business processes, the Department staff interviews and work sessions, and review of additional artifacts provided by the Department.

CONNECT is Florida’s RA claims system, used by the Department’s staff, claimants, employers, and third-party representatives. CONNECT was launched on October 15, 2013, and serves as the central repository to track, view, and file RA claims. The system functions as the core benefits administration platform for the Department’s staff and provides online access for claimants to apply for benefits, view and track claims, and set up payment information. For employers, the system allows access to inquiries regarding claimants for response and to protest a benefit change or file an appeal. Additionally, the system allows employers to grant third-party representatives access to perform specific functions.

This document is deliverable two of five and provides a report of the Department’s COVID-19 performance. Future deliverables are intended to focus more deeply into RA business processes and CONNECT system performance whereas this document is focused on overall RA program performance during the COVID-19 period. This project includes the following deliverables:

**Table 1: Project Deliverables**

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<td>3</td>
<td>CONNECT Current State Assessment and Recommended Approach and Multi-Phased Roadmap</td>
<td>An assessment of the current state of the CONNECT system including documentation presenting current architecture of the CONNECT system, areas of concern, and potential opportunities for improvement. An overall recommendation and potential approaches in the form of an implementation roadmap with preference given to cloud-computing options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
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<td>Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Model of Continuous Modernization and Recommended Implementation</td>
<td>A recommended model of governance to enable the improved delivery of Reemployment Assistance benefits. Minimum of three system integrator recommendations, based on market research, of system integrators with prior experience and proven track records.</td>
</tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Final Report and Schedule IV-B</td>
<td>A final report with documentation stating recommendation, risk assessment, and all other supporting information. Schedule IV-B report including system/program analysis, functional/technical requirements, benefits realization, cost benefit analysis, risk assessment, and technology and project management planning.</td>
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2 Executive Summary

New claim volumes increased by a factor of more than 100 (10,340%) from the week ending February 29, 2020, through the week ending April 18, 2020.¹

Two data points related to Florida’s performance stand out from an observational standpoint.

- **10,340%**
  The percentage change in new claims received over a period of less than seven weeks between USDOL reporting week ending February 29, 2020, through reporting week ending April 18, 2020.

- **$22,084,929,251**
  Between March 15, 2020 and February 4, 2021, the Department distributed more than $22 billion in federal unemployment benefits.

This report is believed to be the first of its kind. Expressing performance of a state workforce agency in its response to the dramatic increase in claim volumes for RA benefits resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic is not without challenges. Although there is no prior example to serve as a benchmark for this report, a contextual frame of reference is required. In order to assess and report on the Department’s COVID-19 performance, it is necessary to first understand the scope and magnitude of COVID-19 and the impact of the pandemic on new RA claims volumes in Florida.

Florida’s COVID response is representative of that of other states, simply scaled larger due to Florida’s size and proportional share of tourism and hospitality as a percentage of state GDP. This resulted in a hundred-fold increase in claim volume. Ultimately, Florida would receive more claims in nine months than it had in the previous eight years combined. This unprecedented stress test revealed weaknesses in CONNECT that must be addressed. In response, Florida scaled up their system and staff and employed additional solutions like implementing robotic process automation, virtual waiting rooms, and a new system just for receiving new claims.

¹ Calculation of the difference (501,817 initial claims) between the week ending 2/29/2020 (4,853 initial claims) and the week ending 4/18/2020 (506,670 initial claims), expressed as a percentage change.
3 Background

3.1 Historical Context

As of July 1, 2019, according to the US Census Bureau, Florida’s population had grown substantially ranking the third most populous state with an estimated population of 21,477,737, behind only California and Texas. Florida experienced a population growth of 233,420 between the period July 1, 2018, and July 1, 2019, ranking second in numeric growth only behind Texas and ranking ninth in percent growth at 1.1% during the same period.²

Based on USDOL statistics, Florida’s historical low unemployment rate of 2.8% was reported in February of 2020. Florida’s historical high unemployment rate of 13.8% was recorded in April of 2020. Figure 1 below illustrates the relative impact of COVID-19 on new RA claims in Florida over the past 30-years.³

COVID-19 and the nationwide “shut down” had a dramatic impact on all states. In particular, unemployment rates rapidly increasing to all-time highs across the nation inordinately stressed state Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs and the IT systems supporting them. This section describes some of the experiences and responses of states’ UI programs in comparison to Florida’s response.

As a starting point for this assessment, it must be noted that UI systems were not designed with system performance requirements intended to support the number of end users and the volume of claims and claim-related system transactions encountered during the COVID-19 performance period. Underlying a capability to address such volume is the hardware of a given system which provides the raw computing power to run each system.

³ USDOL Statistics obtained from: https://www.bls.gov/web/laus/lauhsthl.htm
Figure 1: Unemployment Claims since January 1, 1990

Florida Weekly Initial Unemployment Claims since January 1, 1990

Source: US Department of Labor
Employment & Training Administration
https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims.asp

Historical Record High State Unemployment Rate
(February 2020)
Week ending February 29, 2020
4,853 initial claims filed

Historical Record Low State Unemployment Rate
(February 2020)
Week ending February 29, 2020
506,670 initial claims filed
10,340% increase from 2/29/2020
The sudden influx of new RA claims depicted in Figure 1 is remarkable when viewed in comparison to other major state and national events that occurred within the 30-year timeline. Major Category 4 and 5 hurricanes impacting Florida, such as Andrew, Irma, and Michael, do not appear to have a significant presence on the timeline when compared to the spike in new claims resulting from COVID-19. Neither the aftermath of the World Trade Center attacks on September 11, 2001, nor the impacts of the “Great Recession” from 2008-2009 produced comparable increases in Florida’s new RA claims. COVID-19 resulted in an unprecedented increase of more than 10,000 percent in new RA claims over a period of less than seven weeks. Nothing before it provides a valid basis for comparison.

The surge in claims beginning in March 2020 resulted in an unprecedented increase in work required to process those claims. The historic efforts of the Department staff resulted in the distribution of more than $22 billion in federal unemployment benefits between March 15, 2020, and February 10, 2021. As illustrated in Figure 2 below, the number of new RA claims submitted during the nearly 11-month COVID-19 period (March 15 through February 10, 2021) greatly exceeded the number of new RA claims submitted during the entire eight-year period (more than 84 months) prior to the COVID-19 observation period.\(^4\) The volume of claims during the tracking for this report, both new and continued, were processed by the Department’s employees using the same base operating system (CONNECT) that was in production for the preceding eight-year period.

\(^4\) Data for initial claims during the COVID timeframe were gathered from the Reemployment Assistance Claims Dashboard. ([Reemployment Assistance Claimants by County and Industry](https://labormarketinfo.com)) Data for initial claims for prior years was gathered from USDOL Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims Data ([Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims Data, Employment & Training Administration (ETA) - U.S. Department of Labor](https://doleta.gov)).
Figure 2: Initial Unemployment Claims in ~11 Months vs Previous 8 Years

Initial Unemployment Claims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>60,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>323,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>363,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>428,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>420,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>483,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>702,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>717,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>744,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID</td>
<td>4,245,966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,346,114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 8 Years (1/1/12 - 3/14/2020): 4,245,966

In 11 Months (3/15/2020 - 2/10/2021): 5,346,114
From March 15, 2020 through February 10, 2021, the Department distributed $22,084,929,251 in total payments to more than two million claimants among the following programs as follows:

- $4,254,534,135 in State Reemployment Assistance Benefits (RA)
- $2,029,505,566 in Federal Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (FPEUC)
- $2,278,738,695 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (FPUA)
- $13,522,150,855 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) / Lost Wage Assistance (LWA)


### 3.2 Peer States

#### 3.2.1 Peer State Selection

States were selected for purposes of comparison based upon the following rationale:

- Greater or equal economic impact of tourism as a percentage of state GDP: Hawaii and Nevada
- Population greater than 15 million: California, Texas, New York
- Similar current RA system of record: Massachusetts
- Similar geographic region (and recommended by the Department for sound performance): South Carolina

#### 3.2.2 Peer State Comparison

Table 2 compares the percentage change in initial claims, by state, from its COVID-19 peak weekly volume to its lowest weekly volumes occurring within an eight-week reporting period prior to peak.

---

5 Stateline, “Coronavirus Will Slam States Dependent on Tourism,” Tim Henderson (March 16, 2020)

6 “U.S. and World Population Clock.” Population Clock, [www.census.gov/popcloc](http://www.census.gov/popcloc/

Overall, Florida experienced the highest percentage change of any state in the nation from its COVID-19 peak initial claim volume to its lowest weekly initial claim volume within the eight-week USDOL reporting period prior to its peak. The US average is also provided for further comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Baseline* Initial Claims (A)</th>
<th>Historic High Initial Claims (B)</th>
<th>Numeric Difference (C=B-A)</th>
<th>Percentage Change ((C/A) *100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>34,979</td>
<td>1,058,325</td>
<td>1,023,346</td>
<td>2,925.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>4,853</td>
<td>506,670</td>
<td>501,817</td>
<td>10,340.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>1,020</td>
<td>53,102</td>
<td>52,082</td>
<td>5,106.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>4,712</td>
<td>181,423</td>
<td>176,711</td>
<td>3,750.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>2,052</td>
<td>92,298</td>
<td>90,246</td>
<td>4,397.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>14,144</td>
<td>394,701</td>
<td>380,557</td>
<td>2,690.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>1,824</td>
<td>89,147</td>
<td>87,323</td>
<td>4,787.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>12,047</td>
<td>315,167</td>
<td>303,120</td>
<td>2,516.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>199,278</td>
<td>6,211,406</td>
<td>6,012,128</td>
<td>3,016.96%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Baseline is defined as the lowest initial unemployment claims within eight (8) weeks of the historic high initial unemployment claims.

4 COVID-19 Response Initiatives

COVID-19 and the nationwide "shut down" had a dramatic impact on all states. In particular, unemployment rates rapidly increased to all-time highs across the nation, causing inordinate stress to state Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs and the IT systems supporting them. This section describes some of the experiences and responses of states’ UI programs in comparison to Florida’s response.

As a starting point for this assessment, it is important to note that UI systems were not designed with system performance requirements to support the number of end users and the volume of claims and claim-related system transactions encountered during the COVID-19 performance period. Infrastructure supports the capability to address such volume and provides the raw computing power to run each UI system. Many states were the subject of news articles because their systems simply did not operate continuously and without disruption during the COVID-19 performance period. These systems may have encountered an unexpected "crash" or may have purposely been shut-down to claimants and employers to allow UI workers an opportunity to perform
maintenance, install upgrades, or clear out backlogged transactions in support of the surge in claims resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 3: CONNECT Issues and Resolutions: Feb – Jul 2020 depicts the claims processing issues experienced and solutions implemented during the February through July 2020 timeframe to stabilize the system and enable the Department to process the influx of work effort.

A snapshot of the demand increases and associated hardware scaling that occurred from February – July 2020 in Florida’s RA program provides context. During that time, claimant user sessions increased over 30 times, from 36,000 claimant user sessions in January 2020 to a peak of 1.09 million claimant user sessions in April 2020.

In response to addressing the need for greater system processing volume, many states, including Florida, increased their system infrastructure to support the sudden and dramatic influx of claims. Some examples of infrastructure enhancements included deployment of additional servers, increased storage, and supplemental network components. Database performance issues were addressed by increasing, and scaling out, the capacity of existing Storage Area Networks (SAN).
• Other states UI programs either had scalable infrastructure already in place and were less impacted by a sudden and dramatic increase in claims volume or adapted by increasing their system infrastructure in the following ways:
  o New York expanded from 4 servers to 50\(^8\)
  o Texas expanded mainframe capacity and increased servers from 4 servers to 16\(^9\)
  o Minnesota has been built on a technology-first approach, since technology scales faster than hiring people\(^{10}\)

• Florida’s RA program completed the following infrastructure related activities during the COVID-19 performance period:
  o Critical infrastructure and hardware scaling to address the increased demand began in March of 2020. The scaling to address CONNECT system performance included the addition of four new web servers on-premise, at the state data center, and 72 new Azure web servers to enable horizontal scaling of servers within the Microsoft Azure IaaS Cloud environment.
  o Database performance issues were addressed by increasing, and scaling out, the capability of the existing Storage Area Network (SAN).
  o A Data Engineering project began and includes the implementation of a new data warehouse reporting capability to eliminate the need to run reports against the CONNECT transactional database. Reports run against the data warehouse will be optimized for both performance and business need. Additionally, the replication of data to the warehouse will enable the archiving and purging of historic transactional data from the CONNECT database, optimizing query response times, and increasing transactional performance.

UI agencies were not staffed to support the immediate and substantial influx of claims. In response, they supplemented their workforce with staff from other agencies and third-party contractors.

• Other States’ Experience
  o Michigan nearly quadrupled Contact Center workforce, increasing from 130 call center staff to an estimated 500. \(^{11}\)

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\(^{8}\) NY agency boosts staff to handle surging jobless claims (nypost.com)
\(^{9}\) https://www.texastribune.org/2020/05/19/texas-unemployment-benefits-coronavirus/
\(^{10}\) https://www.startribune.com/state-unemployment-system-is-ably-confronting-a-never-imagined-challenge/569676162/
\(^{11}\) State's unemployment agency to add staff, increase hours to deal with surge in claims (detroitnews.com)
Texas hired an additional 350 emergency staff, and trained 450 additional staff from other Texas Workforce Commission departments to assist in taking claims. They also added additional volunteers from other state agencies.  

Pennsylvania increased staffing from 775 employees to over 2,100.

California redirected 1,340 workers from other branches of state government and extended their operating hours to 8A.M. to 8P.M., 7 days a week.

Florida Initiatives involved adding over 2,500 personnel to support the COVID-19 response, including:

- Increasing DEO staff by 287 and contracted staff by 20.
- Early in the COVID-19 response period, the Department led a coordinated response effort collaborating with other Florida state agencies such as the Department of Management Services (DMS), the Department of Revenue (DOR), and the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) for additional support which included loaning of technical personnel who formed a crisis response team.
- DMS Secretary coordinated the Governor’s call-to-action for state employees to assist the Department with calls, data entry, and citizen services. In April of 2020, DMS Secretary took over all COVID-19 related activities. DMS also assisted with both project management and technical assistance related to planning and implementing resolutions to address the unprecedented demand peaks and resulting system performance issues.
- DHSMV developed a small application to assist in identity verification.
- The Department also provided system access to over 2,000 supplemental staff to assist with paper processing and also engaged local Workforce Development Board staff and third-party vendors to augment staffing and meet emergency service-level demands. DOR dedicated 579 employees to the Department to assist with claims processing and administrative assistance. DMS assisted with both project management and technical assistance related to planning and implementing solutions to address the unprecedented demand peaks and resulting system performance issues.

Frequently Asked Questions about Unemployment Insurance Benefits Related to COVID-19 | Texas Workforce Commission

Pa. unemployment update: State Department of Labor, Industry addresses delay in pandemic benefits | ABC27

State employment offices are undergoing hiring sprees to process the influx of unemployment claims - MarketWatch
UI Contact Centers were inundated with enormous call volumes, and in response, additional contact centers were implemented.

- Other States’ Experience
  - Michigan nearly quadrupled Contact Center workforce, increasing from 130 call center staff to an estimated 500.\textsuperscript{15}
  - Texas doubled the number of call centers from 4 to 8, added an additional 1,800 staff, extended their hours to 12-hour days/7 days a week, and implemented “Larry the Chat Bot” on their website.\textsuperscript{16}
  - New York extended their call center hours, days of service to 7 days/week, expanded their staff from 400 to 3,100, and experimented with an alphabetical system for scheduling claimant’s calls.\textsuperscript{17,18}
  - Pennsylvania’s normal staff of 90-130 was cut in half when the governor mandated that nonessential staff work from home.\textsuperscript{19} They later expanded their workforce by enlisting retirees and hiring additional staff.\textsuperscript{20}

- Florida Initiatives included:
  - Contracts with multiple third-party vendors to expand call center capacity
  - Training additional Contact Center agents to address RA Calls; trained new RA Contact Center agents which resulted in an average daily on-call agent level of 2,016 agents between October 2020 and January 2021
  - Educating Department staff regarding rapidly changing initiatives through daily huddles and customer service bulletins
  - Establishing new FAQ hotline and introduced new Contact Center answering calls with FAQ
  - Standing up 833-FLAPPLY and

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\textsuperscript{15} State's unemployment agency to add staff, increase hours to deal with surge in claims (detroitnews.com)
\textsuperscript{16} Frequently Asked Questions about Unemployment Insurance Benefits Related to COVID-19 | Texas Workforce Commission
\textsuperscript{17} NY agency boosts staff to handle surging jobless claims (nypost.com)
\textsuperscript{18} State employment offices are undergoing hiring sprees to process the influx of unemployment claims - MarketWatch
\textsuperscript{19} Unemployment phone staff cut in half amid COVID-19 crunch | Pennsylvania Capital-Star (penncapital-star.com)
\textsuperscript{20} Answering questions about problems with unemployment benefits - 6abc Philadelphia
Implementing capability for Contact Center agents to view payment history for FPUC and LWA payments and synchronizing payments made external to CONNECT with payment history within CONNECT.

Governing bodies for UI programs and states added or changed policies and executive orders to provide relief from pre-COVID program requirements in order to expedite claims-processing.

- Other States’ Experience
  - While it is highly likely other states changed existing policies and, implemented new policies or executive orders, there was little detail identified in the research of publicly available information.
- Florida’s RA program implemented the following policies and executive orders related activities during the COVID-19 performance period:
  - COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Executive Order 20-52, signed on March 1, 2020, by Governor DeSantis, granted state agencies the right to suspend the provisions of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business, if strict compliance with the provisions of the statute, order, or rule would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency. This includes, but is not limited to, the authority to suspend any and all statutes, rules, ordinances, or orders which affect leasing, printing, purchasing, travel, and the condition of employment and the compensation of employees.
  - The Department executed Emergency Order 20-011 on March 20, 2020, Emergency Order 20-014 on March 26, 2020, and Emergency Order 20-016 on March 31, 2020, all of which suspend certain provisions of regulatory statutes that may prevent, hinder, or delay necessary actions to assist Florida’s Reemployment Assistance Program.
  - Emergency Order 20-055 was signed on December 4, 2020, with the purpose of suspending the work registration and the work search requirements for claimants due to COVID-19. The suspension was applied retroactively for RA claims filed the week beginning March 15, 2020, and remain in effect through December 26, 2020. Emergency Order 20-060 modifies 20-055 such that the suspensions remain in effect through February 27, 2021.

The initial Executive Order signed by Governor DeSantis and all subsequent emergency orders signed by the Department’s Executive Director are referenced below.

Reference Link: Governor DeSantis Executive Order 20-52
Reference Link: DEO Emergency Order 20-060 (the most recent emergency order issued; references all prior emergency orders issued pursuant to Executive Order 20-52)
Modern technologies were leveraged to gain efficiencies in the management of an influx of claimants and processing of claims. Examples of modern technologies include Robotic Processing Automation (RPA), Machine Learning (ML), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and cloud-hosted software.

- Texas implemented “Larry the Chat Bot” to their website. The Larry AI has assisted more than 2 million Texans and answered more than 10 million questions.\(^1\)
- Minnesota developed their entire application process online without ever speaking to a person.\(^2\)
- Florida’s RA program implemented the following modern technology related activities during the COVID-19 performance period:
  - Virtual Waiting Room Implementation – When visitors to the CONNECT website exceed the site’s capacity, they are redirected to a branded waiting room and then given access to CONNECT on a first-come, first-served order. This capability provides continuity and efficiencies in the user experience and was implemented using cloud-hosted software.
  - A new, mobile friendly application was implemented to handle all initial claims. This implementation enabled the CONNECT system to focus on handling the demand for continued claims and staff adjudications using cloud-hosted software.
  - Stood up new IVR – Enterprise IVR cloud product was implemented to better handle the additional contact center workload, guide claimants to the appropriate support resource, and to provide claimant information to support staff.

As COVID forced the shuddering of public spaces, including state offices, many states greatly expanded their Work from home (WFH) policies and infrastructure to enable continued operations.

- Other States’ Experience
  - In order to scale up productivity while also increasing staff safety, Minnesota began moving staff to work from home quickly.\(^3\)
  - The governor of Pennsylvania early in the pandemic mandated nonessential staff work from home, hoping PA could improve its IT capacity to enable additional staff to process claims.

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\(^3\) [State unemployment system is ably confronting a never imagined challenge - StarTribune.com](https://www.startribune.com/state-unemployment-system-is-ably-confronting-a-never-imagined-challenge/569676162/)
• Florida Initiatives
  o Initiated work from home program for 276 RA staff
  o Deployed Microsoft Teams and personal computer-based soft phones to better enable remote collaboration
  o Provided additional resources and technology including laptops, secure VPN access, headsets, and software to WFH staff

**Business Process Improvements** were identified and implemented to provide unemployment benefits sooner while relying on technology-based programs which can reduce, eliminate, or make more efficient steps in RA claims-related business processes.

• Other States' Experience
  o Minnesota's program managed to build fraud protection and customer service into the same organizational culture.²⁴
  o Kentucky switched from processing claims based on the date a person last worked to processing cases based on the date they were filed (as a measure intended to help keep older claims moving through the initial claims pipeline).²⁵

• Florida’s RA program implemented the following business process improvement related activities during the COVID-19 performance period:
  o Created an electronic process for paying $600 weekly benefit
  o Implemented a check printing process providing payment faster and alleviates volume constraints on state's financial system and Department of Financial Services personnel
  o Implemented a process for scanning applications and making those applications available to statewide volunteers
  o Eliminated scanning of envelopes
  o Programmed the automation of approving claimed weeks for Claimants for a specific period of time
  o Implemented the Reemployment Assistance dashboard providing COVID-19 related RA claims volume information to ensure transparency
  o Implemented identity verification for locked accounts

---

Implemented master lists for claims pending monetary determinations and adjudication to improve workload efficiency and accountability

- Trained team members across organizational units to help create and support a flexible and rapidly adaptive work culture

All states’ UI programs implemented Federal Programs including Federal Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (FPEUC), Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (FPUA), Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC), and Lost Wage Assistance (LWA), which were all required federal programs, and the optional Multi-Employment Unemployment Compensation (MEUC) program.

- Florida’s RA program implemented the following Federal Programs and related activities during the COVID-19 performance period:
  - Implemented FPUA, FPUC, and FPEUC applications, LWA benefits, and extended benefits in some cases
  - In the process of implementing MEUC application
  - Implemented Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) in response to unemployment impacts resulting from Hurricane Sally

5 Conclusion

New claim volumes increased by a factor of more than 100 (10,340%) during the COVID-19 period. Initial and continued claims were impacted by the volume, but COVID-19 claim volumes did not change Florida’s relative overall USDOL performance position ranking year-over-year.

Florida’s COVID response is representative of that of other states. All states were at relatively low unemployment, and therefore low funding, for years. Their UI systems reflected this low funding and were in many cases dated, and in almost all cases unprepared for the sudden influx of claims caused by the pandemic. Many systems suffered outages and call center inundation. States scaled up their staff by hiring new employees, borrowing other agency staff, and procuring third party vendors’ assistance. Because scaling workforce and systems took time to implement, many states grew a backlog of work that they expect to exist into the future until it can be worked down over time.

Florida’s story mirrors this nation-wide narrative but is scaled larger due to Florida’s size and disproportionate share of tourism and hospitality as a percentage of state GDP. The combination of relatively low unemployment followed by a disproportionately high spike in unemployment claims resulted in a hundred-fold increase in claims volume that arose far faster than any organization could react to. In response, Florida scaled up their system and staff and employed additional solutions like implementing robotic process automation, a virtual waiting room, and a new system just for receiving new claims.

Ultimately, Florida would receive more claims in nearly 11 months, the period between March 15, 2020, and February 10, 2021, than it had in the previous eight years combined, resulting in the distribution of over 22 billion
dollars to Floridians. However, this unprecedented stress test also revealed weaknesses in CONNECT that must be addressed.

Next in the sequence of project activities is to perform and document an assessment of the current state of the CONNECT system including documentation presenting the current architecture of the CONNECT system, areas of concern, and potential opportunities for improvement.
Improved Delivery of Reemployment Assistance Benefits

Deliverable #3: Assessment of Current CONNECT System

February 26, 2021
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## Acronyms

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALM</td>
<td>Application Lifecycle Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWS</td>
<td>Amazon Web Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAM</td>
<td>Benefit Accuracy Measurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BI</td>
<td>Business Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPC</td>
<td>Benefit Payment Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BTQ</td>
<td>Benefits Timeliness and Quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONNECT</td>
<td>Florida’s core Reemployment Assistance benefits administration information technology system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRM</td>
<td>Customer Relationship Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTI</td>
<td>Computer Telephony Integration</td>
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<tr>
<td>CX</td>
<td>Customer Experience</td>
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<td>DARS</td>
<td>Digital Appeals Recording System</td>
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<td>District Court of Appeals</td>
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<td>The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity</td>
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<td>Federal Unemployment Tax Act</td>
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<td>IaaS</td>
<td>Infrastructure as a Service</td>
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<td>Interstate Reciprocal Overpayment Recovery Arrangement</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>ITSM</td>
<td>Information Technology Service Management</td>
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<td>Interactive Voice Response</td>
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<td>National Association of State Workforce Agencies</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQSC</td>
<td>State Quality Service Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>TFS</td>
<td>Team Foundation Server</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOP</td>
<td>Treasury Offset Program</td>
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<td>TPA</td>
<td>Third-Party Administrators</td>
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<td>UAC</td>
<td>Unemployment Appeals Commission</td>
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<td>UI</td>
<td>Unemployment Insurance</td>
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<td>USDOL</td>
<td>United States Department of Labor</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIOA</td>
<td>Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Overview

1.1 Project Overview

The Reemployment Assistance (RA) Improvement project will examine and assess the delivery of RA benefits in the state of Florida to include an assessment of CONNECT, Florida’s system providing the intake and processing of RA claims, and identification of recommendations to improve RA claims processes. The basis of understanding for the assessment will be formed through a review of CONNECT and RA business processes, DEO staff interviews and work sessions, and review of additional artifacts provided by DEO.

CONNECT is Florida’s RA claims system, used by DEO staff, claimants, employers, and third-party administrators (TPAs). CONNECT was launched on October 15, 2013, and serves as the central repository to track, view, and file RA claims. The system functions as the core benefits administration platform for DEO staff and provides online access for claimants to apply for benefits, view and track claims, set up payment information, and file an appeal. For employers, the system allows access to inquiries regarding claimants for response and to protest a benefit charge or file an appeal. Additionally, the system allows employers to grant third-party administrators access to perform specific functions.

This document is deliverable three of five and provides an assessment of the current state of RA operations and CONNECT including business processes, infrastructure, software, documentation, and organizational culture to address areas of concern and provide potential opportunities for improvement. Future deliverables are intended to focus more deeply on recommendations to improve the future state of RA services and the information technology supporting the delivery of RA services. This project will develop the deliverables defined in Table 1: Project Deliverables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Project Plan &amp; Basis of Understanding</td>
<td>A detailed project plan, including, but not limited to, project schedule, tasks, objectives, anticipated DEO resource needs which must be approved by DEO. Project plan and execution thereof, must adhere to Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 60GG-1, Project Management and Oversight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>COVID-19 Response Performance Report</td>
<td>A detailed report of assessment findings, including, but not limited to, a baseline of Florida’s RA performance and a comparison of Florida’s RA performance to the performance of other states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CONNECT Current State Assessment</td>
<td>An assessment of the current state of RA operations and CONNECT including business processes, infrastructure, software, documentation, and organizational culture to address areas of concern and provide potential opportunities for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Deliverable</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Future State Recommended Approach and Implementation Roadmap</td>
<td>An overall recommendation and potential approaches for CONNECT in the form of an implementation roadmap and a recommended model of governance to enable the improved delivery of RA services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Final Report and Schedule IV-B</td>
<td>A final report with documentation stating recommendations, risk assessment, and supporting information. Schedule IV-B report, including system/program analysis, functional/technical requirements, benefits realization, cost benefit analysis, risk assessment, and technology and project management planning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 Executive Summary

In order to receive broad support, Information Technology projects must support the RA Program’s mission, requirements, and services. This initial perspective of an eventual comprehensive business case provides a broad analysis of the current state of RA services and begins to plan the overall path forward. This is essential to facilitate buy-in from all RA stakeholders including: Legislative, Department and public individuals with an interest in Reemployment Assistance services. This document clearly identifies the current situation leading to the need for the proposed project and surfaces the requirements that must be met by the proposed business solution.

During the COVID-19 performance period, an unprecedented volume of services and program benefits were provided by DEO’s Reemployment Assistance Bureau. The historic efforts of DEO staff were supported by a seven-year old system augmented with newer supplemental information technology assets needed to meet the sudden surge in demand for program benefits. Historically, during times of lower unemployment, as was the case during the period preceding the pandemic, federal funding tends to be lower overall which impacts the Department’s ability to support projects which could improve the delivery of RA services.

The impact to RA workload resulting from economic crisis in response to COVID was pervasive nationwide. Many of Florida’s RA services were negatively impacted, ranging from inability to establish a claim to being able to talk to program staff and delays in the provision of RA benefits. While the system supporting RA was never intended, designed, nor implemented to support the workload it experienced during the COVID-19 period, the increased load exposed weaknesses in the RA system and business processes. Changes were required to stabilize the system and were completed with generally successful results. Urgent issues were largely remediated; however, they consumed valuable time and human resources as the crisis persisted for many months. While unemployment levels have been trending downward since a peak level in mid-April of 2020, there is still a large backlog of work, new federally required programs to implement, and extensions of existing programs that continue to heavily burden the RA program and CONNECT in particular. The best or most utilitarian solution to accommodate and resolve this large remaining workload is to continue pursuing the Department’s pre-COVID plan toward continuous modernization and progress towards a sustainable, healthy, responsive, and ready RA program with the proper technical enablement and functionality needed to satisfy service level requirements.

Before the above scenario unfolded, RA was already on a path towards continuous modernization of CONNECT. Substantial resources were previously expended to begin migration to a cloud-hosted model for core infrastructure. Software, becoming aged, was also being contemplated for eventual replacement as it had well begun its loss of a designed modular architecture which over time has become highly interconnected.

Moving forward, further detailed requirements analysis is needed as a first step to a phased long-term modernization approach. RA needs to organize and re-establish core system documentation, procedures, and capabilities to return to the continuous modernization path they were on pre-COVID. The necessary system changes require an accounting with regard to the functional and non-functional requirements of the system in order to be best positioned for any future 1 in 500-year event, low unemployment, and any scenario in between. It is clear, when unemployment is high and surges quickly, there can be no delay in providing the RA benefits and services claimants and employers are due by law, and this includes the agility to implement federally mandated programs in very short order.
3 Current State

The Current State describes DEO’s RA program including: existing regulations, functional business processes, system infrastructure, software, documentation, organizational culture.

3.1 Overview

DEO administers Florida’s RA Program which provides temporary, partial wage replacement benefits to qualified individuals who are out of work through no fault of their own. The program’s primary goals are to connect claimants to reemployment services, pay RA benefits to qualified workers in an accurate and timely fashion, provide an efficient first level appeals process to claimants and employers, and promptly register employers liable for the payment of RA taxes or the reimbursement of claims.

The program operates as a federal/state partnership. The administrative framework is established in federal law, and state law governs program operations. States are responsible for determining program eligibility and providing funds to cover RA benefit payments, while the federal government is responsible for providing states with funds to administer the program.

The RA program is funded by two separate payroll taxes paid by employers – one paid to the federal government as required by the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) and one paid to the state as required by Chapter 443, Florida Statutes. State tax proceeds can only be used for RA benefit payments but the federal tax proceeds, in addition to funding extended benefits, may also be used for other designated programs that support workforce services. While the majority of the FUTA allocation from the federal government covers the RA program’s administrative costs, these funds are also used to support workforce programs including labor market statistics, veterans’ programs, and labor exchange services. The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) funds the administrative costs of the RA program.

In accordance with State law, the Department launched the Reemployment Assistance Claims and Benefits Information System (CONNECT) on October 15, 2013. CONNECT is a fully integrated web-based claims management system that encompasses work activities performed under RA Assistance functional business processes. Claimants, employers, and third-parties can access information about filed claims and communicate with Department staff through CONNECT. Five categories of users can access CONNECT:

1. Claimants
2. Employers
3. Department staff
4. Third-Party Representatives / Third-Party Administrators
5. Other State agency staff with authorized access

CONNECT interfaces with various State and Federal systems as needed to process and report data applicable to the RA Program.

Functional business processes supported by CONNECT include the following:

1. Claims Processing, including the Wage Determination Unit and Benefits Integrity Unit
2. Adjudication
3. Appeals
4. Contact Center
5. Quality Assurance and Training

The customer-facing process flow for RA Benefits is illustrated below in Figure 1: Customer-Facing RA Business Processes.

* As a general rule, functions performed by the Benefits Integrity Unit follow a payment of program benefits. Preventive functions such as fraud detection and investigation can occur without any payment of benefits.

** The Contact Center provides support for all functional business units within the Bureau, but calls relating to the merits or substance of an appeal are routed to authorized staff within the Appeals Unit.
3.2 Existing Regulations and Requirements

This section includes summaries of numerous, substantial, and detailed federal and state legislative requirements for the RA Program. Federal regulations and Florida statutes and rules provide the foundation for RA business objectives and processes, system capabilities, functions, and performance requirements. Figure 2: RA Requirements and Functions illustrates the makeup of the CONNECT ecosystem. As shown in Figure 2, the RA requirements provide the regulatory and system performance drivers for the RA business processes and functions enabled through the CONNECT environment.

**Figure 2: RA Requirements and Functions**

3.2.1 Federal Regulations

This section includes summaries and reference links for federal regulations that drive the RA business processes and system functionality.
Federal Unemployment Tax Act 26 U.S.C. Ch. 23

The Federal Unemployment Tax Act (or FUTA, I.R.C. Ch. 23) is a United States federal law that imposes a federal employer tax used to help fund state workforce agencies. Employers report this tax by filing an annual Form 940 with the Internal Revenue Service. In some cases, the employer is required to pay the tax in installments during the tax year.

FUTA covers a federal share of the costs of administering the unemployment insurance (UI) and job service programs in every state. In addition, FUTA pays one-half of the cost of extended unemployment benefits (during periods of high unemployment) and provides for a fund from which states may borrow, if necessary, to pay benefits.

Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. Ch. 7

The Federal Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. Ch. 7, defines the use of available funds, amounts made available for the purpose of assisting the states in the administration of their unemployment compensation laws, payments to states, computation of amounts, state law provisions required, judicial review process, demonstration projects authorized, and grants to states for reemployment services and eligibility assessments.

Employee Benefits Title 20 C.F.R

U.S Department of Labor, Title 20 C.F.R., Parts 601-625, define the requirements for employment and training administration and the unemployment compensation eligibility requirements. Part 640 defines the standards for benefit payment promptness, and Part 650 defines the standards for appeal promptness.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Requires states to strategically align workforce development programs.

WIOA ensures that employment and training services provided by state core programs are coordinated and complementary so that job seekers acquire skills and credentials that meet employers’ needs. Every state must develop and submit a four-year strategy, in the form of a single unified strategic plan for core programs, for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and for meeting the workforce needs of employers.

Reference Link: FUTA 26 U.S.C. Ch. 23
Reference Link: Social Security Act 42 U.S.C. Ch. 7
Reference Link: Title 20 C.F.R.
Reference Link: WIOA Overview

3.2.2 State Regulations

This section includes summaries and reference links for Florida statutes and rules that drive the business requirements and objectives, as well as the technology, data, and security architecture for the RA system.
Reemployment Assistance Statutory Requirements

Chapter 443, Florida Statutes, codifies Florida legislative requirements for the RA program. The short title for Chapter 443 is Reemployment Assistance Law.

Chapter 443, Florida Statutes, Requirements outline the following:

- 443.012 – Reemployment Assistance Appeals Commission
- 443.091 – Benefit eligibility conditions
- 443.101 – Disqualification for benefits
- 443.111 – Payment of benefits
- 443.1113 – RA Claims and benefits Information System

Section 443.1113 (2), Florida Statutes, – Business Objectives - In advance of the RA system implementation project in 2010, section 443.1113, Florida Statutes, was codified to define business requirements and objectives for the Reemployment Assistance Claims and Benefits Information System.

Section 443.1113 (2), Florida Statutes, outlines the following Business Objectives:

- Reduce paper processes and enhance existing automated workflows
- Enable self-service access to claimant and employer information and federal and state reporting
- Comply with all requirements established in federal and state law for reemployment assistance
- Integrate with the DOR statewide unified tax system that collects reemployment assistance taxes

Reference Link: 443 F.S.

Emergency Orders

COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Executive Order 20-52, signed on March 1, 2020, by Governor DeSantis, granted state agencies the right to suspend the provisions of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business, if strict compliance with the provisions of the statute, order, or rule would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency. This includes, but is not limited to, the authority to suspend any and all statutes, rules, ordinances, or orders which affect leasing, printing, purchasing, travel, and the condition of employment and the compensation of employees.

The Department executed Emergency Order 20-011 on March 20, 2020, Emergency Order 20-014 on March 26, 2020, and Emergency Order 20-016 on March 31, 2020, all of which suspend certain provisions of regulatory statutes that may prevent, hinder, or delay necessary actions to assist Florida’s Reemployment Assistance Program.

Emergency Order 20-055 was signed on December 4, 2020, with the purpose of suspending the work registration and the work search requirements for claimants due to COVID-19. The suspension was applied retroactively for RA claims filed the week beginning March 15, 2020, and remain in effect through December 26, 2020. Emergency Order 20-060 modifies 20-055 such that the suspensions remain in effect through February 27, 2021.
The initial Executive Order signed by Governor DeSantis and all subsequent DEO emergency orders signed by the Department's Executive Director are referenced below.

Reference Link: Governor DeSantis Executive Order 20-52
Reference Link: DEO Emergency Order 20-060 (the most recent emergency order issued; references all prior emergency orders issued pursuant to Executive Order 20-52)

Project Management and Oversight

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-1 establishes project management standards when implementing Information Technology (IT) projects. State of Florida Agencies must comply with these standards when implementing all IT projects. Cabinet Agencies must comply with these standards when implementing IT projects that have a total cost of $25 million or more and that impact one or more other agencies pursuant to section 282.0051(33)(a), Florida Statutes.

60GG-1 Requirements outline the following:

- 60GG-1.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions.
- 60GG-1.002 Project Risk and Complexity (R&C) Assessment
- 60GG-1.003 Project Initiation Phase Requirements by R&C Category
- 60GG-1.004 Project Planning Phase Requirements by R&C Category
- 60GG-1.005 Project Execution Phase Requirements by R&C Category
- 60GG-1.006 Project Monitoring and Controlling Requirements by R&C Category

Reference Link: 60GG-1, F.A.C.
Reference Link: 282.0051, F.S.

Florida Cybersecurity Standards

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-2, also referred to as Florida Cybersecurity Standards (FCS) establishes minimum standards to be used by state of Florida Agencies to secure IT resources. The FCS consist of five high-level functions: Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover. These functions support lifecycle management of IT risk. The functions identify underlying key categories and subcategories for each function. Subcategories contain specific IT controls. Section 282.318 Florida Statutes, requires that a security plan be maintained and submitted annually to Department of Management Services (DMS) by July 31.

60GG-2 Requirements outline the following:

- 60GG-2.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 60GG-2.002 Identify (Asset Management, FIPS Classifications, and Risk Assessment)
- 60GG-2.003 Protect (Identity Management, Data Security, Awareness and Training)
- 60GG-2.004 Detect (Event Monitoring and Detection Processes)
- 60GG-2.005 Respond (Communications, Analysis, Mitigation, Improvement)
- 60GG-2.006 Recover (Planning, Communications, Improvements)
Data Center Operations

DMS is responsible for developing and implementing cost-recovery mechanisms that recover the full direct and indirect cost of services through charges to applicable customer entities. Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-3 documents the State Data Center (SDC) cost-recovery methodology including the process for cost estimation, invoicing, and reconciliation. Customer entities are required to make the SDC aware of any changes in anticipated utilization by May 31 and November 30 annually pursuant to section 282.206, Florida Statutes.

60GG-3 Requirements outline the following:

- 60GG-3.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 60GG-3.002 Physical Access and Security
- 60GG-3.004 Service Requests and Approvals
- 60GG-3.007 Budgeting and Accounting; State Data Center Cost-Recovery Methodology

Cloud Computing

Section 282.206, Florida Statutes, requires state agencies to show a preference for cloud computing services that minimize or do not require the purchasing, financing, or leasing of state data center infrastructure when cloud-computing solutions meet the needs of the agency, reduce costs, and meet or exceed the applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and standards for information technology security. Section 282.206, Florida Statutes, requires that each agency develop a strategic plan to address its inventory of applications located at the state data center. The plan must be submitted annually to DMS, the Executive Office of the Governor, and the chairs of the legislative appropriations committee by October 15.

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-4 is designed to further state agency implementation of the cloud-first policy as provided in Section 282.206, Florida Statutes. 60GG-4 includes requirements for state of Florida agencies to produce formal cloud procurement and contractual procedures, cloud financial controls and processes, and cloud security and risk mitigation strategies. 60GG-4 further requires that a security assessment be conducted for the implementation of each cloud service, which will contain data classified as moderate or higher based on the data classification of FIPS Publication No. 199, and consider the potential risk of breach of data deployed in the cloud.

60GG-4 Requirements outline the following:

- 60GG-4.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 60GG-4.002 Cloud Procurement and Contractual Elements
• 60GG-4.003 Cloud Financials
• 60GG-4.004 Cloud Security and Risk Mitigation Strategy

Reference Link: 282.206, F.S.
Reference Link: 60GG-4, F.A.C.

Identity Management

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-5 rule is designed to ensure that Identity Management (IDM) Services provide secure, reliable, and interoperable mechanisms for authenticating the identity of devices, application services, and Users that consume state information and application resources. 60GG-5 extends, and further specifies, the Identity Management, Authentication, and Access Control requirements defined in Florida Cyber Security (FCS) Rule section 60GG-2.003.

Each agency is required to perform and maintain an assessment that documents the gaps between requirements of the IDM rule and existing IDM services, applications, architectures and capabilities currently in place. At a minimum, the assessment must: identify any plans, target dates, and resources necessary to achieve compliance with each requirement of the IDM rule, and document any compensating controls or risk acceptance for requirements that are not applicable or cannot be met.

60GG-5 Requirements outline the following:

• 60GG-5.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
• 60GG-5.003(1) Assessment (Inventory all IDM Services utilized, Identify Primary IDM Services)
• 60GG-5.003(2) Interoperability (Protocol and Data Format Standards for IDM Services)
• 60GG-5.003(3) Privacy (Data Minimization, Retention, and Disposal)
• 60GG-5.003(4) Security (Data Integrity, Token Control, MFA, Key Management, Security Logs)

Reference Link: 60GG-5, F.A.C.

Interoperability and Data Management

Section 282.0051, Florida Statutes, establishes the powers, duties, and functions of the Florida Digital Services (FL [DS]) within DMS. The FL [DS] is created within DMS to propose innovative solutions that securely modernize state government, including technology and information services, to achieve value through digital transformation and interoperability and to fully support the cloud-first policy as specified in section 282.206 Florida Statutes.

Specific functions of the FL [DS] related to interoperability include the development of an enterprise architecture that acknowledges the unique needs of entities within the enterprise, supports the cloud-first policy, and addresses how information technology infrastructure may be modernized to achieve cloud-first objectives.
The FL [DS] is further responsible for the development of standards that support the creation and deployment of an application programming interface to facilitate integration throughout the enterprise and standards necessary to facilitate a secure environment of data interoperability that is compliant with the enterprise architecture.

Specific functions of the FL [DS] related to data management include, not later than October 1, 2021, the creation of a comprehensive indexed data catalog in collaboration with the enterprise that lists the data elements housed within the enterprise and the legacy system or application in which these data elements are located. Further, the FL [DS] will develop and publish, not later than October 1, 2021, in collaboration with the enterprise, a data dictionary for each agency that reflects the nomenclature in the comprehensive indexed data catalog.

Section 282.201, Florida Statutes, Interoperability and Data Management requirements outline the following:

- 282.201(1)(b) Enterprise Architecture
- 282.201(3)(a) Enterprise Data Catalog
- 282.201(3)(b) Enterprise Data Dictionary
- 282.201(3)(c) Enterprise API Solution or Service
- 282.201(3)(d) Enterprise Interoperability Standards

Reference Link: 282.0051, F.S.

3.2.3 Functional Requirements

This section includes summaries of the functional feature-level requirements for the RA system for claimants, employers, and job assistance. Functional requirements are maintained within Functional Requirements Diagrams and stored on the Department’s secure SharePoint site. Functional specifications, also referred to as Use Cases, are also stored on the same site within a different directory. Functional specifications were in process of being updated prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Summaries of the following claimant and employer functional business processes are included in section 4.3 of this document.

- Claimants
  - Apply for Benefits
  - Request Benefit Payment
  - File an Appeal
  - Fraud and Overpayments
  - Repay Overpayment
  - Claimant FAQs

- Employers
  - File and Appeal
  - File a Response
  - Tax Information
  - Employer FAQs
3.2.4 System Performance

This section includes summaries of the non-functional requirements for the RA system such as peak demand, average response time, availability, continuity, and failover as they existed prior to the COVID emergency and as they exist now. In August 2013, prior to CONNECT Go-Live, performance stress tests were performed to verify that the system could handle anticipated peak loads. Those tests were developed from baseline average usage demand data prior to implementation of CONNECT. The stress tests did not anticipate a one in 500-year event such as the COVID pandemic.

The total number of claims submitted in 2012 that drove the metrics for initial 2013 system performance tests was 744,755. In the nine-month period from March 2020 – November 2020, there were over four million initial RA claims submitted, or six times the number of claims submitted in 2012. In response to the unprecedented demand, substantial infrastructure and human capital investments were made in 2020 including the addition of 72 new IaaS web servers and a new SaaS customer portal to handle all initial claim submissions.

As a result of these investments, the current system is capable of handling up to 80,000 concurrent user sessions without performance degradation. The total number of user sessions per month peaked at 1,179,234 for the month of April, 2020. Total sessions dropped to approximately 628,601 per month in August, 2020. Completion of the Cloud Migration project will result in additional compute and storage capabilities to further improve the elasticity and resiliency of the system.

3.2.4.1 Demand and Usage

In August 2013, the following stress tests were performed:

- For initial claims, 97 concurrent claimant sessions and 65 concurrent staff sessions completed a total of 1,332 hourly transactions; this exceeded the planned number of peak hourly transactions for the test which was 1,292.
- For continued claims, 3,433 concurrent claimant sessions and 349 concurrent staff sessions completed a total of 24,127 hourly transactions; this exceeded the planned number of peak hourly transactions for the test which was 24,120.
- For staff adjudication, 150 concurrent sessions completed a total of 2,284 hourly transactions; this exceeded the planned number of peak hourly transactions for the test which was 1,019.
- The scope of contact center computer telephony integration (CTI) and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) stress testing included the following:
  - Load Testing of 96 concurrent ports maximum
  - Up to five Test cases including agent interaction with CONNECT (five transactional call flows including a continued claim and Virtual Hold Callback)
  - Test session support time intended to cover two eight-hour testing sessions
3.2.4.2 Response Time

A total of 413 transactions were tested in August 2013 during periods of high and low volume. Of the 149 total transactions executed during high volume: 56% completed in less than one second; 80% completed in less than two seconds; 89% completed in less than three seconds; 96% completed in less than four seconds; 100% completed in less than five seconds. Of the 264 total transactions executed during low volume: 65% completed in less than one second; 85% completed in less than two seconds; 92% completed in less than three seconds; 97% completed in less than four seconds; 100% completed in less than five seconds.

3.2.4.3 Availability

Availability testing was completed and successfully met requirements for the following components in August 2013:

- SAN/NAS device
- F5 load balancers
- Servers (four tests, all during a performance test of 3,000 concurrent users)
  - Disabling Network Interface Cards
  - Stopping services
  - Performing a server reboot
  - Completing 50/50 test (shutting down half of the environment)

3.2.4.4 Continuity and Failover

CONNECT utilizes a Disaster Recovery site located in Winter Haven Florida. A re-hosting project is in progress that includes the acquisition and implementation of a disaster recovery and failover service. With the transition to a cloud-based disaster recovery (DR) service, DEO will no longer require Winter Haven disaster recovery services.

3.3 Functional Business Processes

3.3.1 Claims Processing

Individuals who file for RA program (unemployment) benefits with the State of Florida are referred to as claimants. Employers for whom the claimants previously worked are referred to as employers. Generally, claimants can file an automated claim for RA benefits as a first-time claimant if they have not filed for RA benefits before or as a repeat claimant if they have previously filed for RA benefits. When filing a claim for an existing claimant, the claimant is guided through an automated series of questions, messages, screens, and forms to enter required information in the system to complete the claim application. In addition, CONNECT is designed to verify the identity of claimants as part of the completion of a claim application. Once a claim application has been completed in CONNECT by the claimant, notice of claims (claim notices) are distributed to employers. A monetary determination is then issued indicating whether and in what amount a claimant is monetarily eligible for benefits based on the claimant’s wages during the base period of the claim.

Depending on the nature of the claim and the data entered by the claimant, CONNECT may generate one or more claim issues. The Department uses the term “claim issue” to denote something that will need to be reviewed or resolved before a claimant is considered eligible to receive benefit payments.
Wage Determination Unit

The Wage Determination Unit investigates claimant wages by reviewing the information provided from CONNECT and through contacting employers. If DEO staff finds issue with the information reported within CONNECT, the Department of Revenue (DOR) is contacted to investigate. Once the correct wages are determined, Department staff updates the information in CONNECT and issues a redetermination.

The Wage Determination Unit also investigates the claimant’s base period employment based on receipt of a request for monetary reconsideration from Claims Intake or the claimant.

Activities undertaken in the Wage Determination Unit include the following:

- Requests for wage verification
- Reviewing tax screens and wage report responses
- Sending claimant proof of employment request
- Sending employer letter requesting wage information
- Issuing redeterminations
- Initiating investigations if unable to verify employment

Special Programs Unit activities include the following:

- Short Term Compensation
- Combined Wage Claims from other states
- Federal and Military Claims

The review of claim issues is referred to as “adjudication” and the resolution of claim issues for eligibility is referred to as a “determination.”

Benefits Integrity Unit

The Benefit Integrity Unit performs functions related to wage audits, investigations of fraud and overpayments, recovery of program funds (due to fraud and/or overpayments), and oversight of the Special Payment Unit. Processes performed in each of these four areas are listed below.

1. Wage Audits

Processes related to Wage Audits include, but are not limited to the following:

- DEO/DOR crossmatch of earnings
- Establish non-fraud and fraud overpayments
- Redetermination of overpayment
- Earning corrections
- Appeals
  - Non-fraud and fraud
  - Recoupment
  - Participation in appeals hearings

2. Investigations of Fraud and Overpayments
Investigations of fraud and overpayments are initiated based upon information on overpayments obtained from processed cross-matches, non-monetary determinations, appeals decisions, and Bureau conducted audits within CONNECT.

Processes related to investigation include, but are not limited to, the following:

- RA fraud overpayment investigations for recoupment and prosecution
- RA identity theft investigations and support for prosecution
- In-person identity verification
- Escalated Benefit Payment Control (BPC) mailbox/hotline tip investigations
- Escalated deceased claimant investigations
- Escalated incarcerated claimant investigations
- Fraudulent payments/hijacked claims

3. Recovery of Program Funds

Sources from which program funds may be recovered include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Treasury Offset Program
- Collection Agency
- Florida Lottery
- Small Claims Court
- Interstate Reciprocal Overpayment Recovery Arrangement (IRORA)

4. Special Payments Unit (oversight)

Processes related to the oversight of the Special Programs Unit include, but are not limited to the following:

- Child support
- 1099G’s
- Unpinned debit cards
- Internal Revenue Service
- Payment issues
- Claims cancellation
- Veterans Affairs request
- Deceased claimant issuance of benefits
- 1099G’s on fraudulent claims
- Voucher certifications
- Earning corrections

3.3.2 Adjudication

Nonmonetary claim issues are automatically or manually created in CONNECT when circumstances are presented that under UI state law are potentially disqualifying. These issues can either be auto-adjudicated based on pre-defined business logic within CONNECT, or manually handled by an Adjudicator. An example of
an issue which is currently auto-adjudicated occurs when an employer has informed the Department of a layoff due to a lack of work. Once a claimant has been determined monetarily eligible, non-monetary issues are adjudicated. After reviewing the available facts, the Adjudicator may be required to contact one or more parties to gather additional information and rebuttals prior to issuing a quality determination based on state UI law. Nonmonetary determinations have the potential to affect the claimants' past, present, or future benefits. Once a determination is processed, the claimant and affected employers will then receive copies of the non-monetary determination.

Non-monetary determinations relate to eligibility factors such as:

- Ability and availability issues
- Separation issues
- Earnings reported incorrectly
- Refusal of work issues
- New hire return to work issues (created when CONNECT cross-matches with the DOR "New Hire" database)

3.3.3 Appeals

Claimants may appeal any adverse monetary or non-monetary benefit determinations, and employers have the right to appeal adverse non-monetary or charge-related benefit determinations to which they are a party.

If a determination is provided that adversely affects a claimant or employer, the affected party may file an appeal regarding eligibility, qualification, experience benefit charges, child support deductions, overpayment, special programs eligibility and/or fraud. Appeals are heard and decided by appeals referees. When an appeal is filed, the Office of Appeals must provide an opportunity for an administrative hearing providing all due process rights and in compliance with Florida's administrative code, evidence rules, and applicable rules of procedure. Pertinent files and documents must be made available to all parties. Following each hearing, a written decision is issued establishing findings of fact and conclusions of law with a ruling affirming, reversing, or modifying the determination. The written decision can be appealed to the Reemployment Assistance Appeals Commission (RAAC) and then to a Florida District Court of Appeal (DCA).

Employers may also file appeals on determinations of their tax liability tax rate and benefit reimbursement. For each tax appeal, the Office of Appeals provides the opportunity for an administrative hearing and holds a hearing providing all due process rights and in compliance with Florida's administrative code, evidence rules, and rules of procedure. Following each hearing, a written recommended order is issued establishing recommended findings of fact and conclusions of law with a recommended ruling affirming, reserving, or amending the determination. A Final Order is then issued based on the recommended order and any filed exceptions. Final Orders in these cases may be appealed directly to the DCA.

3.3.4 RA Contact Center

In addition to general information made available by the Department through the CONNECT webpage on the DEO website and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sections (Claimant FAQs (New) - FloridaJobs.org), the RA contact center receives calls routed from Interactive Voice Response (IVR) menu options to contact center representatives based on the nature of the caller's inquiry. Calls can relate to questions seeking general information or questions related to the status of a specific claim. A majority of calls processed at the primary contact center site located in Orlando, Florida, are calls received from individual claimants inquiring about the status of a new or continuing claim. In addition to claim status inquiries, contact center representatives also
process address changes, provide payment information relating to a specific claim, reset claimant Personal Identification Numbers (PIN), and place a “Stop” on payments if a claimant has returned to work.

Prior to the COVID-19 period beginning in March 2020, Contact Center volumes fell within an average of 25,000 attempted calls per week. During the COVID-19 period, the maximum number of calls attempted in a single day exceeded 1.1 million. The maximum attempted daily call volume to the contact center during the COVID-19 claims period was more than 200 times the previous daily average or an increase of nearly 22,000%.

3.3.5 Quality Assurance

Although not customer-facing, the Quality Assurance Unit performs a broad and varied range of essential business functions that are not performed by other functional units elsewhere within the Bureau. Those various functions include, reporting required by USDOL, management reports and audits, records requests, central mail intake, SME oversight for functional requirements development, testing and maintenance of CONNECT, oversight of a self-service task force driving improvements in Customer Experience (CX), programmatic and quality training, and federally-required Benefit Accuracy Measurement (BAM), including Benefits Data Validation (DV) and Benefits Timeliness and Quality (BTQ) of non-monetary determinations.

Quality Assurance Activities

A listing of activities performed within each functional area is provided below.

Federal Required Reporting and Management Reports/Audits:

- Responsible for submitting 36 core federal reports required by USDOL
- Reports are used for economic statistics, allocating RA administrative funding based on state workload, measuring state claimant eligibility criteria and performance in providing benefits, and accounting for fund utilization
- Coordinating, managing, and providing statistical data and program information
- Manage the State Quality Service Plan (SQSP)
- Serve as RA liaison for all business units during Federal, State, or internal audits
- Coordinate and provide audit responses for the Department to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) or other relevant party

Records Requests:

- Responsible for handling records requests received for employer or claimant records, which are received by phone, fax, or email
- Responsible for processing any record request payments received and delivery to DEO Financial Management

Central Mail Intake:

- Responsible for receiving and processing all the RA Program’s incoming mail
Open, sort, and prep mail for scanning
Mail received via certified, priority, courier, or overnight is logged and processed as time sensitive
Returned mail is separated from regular mail and then returned to the originating unit or scanned and indexed to the appropriate workflow
Preparation and scanning of documents into the document management tool for indexing to the appropriate workflows in CONNECT
Process faxed documents

**SME Oversight for functional requirements development, testing, and maintenance of CONNECT:**
- Oversight for all development work, testing, and maintenance for CONNECT
- Responsible for the development and coordination of a statewide training plan and change management activities for RA
- Manage all internal and external communications regarding programmatic changes or initiatives
- Responsible for the development and maintenance of all RA documentation and correspondence
- Responsible for changes or updates to the RA benefits website (CONNECT) and the program’s Intranet site

**Oversees a Self-Service Task Force driving improvements in Customer Experience (CX):**
- Captures and reviews the “Voice of the Customer” in order to identify areas for improvement
- Drafts projects and business changes aimed at improving the customer experience and/or creating efficiencies
- Ensures the Department’s front-line staff participate in development through the use of focus groups across the program
- Benchmarks initiatives and projects against other states and industry experts, when possible
- Reviews and develops content using plain language guidelines
- Assists in requesting, developing, testing, and deploying new technology
- Supports other units with unique requests as needed (Ex: drafting communication for claimants and employers.)

**Programmatic and Quality Training:**
- Develop, schedule, and perform programmatic training sessions to improve quality of the RA Program
- Supervise technical training for staff
- Conduct orientation sessions for recently hired staff
- Create brochures and training materials
- Conduct statewide RA programmatic training for DUA as needed

**Benefit Accuracy Measurement:**
- Federally required unit that provides the basis for assessing accuracy of RA benefits payments and accuracy of benefits denied
• Assess improvements in program accuracy and integrity
• Conduct performance reviews to determine federal and state quality standards

Benefits Data Validation:
• Validates reported workload data, identifies and addresses discrepancies, and reports findings to USDOL
• Assesses the accuracy of reported counts, the validity of the counts, and that the correct information is being counted
• A required activity assessing accuracy of RA Benefits required reports used to measure performance and allocate RA benefits administrative funding

Benefits Timeliness and Quality:
• Responsible for completing federally required quarterly reviews of nonmonetary determinations, which provides USDOL with data needed to help assess an aspect of the state’s RA operational performance
• Responsible for completing weekly reviews of a defined sample of nonmonetary determinations, based on the federal Benefits Timeliness and Quality (BTQ) model, which provides reports and documents trends to assist adjudication management with training tools for individualized coaching
• Responsible for assisting with reviews of RA operations with regards to monitoring first payment promptness performance
• Responsible for maintaining the RA Adjudication Manual and other related resource materials such as procedural instructions and memorandums
• Conduct statewide RA quality training, primarily for fact-finding and adjudication
• Provides statewide technical assistance when needed
3.4 Infrastructure

3.4.1 Overview

This section provides an overview of CONNECT including a detailed description and the area of focus for improvement of system hardware, network, and storage assets. Figure 3: CONNECT Architecture provides overview of the main components of CONNECT as well as the interaction between these components.

**Figure 3: CONNECT Architecture**
The CONNECT evolution diagram below depicts the major activities completed and milestones achieved since the inception of the system in 2011 through early 2021. The diagram also highlights that the implementation of prioritized modernization and improvement Initiatives, many of which began in 2018. The re-appraisal and prioritization project is designed to ensure that proper planning and budget requests are in place to enable the continuation of initiatives in-progress, the utilization of services acquired and implemented in 2020 as a result of the COVID response, and the initiation of additional modernization projects as prioritized and planned by the Department in the February 2021 Reemployment Assistance IT Modernization Schedule IV-B.

The following modernization and improvement projects are currently in progress:

- **RA CONNECT Re-hosting** – This project includes the migration of the CONNECT application and database architecture from the state data center (SDC) infrastructure to Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS). The rehosting also includes the acquisition and implementation of a Microsoft hosted disaster recovery and failover service. With the transition to these two cloud services, DEO will no longer require the SDC hosted application and database infrastructure services, or the Winter Haven DR services.

- **Data Engineering** – This project includes the implementation of a new data warehouse reporting capability to eliminate the need to run reports against the CONNECT transactional database. Reports run against the data warehouse will be optimized for both performance and business need. Additionally, the replication of data to the warehouse will enable the archiving and purging of historic transactional data from the CONNECT
database, improving system stability, optimizing query response times, and increasing transactional performance.

- New Citizens Portal “RA Contact Us” – This project will result in a single one-stop portal for citizens to get answers to common requests and questions, to submit specific questions about their claims, and to search and view responses to questions submitted. This project includes data analysis and data cleansing to ensure that each citizen has a single unique identifying record that will be utilized as the identifier for all of their information in the system.
Figure 5: CONNECT Issues and Resolutions: Feb – Aug 2020 depicts the claims processing issues experienced and solutions implemented during the February through July 2020 timeframe to stabilize the system and enable DEO to process the influx of work effort.

3.4.2 Hardware

CONNECT utilizes processing hardware to support both the main CONNECT application as well as the Treasury Offset Program (TOP), Digital Appeals Recording System (DARS), Fraud Initiative Rating and Rules Engine (FIRRE), Interactive Voice Response (IVR), database, and reporting/analytics. Integration services within the CONNECT application provide communications to other CONNECT components as well as external agencies. The bulk of this hardware is hosted on-premises at DST with web servers for the CONNECT application being hosted in the cloud. Note that this section assesses the current state. Section 4 of this document identifies gaps between the current and future state.
Table 2: CONNECT Hardware outlines the processing hardware characteristics for all system components.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONNECT Component</th>
<th>Hosting</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Used for providing the user interface components. Scaled from 4 pre-COVID to 80 at the peak of COVID. Scaling is a manual process. This component was shifted from on-premises to cloud hosting in response to COVID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Used for exposing API to the user interface components. Scaled from 4 pre-COVID to 60 at the peak of COVID. Scaling is a manual process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for document generation software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for document storage and workflow software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for email software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for running batch processes including processes that integrate with external systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>SaaS</td>
<td>Software as a Service offering hosted externally and used to queue initial claims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Hosting for Robotic Process Automation (RPA) software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for session management software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasury Offset Program</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Used for hosting the user interface components.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasury Offset Program</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Used for running batch processes including processes that integrate with external systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Recording Software</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for Appeals Hearing Recording software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud Detection Application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for fraud detection software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVR</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for IVR software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting/Analytics</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for report generation software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting/Analytics</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for Dashboards and analytics software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Clustered hardware used to host Oracle database software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for TOP software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Hosting for cloud database software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for the FIRRE database software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Petabyte-scale data transport solution to transfer large amounts of data into and out of AWS cloud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3.4.3 Network**

The CONNECT application is currently utilizing a hybrid network infrastructure with a portion of the infrastructure located at the DST state datacenter in Tallahassee, Florida, and a portion hosted in the Azure East-US region datacenters in Ashburn, Virginia. Note that this section assesses the current state. Section 4 of this document identifies gaps between the current and desired state.
Table 3: CONNECT Network Components provides additional details on the system’s network components.

### Table 3: CONNECT Network Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network Component</th>
<th>Hosting</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal Load Balancer</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Balances load that is distributed to web servers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Load Balancer</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Balances load that is distributed to web servers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloud Connectivity</td>
<td>Cloud, DST, and MFN</td>
<td>Connects DEO internal network to the cloud network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewall</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Blocks potentially malicious incoming web traffic to cloud-hosted assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewall</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Blocks potentially malicious incoming web traffic to on-premises assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Network</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Provides connectivity within the DEO internal network</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.4.4 Storage

Table 4: CONNECT Storage Components outlines the major database storage components within CONNECT used to store both structured and unstructured data.

### Table 4: CONNECT Storage Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONNECT Component</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Hosting</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>File storage</td>
<td>Store all files used by CONNECT components in the DST</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>No archival process in place and the volume is stretching capabilities of some CONNECT components such as the document management application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database storage</td>
<td>Database storage for all CONNECT components in the DST</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>No archival process in place and the volume is stretching capabilities of some CONNECT storage components.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloud storage</td>
<td>Database and file storage</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Software only, no database</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.5 Software

##### 3.5.1 Overview

This section provides an overview of CONNECT, including a detailed description of both a software inventory and an inventory of integration points with external agencies. Note that this section assesses the current state. Section 4 of this document identifies gaps between the current and desired state.

##### 3.5.2 Software Inventory

Table 5: CONNECT Software Components provides an inventory of current software supporting RA and CONNECT. For each business capability of CONNECT a description of supporting software and the current status is included.
### TABLE 5: CONNECT Software Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONNECT Component</th>
<th>Business Capability</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>Authentication</td>
<td>Used for non-claimant authentication and authorization. Claimant authentication and authorization is performed with a custom process using the database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information Technology Service Management (ITSM)</td>
<td>The ITSM tool is used for tracking work initiated from business units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source Code Control</td>
<td>Used for source code control and tracking work within the development teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application Performance Monitoring</td>
<td>Assesses the performance of CONNECT components.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT Application</td>
<td>CONNECT Web Application</td>
<td>This application is implemented using an older version of Microsoft .Net Framework and the Web Forms user interface technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web Server</td>
<td>Delivers web pages and API responses to both end users and API consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Document generation</td>
<td>Provides the capability to generate correspondence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Batch Management and Scheduling</td>
<td>Schedules and initiate batch jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workflow and Document Storage</td>
<td>Tracks the flow of work within the CONNECT application and stores any documents generated from and received into the CONNECT application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Object Relational Mapping</td>
<td>Development tool that facilitates database access and updates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Queue CONNECT Access</td>
<td>Provides the equivalent of a waiting room to ‘throttle’ end user sessions and support maintaining a manageable system load and avoid negative consequences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robotic Process Automation</td>
<td>Automates repetitive claims processing that does not require human intervention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initial Claims Processing</td>
<td>Offloads initial claims processing from the CONNECT application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Session Management</td>
<td>Tracks and stores user information (session state) after the user logs into the CONNECT application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Document Conversion</td>
<td>Converts documents between various format such as Word or PDF.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Redacted File Viewing</td>
<td>Redacts and displays documents that have redactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Recovery Application</td>
<td>TOP Web Application</td>
<td>User interface for tracking interaction with the IRS for recovering overpayments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web Server</td>
<td>Delivers web pages and API responses to both end users and API consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Software</td>
<td>DARS Application</td>
<td>Records appeals hearings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web Server</td>
<td>Delivers web pages and API responses to both end users and API consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud Detection Application</td>
<td>FIRRE Application</td>
<td>Flags potentially fraudulent claims activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web Server</td>
<td>This component delivers web pages to fraud detection application users.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 6: Key CONNECT Interfaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Capability</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Interface Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claim recipient identification</td>
<td>ICON - SSA</td>
<td>Real Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interstate claims and wages</td>
<td>ICON – SIDI / IBIQ</td>
<td>Real Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request wages from other states</td>
<td>ICON – Ibx</td>
<td>SFTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity verification</td>
<td>HSMV</td>
<td>Real Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration and naturalization status verification</td>
<td>SAVE</td>
<td>Real Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support job service registration and local workforce boards</td>
<td>WITS</td>
<td>Real Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly wage verification with other states</td>
<td>SIDES</td>
<td>Real Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debit card payment processing</td>
<td>Way2Go</td>
<td>SFTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct deposit payment processing</td>
<td>JP Morgan</td>
<td>SFTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage and employer information to determine benefits and employer charges</td>
<td>DOR</td>
<td>SFTP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address validation</td>
<td>QAS</td>
<td>Real Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Capability</td>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Interface Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match occupation with specialty of occupation used for labor market statistics</td>
<td>Auto coder</td>
<td>Real Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6 Documentation

3.6.1 Overview

The Department staff stated during meetings and interviews that documentation is in place to support the ongoing operation and maintenance of CONNECT as an enabler of the RA business process. Numerous examples of documentation were provided, reviewed, and analyzed. This section summarizes the review and analysis of CONNECT documentation.

3.6.2 Processes Supported

As noted previously, functional business processes supported by CONNECT include the following:

- Claims Processing, including Wage Determination Unit and Benefits Integrity Unit
- Adjudication
- Appeals
- Contact Center
- Quality Assurance

3.6.3 Listing of Documentation

The Department staff have represented that system documentation supporting the functional business processes listed above include the following:

- Documented business requirements and business rules
- Functional and technical software specifications
- Documentation of business process flows supported by CONNECT
- Test scripts and test cases for software changes
- Maintenance / release logs documenting software maintenance, updates, and enhancements
- User training scripts and use cases

3.7 Organizational Culture

3.7.1 Overview

This section will offer a general assessment and direction for the Department to establish or continue the disciplines necessary to perform self-assessment and prioritization of actions to adjust to changing expectations and minimize technical debt.

3.7.2 Organizational Strengths

Commitment of Staff to Public Service

Calendar year 2020 brought with it many hardships. The Department’s staff persevered through those hardships. As shown in Figure 5: Percentage Change in Initial Claims During COVID-19 Peak, Florida experienced the
greatest percentage change of any state in the nation from its COVID-19 peak initial claim volume to its lowest weekly initial claim volume within the eight-week USDOL reporting period prior to its peak. New claim volumes increased by 10,340% (a factor of more than 100 times) during the COVID-19 period. The U.S. average is also provided for comparative context.

The dedication and commitment of staff might be expressed most effectively in the context of factors illustrated below in Figure 5 and Figure 6.

**Figure 5: Percentage Change in Initial Claims During COVID-19 Peak**

![Percentage Change in Initial Claims](image)

Beyond the percentage change in new claims volume during the COVID-19 peak, the Department’s staff also led the effort to process more new RA claims submitted during the nearly 11-month COVID-19 period (March 15 through February 4, 2021) exceeded the number of new RA claims submitted during the entire eight-year period (more than 84 months). See Figure 6: Initial Unemployment Claims in ~11 Months vs. Previous 8 Years.

Moreover, prior to the COVID-19 period beginning in March 2020, Contact Center volumes fell within an average of 25,000 attempted calls per week. During the COVID-19 period, the maximum number of calls attempted in a single day exceeded 1.1 million. The maximum attempted daily call volume to the contact center during the COVID-19 claims period was more than 200 times the previous daily average or a surge of nearly 22,000%.

In spite of an unprecedented surge in claims, the Department’s staff have distributed more than $20 billion in benefits to claimants since March 2020.
**Program Knowledge**

The Department’s staff not only processed a record number of regular RA initial claims during 2020 but also implemented new programs authorized under the CARES Act, including Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation / Lost Wage Assistance. As of January 12, 2021, the value of benefits distributed by the Department’s staff for the latter program alone exceeds $12 billion. Another new federal program authorized under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, Federal Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation, is being developed for implementation by the Department’s staff.

The depth and breadth of program knowledge required by the Department’s staff to process record volumes of regular RA initial claims and simultaneously implement multiple new programs created to provide pandemic assistance benefits is noted among the Bureau’s greatest organizational strengths.

**Resiliency**

The foregoing organizational strengths not only stand on their own, but together demonstrate resiliency in the workplace. Staff have also demonstrated resiliency in performing workarounds needed to compensate for system constraints and limitations.
4 Identified Gaps

Table 7: Key Observations and Associated Risks and Deficiencies below provides key observations and the associated risks and deficiencies identified through RA and IT interviews and review of CONNECT documentation.

Observations are divided into four domains:

1. Infrastructure
2. Software
3. Data & Analytics
4. Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Key Observations</th>
<th>Risks/Deficiencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Infrastructure | • Aging on-premises infrastructure.  
• Current infrastructure is not automatically scalable. The Department has a desire to move more CONNECT infrastructure to a Cloud-hosted model.  
• Heightened loads during the pandemic overwhelmed the system, causing system performance and stability issues. New claims were ultimately offloaded to a separate system to alleviate the additional pressure.  
• Database hosting and application hosting is on-premises. Web servers are in the cloud.  
• During high-volume periods of the pandemic, call volume capacity was exceeded.  
• Session management was unreliable under high load, resulting in users having to start their process over if the system had any issues during their session. When combined with the slow performance and system instability issues caused by the unforeseen glut of users, many users would spend hours entering data, then lose their session and have to start over from the beginning.  
• Approximately 80 servers were configured in the cloud to eliminate issues due to increase in claims submitted as a result of COVID – 19. | • Older on-premises infrastructure has a higher risk of failure.  
• Without automatic scalability, the system risks being unable to respond to spikes in usage, leading to degraded performance or even system outages.  
• Having the database and web applications accessing the database in the same hosting platform improves performance.  
• Exceeding call volume capacity meant claimants calling after capacity is reached were disconnected without the opportunity to have their call answered. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Key Observations</th>
<th>Risks/Deficiencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>• Significant technical debt. • Several software components are reaching the end of support. • Several software components are reaching the limits of their capacity • Some processes in Appeals and Adjudication still exist outside of the system. • New systems implemented in response to the pandemic were hastily implemented. • CONNECT has known, open defects • Build and deployment processes are manual. • Screens are cluttered and hard to navigate. • System is not mobile-friendly • Custom RA web application utilizes an older version of .net and web forms rather than the newer .Net Core Framework. • Due to rapid and dramatic system updates in response to COVID, documentation is fragmented, out of date or doesn’t exist within a well understood standard that is useful to drive value to the operation and achievement of program goals.</td>
<td>• Technical debt increases the cost of maintenance as well as the risk of unintended effects elsewhere in the system. • Lack of support puts the Department at risk of security issues as well as inhibits later development. • Limited software capacity inhibits future growth. • Workflows not integrated into the system and thus maintenance releases can have unintended impacts on system processes performed by other units. • Standing up complex systems quickly introduces security, stability, and performance risks. • The presence of known defects represents a large backlog of outstanding work and potential system stability issues. • Manual build and deployment processes are less reliable and more costly than automated processes. • Difficult screens cause higher rates of errors in claims submissions, increased call volume in the contact center, and ultimately a poor customer experience. • System documentation does not adequately reflect the as-built system which hinders maintainability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data &amp; Analytics</td>
<td>• Currently using the Disaster Recovery server as a reporting platform • RA reporting for USDOL and other operational purposes is external to CONNECT. • Data storage requirements continue to increase due to a lack of a purging and archival capability. • Data catalog and data dictionary is not available. Catalog and dictionary are needed per 282.206 FL [DS] data management and interoperability requirements.</td>
<td>• Best practice is to have a separate environment for reporting. • Some business units (Adjudication) like the ability to control reporting externally. • Increasing data storage requirements reduce performance and increase cost. • 282.206 F.S. and 60GG require that data catalog and data classification be completed in advance of moving data or workloads to cloud.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Key Observations</th>
<th>Risks/Deficiencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Security** | • FIPS data classification has been completed per cloud-first rule 60GG-4, and CONNECT is classified as an overall moderate security categorization.  
• Analysis of requirements for additional CONNECT infrastructure and RA data in the cloud includes the need to comply with Federal Publication 1075 requiring FedRAMP certification of cloud solutions.  
• Modernization of the Identity Management and Access Control capability was identified as a necessary initiative prior to the COVID emergency and is still identified as a critical need. | • Identity Management capability needs to be modernized to allow for service capabilities such as multi-factor authentication and alerting of account changes. |
5 Comparison to Other States

Due to the pressures the pandemic has placed on other state agencies, other states were not available to discuss their current systems or request their system integration partners to interview with respect to system capabilities and key metrics.

The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) is a national organization representing all 50 state workforce agencies, as well as DC and the U.S. territories. Workforce agencies deliver training, employment, career, and business services, in addition to administering the unemployment insurance (UI), veteran reemployment, and labor market information programs. NASWA provides policy expertise, shares promising state practices, and promotes state innovation and leadership in workforce development. NASWA provided the current landscape of nationwide modernization efforts and key factors to consider as Florida contemplates the next steps towards modernization of CONNECT.

5.1 Modernization

Florida is considering modernization of their RA system after implementation in 2013. Florida is not alone in this scenario. Of states that have “new” systems, 25-35% require a new system within seven years. The difference in longevity is sustainability planning and execution. Sustainability planning needs to be incorporated into initial planning and continuously executed throughout the lifetime of each system, including vision for operational support, funding, and incorporation of innovations or technological advances with discernable benefits regarding the delivery of RA services. Any effort to modernize should include a robust sustainability plan.

5.2 Cloud Computing

Another modernization effort currently being incorporated into systems today is a migration of infrastructure to a consumption-based, cloud-hosted model. According to NASWA, nine states currently house their UI systems in the cloud and two more have cloud migration projects in progress.

Cloud-hosting lends itself to enhanced system scalability which can increase system capacity quickly and easily. Infrastructure pricing under this hosting model is primarily consumption-based, where tenants pay only for the

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infrastructure consumed. Gartner Consulting states that by 2024, more than 45% of IT spending on system infrastructure, infrastructure software, application software, and business process outsourcing will shift from traditional on-premises solutions to cloud-hosted models. This evolution makes cloud computing one of the most continually disruptive forces in IT markets since the early days of the digital age. By next year, spending on cloud system infrastructure will be nearly double what it was in 2019.²

As described in section 3.2.2, since CONNECT was first established, Florida has enacted a “Cloud-First” policy. Rule 6oGG, section 282.206, Florida Statutes, requires state agencies to show a preference for cloud computing services that minimize or do not require the purchasing, financing, or leasing of state data center resources.

The cloud should be a central component of any modernization effort Florida contemplates for the RA Benefits system.

6 Conclusion

Moving forward, further detailed requirements analysis is needed as a necessary first step or prerequisite to a phased long-term modernization approach. In the next year, the Department will need to obtain resources to begin updating all documentation of the RA system and functional business processes, which will be necessary to support future strategic IT initiatives.

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Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

Improved Delivery of Reemployment Assistance Benefits

Deliverable #4: Future State Recommendations and Implementation Roadmap

February 26, 2021

Your Vision + Our Expertise

Solving the Future

Strategy | Process | Technology
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## Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Artificial Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>API</td>
<td>Application Programming Interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&amp;B</td>
<td>Claims and Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cap-Ex</td>
<td>Capital Expenditures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSP</td>
<td>Cloud Service Provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CX</td>
<td>Customer Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEO</td>
<td>The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMS</td>
<td>Document Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAC</td>
<td>Florida Administrative Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCS</td>
<td>Florida Cybersecurity Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLDS</td>
<td>Florida Digital Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUTA</td>
<td>Federal Unemployment Tax Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY</td>
<td>Fiscal Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCM</td>
<td>Human Capital Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IaaS</td>
<td>Infrastructure as a Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDM</td>
<td>Identity Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRPP</td>
<td>Long Range Program Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWDB</td>
<td>Local Workforce Development Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFA</td>
<td>Multi-Factor Authentication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ML</td>
<td>Machine Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Op-Ex</td>
<td>Operating Expenditures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PaaS</td>
<td>Platform as a Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POC</td>
<td>Proof of Concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;C</td>
<td>Risk and Complexity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA</td>
<td>Reemployment Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPA</td>
<td>Robotic Process Automation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDLC</td>
<td>Systems Development Lifecycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOA</td>
<td>Service Oriented Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UI</td>
<td>Unemployment Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDOL</td>
<td>United States Department of Labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UX</td>
<td>User Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIOA</td>
<td>Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Overview

1.1 Project Overview

The Reemployment Assistance (RA) Improvement project will examine and assess the delivery of RA benefits in the state of Florida, to include an assessment of the CONNECT system, Florida’s system providing the intake and processing of RA claims, and identification of recommendations to improve RA claims processes. The basis of understanding for the assessment will be formed through a review of the CONNECT system and RA business processes, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) staff interviews and work sessions, and review of additional artifacts provided by the Department.

CONNECT is Florida’s RA claims system, used by Departmental staff, claimants, employers, and third-party representatives. CONNECT was launched on October 15, 2013, and serves as the central repository to track, view, and file RA claims. The system functions as the core benefits administration platform for Departmental staff and provides online access for claimants to apply for benefits, view and track claims, and set up payment information. For employers, the system allows access to inquiries regarding claimants for response and to protest a benefit charge or file an appeal. Additionally, the system allows employers to grant third-party representatives access to perform specific functions.

This document is deliverable four of five and provides an assessment of the current state of RA operations and the CONNECT system including business processes, infrastructure, software, documentation, and organizational culture to address areas of concern and provide potential opportunities for improvement. Future deliverables will focus more deeply on recommendations to improve the future state of RA services and the information technology and human resources supporting the delivery of RA services. This project will develop the deliverables defined in Table 1: Project Deliverables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Project Plan &amp; Basis of Understanding</td>
<td>A detailed project plan, including, but not limited to, project schedule, tasks, objectives, anticipated Department resource needs which must be approved by the Department. Project plan and execution thereof, must adhere to Florida Administrative Code (FAC) 60GG-1, Project Management and Oversight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>COVID-19 Response Performance Report</td>
<td>A detailed report of assessment findings, including, but not limited to, a baseline of Florida's RA performance and a comparison of Florida's RA performance to the performance of other states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CONNECT Current State Assessment</td>
<td>An assessment of the current state of RA operations and the RA system including business processes, infrastructure, software, documentation, and organizational culture to address areas of concern and provide potential opportunities for improvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 Executive Summary

There is no “silver bullet” turnkey RA/UI system or IT solution for achieving the Department’s goal of organizational agility and creating a sustainable culture of continuous modernization. The goal of continuous modernization is not an end point, but an ongoing journey that will require a transformation of institutional vision, commitment, effort, and discipline.

The recommendations set forth in this document divide the modernization initiatives into realistic, viable, and achievable projects. Critical projects include the immediate transition to the cloud to enable system scalability and elasticity, establishment of a service oriented software development architecture, transition to a modern user authentication service, and essential business process re-engineering and user experience transformations for citizens and employers.

Federal laws and regulations, as well as Florida statutes and administrative rules, provide the foundation for RA business objectives, processes, system capabilities, functions, and performance requirements. RA requirements provide the regulatory and system performance drivers for the RA business processes and functions enabled through the CONNECT environment.

Due to the pace of technology advancement and the fluidity of citizen and employer RA needs, the modernize and freeze approach is not sustainable. The initiatives and projects recommended in this document address the immediate need to improve RA system performance and usability while establishing the architectural framework and processes necessary to implement future business process and technology change efficiently and effectively.

Modernization projects are organized within each of the initiatives illustrated in Figure 1: Continuous Modernization Initiatives. Collectively, the projects identified within this document represent the scope of the RA Modernization Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Future State Recommended Approach and Implementation Roadmap</td>
<td>An overall recommendation and potential approaches for the RA system in the form of an implementation roadmap and a recommended model of governance to enable the improved delivery of RA services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Final Report and Schedule IV-B</td>
<td>A final report with documentation stating recommendations, risk assessment, and supporting information. Schedule IV-B report, including system/program analysis, functional/technical requirements, benefits realization, cost benefit analysis, risk assessment, and technology and project management planning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following list identifies the key architectural and cost data points for the modernization program:

- Business Process and Customer Experience Transformation project represents the highest cost.
- Cloud Migration project represents the second highest cost, and most foundational modernization effort.
- Software architecture modernization is a pre-requisite to the CX Mobile-Responsive application project.
- All projects are scheduled to complete by the end of fiscal year 2022-2023.
- The total two-year modernization cost is approximately $73 million.
- Human Resources are the largest cost (at 61% of total) then software, and hardware.
- Maintenance costs are expected to decrease beginning in fiscal year 2023-2024.

3 Vision

The vision for the modernization program is to implement immediate system performance and functional improvement needs while positioning the Department with a secure, scalable, and sustainable system architecture and agile support processes.

To realize this vision for immediate improvement and long-term sustainability there are technology and resource investments necessary in fiscal years 2021-22 and 2022-23. The investments will result in long-term benefit to Citizens in immediate process improvement and long-term benefit to the Department in reduced system maintenance time and cost.

To ensure the most efficient and effective implementation of projects included in the modernization program, it is recommended that the Department acquire the services of a third-party Systems, Software, and Integration (SSI) service provider experienced in the planning and implementation of multi-year system modernization initiatives. Modernization project teams will be comprised of a combination of Department and third-party resources.
Projects are governed by the Department. The governance process ensures an integrated process, vertically and horizontally, for requesting new projects and funding. It is further recommended that the Department acquire third-party services to support the Strategic Planning Office (SPO) and acquire third-party Independent Validation & Verification (IV&V) services to ensure projects are executed with minimal cost and schedule variance.

The SPO serves as the single point of contact for budget, schedule, scope, and status reporting. A critical role and function of the SPO ensures approved projects effectively engage stakeholders and maintain a high level of efficient, coordinated, and productive collaboration.

To ensure fiscal responsibility, the SPO and established governance teams will adjust operational cost needs for fiscal year 2022-2023 based on additional information obtained from the cloud migration and procurement projects initiated in the first quarter of fiscal year 2021-2022. As projects complete, operational costs shift away from managed third-party service providers, back to Department personnel and Staff Augmentation support needs.

### 3.1 Statutory Requirements

This diagram below illustrates the federal and state legislative requirements for the RA Program. Federal regulations and Florida statutes and rules provide the foundation for RA business objectives and processes, system capabilities, functions, and performance requirements. RA requirements provide the regulatory and system performance drivers for the RA business processes and functions enabled through the CONNECT environment.

![Figure 2: RA Requirements and Functions](image-url)
A detailed list and description of Federal and State regulation and rule can be found in appendix sections 10.1 and 10.2 of this document.

3.2 Business Need

The Department is a diverse department that touches many facets of life in Florida, including business development, workforce support and training, and community development. In collaboration with its public and private partners, the Department assists the Governor in advancing Florida's economy for every Floridian, championing the state's economic development vision and implementing innovative initiatives that help citizens, communities, businesses, and visitors thrive.

Agency Responsibilities

Formed in 2011, the Department combines the state’s business, workforce, and community development effort to help expedite economic development projects that fuel job creation and create competitive communities. To achieve this objective, the Department’s three program divisions of Community Development, Strategic Business Development, and Workforce Services support the Department’s goals and objectives. Along with the assistance of the Department’s supporting divisions and offices, the program divisions achieve and fulfill the Department’s responsibilities as mandated by Florida Statutes.

The Division of Workforce Services provides services to enhance the state’s labor force. Whether it is supporting the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and partners who provide job seeker services like employment training and education, supporting Florida’s unemployed, or leveraging information to determine industry demands, the division is committed to ensuring every Floridian has the skills needed and the opportunity to work. The Division of Workforce Services is comprised of the following three program areas:

- **Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research.** The primary purpose of this bureau is to produce, analyze, and distribute timely and reliable statistical information, including economic growth data, information on industry sectors, workforce talent supply, job openings, and more to assist Florida in making sound economic decisions.

- **Bureau of One-Stop and Program Support.** This bureau is responsible for administering workforce programs and providing technical assistance and support to the LWDBs. The bureau partners with CareerSource Florida and the state’s 24 LWDBs to strengthen Florida’s business climate by supporting employers and helping Floridians gain employment, remain employed, and advance in their careers. The Department is the administrative agency designated for receipt of federal workforce development grants and other federal funds pursuant to Chapters 20 and 445, F.S. State law requires CareerSource Florida to enter into a contract with the Department for the administration of workforce services and funds.

- **Bureau of Reemployment Assistance Programs.** The Reemployment Assistance (RA) program provides temporary partial wage replacement (unemployment insurance) benefits to qualified individuals who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. This work is carried out in four units:
  - Claims Processing
  - Adjudication
  - Appeals
Reemployment Assistance: Goals Critical to Department’s Mission

The Division of Workforce Services has three long-term goals to drive change within the division and provide a vision for improvements to RA services which would be enabled by implementation of the recommendations set forth in projects identified in the Roadmap provided in this deliverable. The three long-term goals are:

- Improve organizational agility and create a sustainable culture of continuous improvement
- Achieve workforce and RA national prominence
- Reduce operating costs

3.3 Business Objectives

This section contains a clear articulation of business goals as defined by the Division of Workforce Services in the 2021 – 2022 Long Range Program Plan (LRPP), and the objectives associated with achieving progress toward each goal as expressed by the Department. Objectives were developed as a result of lessons learned in 2020 as well as findings in Deliverable #2: COVID-19 Performance Report. The subsequent recommendations and project summaries provided in this document each enable progress toward achieving one or more business objective.

The Division of Workforce Services has three goals to establish long-term change within the division:

1. **Goal: Improve organizational agility and create a sustainable culture of continuous improvement.**
   2. Objective: Adjust hiring, retention, and compensation policies accordingly.
   3. Objective: Implement a governance process that incorporates both top down and bottom up input.

2. **Goal: Achieve workforce and RA national prominence.**
   1. Objective: Meet or exceed current Quality Assurance performance metrics.
      - LRPP measure 2.2.6: Percent of RA benefits paid accurately meets or exceeds 90%.
   2. Objective: Meet or exceed current Claims Processing performance metrics.
      - LRPP measure 2.2.7: Percent of RA first payments paid timely meets or exceeds 87%.

3. **Goal: Reduce operating costs.**
   1. Objective: Baseline fiscal year 21-22 RA costs recurring costs resulting from the COVID-19 response.
   2. Objective: Estimate RA costs through fiscal year 2025 – 26 to include RA system modernization costs.

3.4 Statement of Need

This section provides a clear statement of need describing the conditions that created, or significantly contributed to, the problem or opportunity being addressed by the project. Problems and opportunities are analyzed in terms of their impact on the Department’s mission and RA program.
As the COVID-19 pandemic shattered all historical records and foreseeable standards for peak demand, RA implemented numerous changes to stabilize operations and deliver RA benefits. Consequently, the Department’s RA program has a need to pursue continuous modernization to re-establish its pre-pandemic direction.

The continuous modernization approach will focus on the reduction of current technical debt, and the utilization of technology architectures that will minimize future technical debt. Technical debt refers to short term solutions that result in significantly more work later. Common examples of technical debt that will be addressed as part of the continuous modernization roadmap include updating end of life application components, creating a business rules engine, and creating a data warehouse that the RA system will utilize for reporting.

There is an immediate need in year-one and year-two to complete the migration of CONNECT infrastructure from the State Data Center and Winter Haven Disaster Recovery sites to a Cloud Service Provider using an IaaS hosting model. This migration began during the pandemic in 2020 with the implementation of 72 new web servers into IaaS. The immediate need is to continue this transition with a component by component transition to the cloud IaaS environment. Some components will require rework or replacement to perform effectively in the cloud environment. This migration is necessary to ensure that the CONNECT infrastructure components are positioned to meet normal and peak demand needs utilizing server auto-scaling capabilities, demand-based costing models, and automatic failover and recovery services.

### 3.5 Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles are broad statements that serve to guide the Department’s improvement in RA services related decisions. The principles serve as a guidepost for the Department’s Program and IT leaders, who are charged with key decisions and the implementation of the strategic roadmap included within this RA system Future State and Implementation Plan. It is within these people where positive change and progress is truly enabled and the importance of this necessary contribution cannot be emphasized enough. Leaders must carry out the principles embodied within this plan on a regular basis for the implementation plan to achieve its desired intent.

The RA Program and Department IT will embrace the following guiding principles throughout the improvement of RA services implementation efforts:

- **Enable:** Enable citizens to complete processes by ensuring that system functionality is secure, easy to use, and intuitive.
- **Fulfill:** Ensure citizen RA transactions can be and are completed at or above documented and regularly reported upon target performance metrics.
- **Assist:** Ensure that citizens have timely access to contact and help resources.
- **Improve:** Embrace a culture of continuous improvement with specific focus on transcending organizational boundaries, engaging end-users, and innovating RA services.
- **Secure:** Secure data access via industry standard authentication capabilities.
- **Govern & Manage:** Govern and manage an inventory of business processes, documentation, data, technologies, and capabilities in support of enterprise reuse and interoperability.
- **Optimize:** Optimize services by utilizing cloud-based scaling and pricing models to maximize performance and minimize operational costs.
# 4 Recommendations

Observations from the current state analysis were refined and incorporated into the table below as Key Findings. Each has been categorized into one of the following four initiatives:

1. Infrastructure
2. Software
3. Data & Analytics
4. Security

Commonly themed findings were grouped into projects to be recommended in the implementation plan. Each recommended project is further elaborated on in Section 8 to include project descriptions, required resources, project duration, key benefits, risks, and constraints.

**Table 2: Key Findings and Recommended Projects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiatives</th>
<th>Key Findings Description</th>
<th>Recommended Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>The infrastructure was initially purchased in 2013. This older on-premises infrastructure is at end of life and has a higher risk of failure.</td>
<td>Cloud Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The CONNECT web server tier is hosted in the cloud while the application server and database server tiers are hosted on premises. Having all tiers in the same hosting platform improves performance.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During high-volume periods of the pandemic, call volume capacity was exceeded. Exceeding call volume capacity meant claimants calling after capacity is reached were disconnected without the opportunity to have their call answered.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Session management was unreliable under high load, resulting in users having to start their process over if the system had any issues during their session. When combined with the slow performance and system instability issues caused by the unforeseen glut of users, many users would spend hours entering data, lose their session, and then have to start over from the beginning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The 72 new cloud web IaaS web servers are fully dedicated to RA at all times. There is additional opportunity to ensure that these IaaS servers are utilizing the most efficient cloud cost models based on pay-as-you-go demand based costing and auto-scaling in and out as demand warrants.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Additional work is needed around cloud security controls and cloud service provider cost analysis to comply with 6oGG-4 cloud rule.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CONNECT web server and application server tiers are scaled manually. Without automatic scalability, the system risks being unable to respond to spikes in usage, leading to degraded performance or even system outages.</td>
<td>Cloud Application Performance Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>System documentation needs to be maintained and updated.</td>
<td>SDLC – Dev Ops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Due to rapid and dramatic system updates in response to COVID, documentation is fragmented, out of date, or doesn’t exist within a well understood standard that is useful to drive value to the operation and achievement of program goals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives</td>
<td>Key Findings Description</td>
<td>Recommended Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>The process for planning software development releases and managing the SDLC needs to be standardized and documented.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>Build and deployment processes are manual, which results in those processes being less reliable and more costly than automated processes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>Several software components are reaching the end of support. Lack of support puts the Department at risk for security issues and inhibits future development.</td>
<td>.Net &amp; ORM Upgrade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>Several software components are reaching the limits of their capacity. Limited software capacity inhibits future growth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>CONNECT system has a high level of technical debt. This technical debt increases the cost of maintenance as well as the risk of unintended effects elsewhere in the system.</td>
<td>SOA and API Layer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>Current system architecture is not modular. Lack of modularity requires extensive regression testing for all system enhancements and updates.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>CONNECT system has a high level of technical debt. This technical debt increases the cost of maintenance as well as the risk of unintended effects elsewhere in the system.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>New systems implemented in response to the pandemic were hastily implemented. Standing up complex systems quickly introduces security, stability and performance risks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>Capability needs to be modernized to allow for service capabilities such as Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), Single Sign-On (SSO), role-based permissions, and alerting of account changes.</td>
<td>Identity Management (IDM) and User Access Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>IDM was the number one priority in both of the last two Florida Cyber Security Standards assessments. The current IDM and user authentication capability is provided by a combination of on-premises Active Directory and Oracle Database for storage of user account information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>In accordance with section 287.056, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and 6oGG-2 Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) IV&amp;V is required for all projects that have total project costs of $10 million or more.</td>
<td>System and Software Integration and IV&amp;V Procurement IV&amp;V Procurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>Some workflows are not integrated into the system and thus maintenance releases can have unintended impacts on system processes performed by other RA business units.</td>
<td>Business Process Optimization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>Screens are cluttered and hard to navigate.</td>
<td>Incremental CX/UX Mobile-Responsive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>System is not completely mobile-friendly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiatives</td>
<td>Key Findings Description</td>
<td>Recommended Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current system architecture is not modular. Lack of modularity requires extensive regression testing for all system enhancements and updates.</td>
<td>Software Transformation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current system has a high level of technical debt. This technical debt increases the cost of maintenance as well as the risk of unintended effects elsewhere in the system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There are many commonly asked questions to processes and functions with no single location identified to get the necessary answers or direction.</td>
<td>RA Contact Us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data &amp; Analytics</td>
<td>The Department is currently using the Disaster Recovery server as a reporting platform. However, the best practice is to have a separate environment for reporting.</td>
<td>Data Warehouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RA reporting for USDOL and other operational purposes is external to CONNECT. Some business units control reporting externally due to lack of trust in the system.</td>
<td>Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data storage requirements continue to increase due to a lack of a purging and archival capability. Increasing data storage requirements reduce performance and increase cost.</td>
<td>Archival and Purge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A data catalog and data dictionary are not available. 282.206 F.S. and 60GG require that data catalog and data classification be completed in advance of moving data or workloads to cloud.</td>
<td>Master Data Management and Interoperability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>System should be reviewed to ensure modern application security standards are incorporated into the system.</td>
<td>Security Architecture Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capability needs to be modernized to allow for service capabilities such as MFA and alerting of account changes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IDM was the number one priority in both of the last two Florida Cyber Security Standards assessments. The current IDM and user authentication capability is provided by a combination of on-premises Active Directory and Oracle Database for storage of user account information.</td>
<td>Identity Management (IDM) and User Access Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Numerous roles have the same permissions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 Model of Continuous Modernization

The model below represents an enterprise approach to ensuring that all areas of the current CONNECT ecosystem receive appropriate assessment, planning, and improvements to enable the realization of desired outcomes and goals. There are four interconnected areas, each aligned with the four key initiatives:

1. Infrastructure;
2. Software;
3. Data and Analytics; and
4. Security

Foundational to the enterprise approach is ensuring that appropriate project prioritization takes place via a defined and governed decision-making process. Also critical is the presence of an efficient process to document and maintain requirements and compare solutions in advance of implementing architectural change.

**Figure 3: Continuous Modernization Model**

This section lists the key projects that are considered to be the most important projects to initiate in year one (fiscal year 2021 – 2022) of the modernization effort. This list is ordered by associated initiative area. Further elaboration on these projects is provided in subsequent sections of this document as well as descriptions of additional projects recommended for inclusion in year two of the modernization roadmap. Project prioritizations and estimated costs should be re-evaluated in advance of the annual budget request cycle as part of a foundational governance process. Creation of a governance structure and process that aligns with specific Department and program area needs is identified as a year-one activity.
**Cloud Migration**: Complete planning for remaining migration, readiness activities, and migrate RA infrastructure from the State Data Center and Winter Haven Disaster Recovery sites to a Cloud Service Provider using an IaaS hosting model.

**Cloud Application Performance Management**: A modern approach to application performance management includes functionality like root cause analysis, custom dashboards showing key performance indicators to communicate performance at-a-glance and system monitoring with clearly defined thresholds for when remedial action must take place and defining those actions.

**SDLC – DevOps**: Improve the completeness and correctness of the application design documentation, related artifacts, and dataflow diagrams for the RA system and ensure that a process is in place that aligns RA System functionality with management’s business requirements.

**.NET & ORM Upgrade**: Establishes a solid architectural basis in support the continuous modernization by upgrading the RA application to the latest version of the .Net Framework and defining a new architecture based on .Net Core and Web API framework for the modernized RA application.

**SOA and API Layer**: Establishes a solid architectural basis in support of the continuous modernization by defining a new architecture based on .Net Core and a service-oriented architecture for the modernized RA application.

**SSI & IV&V Procurements**:

- **SSI Procurement**: Procure the contractual services of a third party System and Software Integration (SSI) services provider with experience in strategic, planning, design, development, and integration for large multi-component system modernization efforts.
- **IV&V Procurement**: Procure the contractual services of a third-party consulting firm with experience in conducting IV&V assessments to provide these services for the RA modernization and mobile-responsive software transformation project.

**Business Process Optimization and CX/UX Transformation**: Procure the contractual services of a Systems, Software, Integration (SSI) services provider to incrementally transform the business processes and develop mobile-responsive user interfaces for citizens and employers.

**RA Contact Us**: Complete implementation of customer facing capability to provide single point of contact focused on all facets of RA claims and benefits for any customer-focused need.
• **Data Warehouse:** Establish a cloud-hosted data warehouse designed for reporting purposes.
• **Reporting:** Rewrite all CONNECT reports using the data warehouse as a source of reporting data.

• **Security Architecture Review:** Procure services to assess, consult, and review proposed application design, architecture, platform, tools, security controls, anti-fraud capabilities, system hardening, access management, and secure development and operations practices.
• **Identity Management and User Authentication:** Acquire and integrate a cloud-based multi-factor authentication service for utilization by all users of the system. This project includes the updating of identity management policies and the migration of existing user accounts to the new service.
• **Security Architecture Audit:** Procure services to perform system, platform, application, and network hardening review, and associated penetration testing.
6 Strategic Roadmap

The timeline provided below depicts each of the recommended projects, an estimated duration, and expected dependencies between project.

**Figure 4: Strategic Roadmap**
7 Strategic Initiatives and Projects

This section provides project descriptions and characteristics for the recommended RA system modernization projects. Project cost information and overall roadmap risk assessment will be included in Deliverable 5: Schedule IV-B and Final Report.

Cloud Migration Project

**Project Description:**
Complete planning for remaining migration, readiness activities, and migration of RA infrastructure from the State Data Center and Winter Haven Disaster Recovery sites to a Cloud Service Provider using an IaaS hosting model. Included within the migration project is the selection and implementation of a new document storage solution and a new document generation solution and the transition to a cloud-based IVR solution. Once the migration is completed, focus on assessment of additional, long term, cloud costs, performance, and maintainability considerations such as utilization of pay-as-you-go models, and potential utilization of Platform as a Service (PaaS) as the long-term development and delivery model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 18 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Cloud deployment and delivery models offer on demand resource acquisition and auto-scaling. 2. Cloud deployment and delivery models reduce or eliminate Cap-Ex and offer pay-as-you-go Op-Ex resource costs. 3. Cloud deployment and delivery models provide cost and operational efficiencies.</td>
<td>1. Complete migration plan and modification of application and data layer readiness modifications in advance of migration. 2. Complete the re-hosting and testing of the application, database, and disaster recovery infrastructure to an IaaS hosting model. 3. Compare and implement a new document storage and workflow solution in IaaS. 4. Compare and implement new document management and IVR solutions in IaaS.</td>
<td>1. There are application and database layer remediation or readiness modifications that must take place in advance of being &quot;cloud-ready&quot;. Those modifications are currently being planned. 2. The replacement of document storage and generation components will require application layer configuration and coding changes to integrate the new solutions with the RA system. 3. Funding availability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cloud Application Performance Management Project
Cloud Migration Project

**Project Description:**
The Department's current approach to assessing system performance is highly reactive and dependent on manual feedback mechanisms. A modern approach to application performance management includes functionality like root cause analysis, custom dashboards showing key performance indicators to communicate performance at-a-glance and system monitoring with clearly defined thresholds for when remedial action must take place and then defining those actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: One year</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                    | 1. System of alerts to identify any noteworthy activity and approaching thresholds.  
2. Dashboards to assist in proactive monitoring of key performance indicators.  
4. Rendering of topology maps and system application networks.  
5. Root cause analysis of identified issues.  
6. Improved user experience. | 1. Gather requirements.  
2. Establish metrics that are indicative of upcoming problems rather than problems that have already occurred.  
3. Design visualizations that make metrics and thresholds easily visible, including trend analysis to support proactive action.  
4. Ensure that metrics capture inputs which would drive automatic scaling.  
5. Identify and procure a solution.  
6. Implement the solution. | 1. Funding availability. |
**System Development Lifecycle (SDLC) - DevOps Project**

**Project Description:**
Improve the completeness and correctness of the application design documentation, related artifacts, and dataflow diagrams for the RA system and ensure that a process is in place that aligns RA System functionality with management’s business requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Updated system documentation is necessary prior to beginning analysis of new requirements needs.
2. Standardization of process leads to work and resource efficiencies.
3. Utilization of a single tool provides a single source of truth for work tracking and documentation.
4. Opportunity exists to utilize DevOps for improved operational efficiencies. | 1. Implement Agile/Scrum processes for managing and tracking all RA development work and documentation in DevOps.
2. Update current RA business process and system documentation to establish the baseline for future state enhancements.
3. Enter, track, and prioritize all in-progress and planned work items in DevOps.
4. Build an initial release plan focusing on the implementation of immediate enhancements to be completed by current Scrum teams.
5. Support the requirements gathering and planning for the incremental mobile-friendly modernization effort. | 1. CONNECT documentation may again become outdated.
2. System functionality may not align with business needs.
3. Software License Costs: Acquisition of additional DevOps licenses are required. |
### .NET and ORM Upgrade Project

**Project Description:**
This project establishes a solid architectural basis in support of the continuous modernization by upgrading the RA application to the latest version of the .Net Framework and defining a new architecture based on .Net Core and Web API framework for the modernized RA application. This project also upgrades the Object Relational Mapping software to the most current version.

**Duration:** 6 months  
**Benefits:**
1. Improved support posture due to working with a supported version of the .Net framework and ORM library  

**Key Activities:**
1. Update the RA application to use the latest version of the .Net Framework  
2. Update the data access library to the latest version  

**Risks and Constraints:**
1. Potential regression in terms of functionality or performance due to the upgrades

### SOA and API Layer Project

**Project Description:**
This project establishes a solid architectural basis in support of the continuous modernization by defining a new architecture based on .Net Core and a service-oriented architecture for the modernized RA application.

**Duration:** 6 months  
**Benefits:**
1. Improved scalability due to the service-oriented architecture allowing independent scaling of each service  
2. Clear direction for the CX/UX modernization  

**Key Activities:**
1. Prepare an inventory of desired services based on the existing API capabilities  
2. Identify any other architectural requirements such as Enterprise Service Bus or API Gateway usage  
3. Document the resulting architectural standard for enforcement during the CX/UX modernization  
4. Develop a proof of concept implementation that demonstrates all architectural components

**Risks and Constraints:**
1. Coordination with the CX/UX requirements is needed to ensure services are in place to support the desired customer and user experience  
2. Architectural requirements must be identified for the System Software and Integration procurement
### Rules Engine Project

#### Project Description:
This project will move RA system business rules into a user-visible and user-maintainable business rules engine. This will allow both maintaining business rules and developing new business rules without requiring code changes and subsequent deployments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 6 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. New RA programs can be established much faster</td>
<td>1. Procure a business rules engine product</td>
<td>1. Performance may be degraded in situations where the current business rule implementation has been highly optimized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Implementation of business rules will be consolidated in situations where they may have been implemented differently</td>
<td>2. Inventory a subset of business rules to validate suitability</td>
<td>2. Determining the actual business rules may require reverse-engineering source code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Development effort required to both establish and maintain the RA application will be reduced</td>
<td>3. Migrate the selected subset of business rules implemented in the RA application to the business rule engine</td>
<td>3. Consolidation of business rule implementations could result in inaccurate historical data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Business rules will be more readily accessible to facility both auditing and troubleshooting</td>
<td>4. Perform regression testing to ensure the rules have been migrated successfully</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Utilize the business rules engine for all remaining modernization efforts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# System and Software Integration Procurement Project

**Project Description:**
This project is to procure the contractual services of a third-party System and Software Integration (SSI) services provider with experience in strategic planning, design, development, and integration for large multi-component system modernization efforts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Duration:</strong> 3 months</th>
<th><strong>Benefits:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Key Activities:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Risks and Constraints:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. SSI service providers bring resources across all necessary disciplines required to manage and deliver on large system development and integration projects.</td>
<td>1. Utilize scope of work charters and the governance model developed in this document, and additional scope of work requirements developed by DEO, to submit an RFO for SSI services.</td>
<td>1. Ability of Department procurement office to handle two procurements in parallel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Select the SSI vendor and on-board in parallel with initiation of the RA modernization project start date planned for 7/1/21.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) Procurement Project

**Project Description:**
This project is to procure the contractual services of a third-party consulting firm with experience in conducting IV&V assessments to provide these services for the RA modernization and mobile-responsive software transformation project. In accordance with section 287.056, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and 60GG-2 Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) IV&V is required for all projects that have total project costs of $10 million or more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 3 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                    | 1. IV&V provides objective and proactive risk identification and assessment. | 1. Utilize scope of work charters and the governance model developed in this document, and additional scope of work requirements developed by DEO, to submit an RFQ for IV&V services.  
2. Select the IV&V vendor and on-board in parallel with initiation of the RA modernization project start date planned for 7/1/21. | 1. Multiple procurements conducted in parallel could impact the other procurement project scope, schedule, and cost. |
### Incremental CX/UX Mobile-Responsive Software Transformation Project

#### Project Description:
An agile and incremental approach will be utilized to ensure that business process optimization is incorporated into the transformation activities for each of the four functional modules within scope of the CX/UX project. Modules to be optimized and transformed include Initial Claims, Continued Claims, Core Claims and Claim Status, Employers, and Third Party Administrators.

#### Duration:
18 months

#### Benefits:
1. Ensuring that business process improvements are documented prior to determining functional system change needs.
2. Ensuring that business requirements align with functional and CX/UX requirements before initiating transformation.
3. Ensuring that appropriate work and resource estimates are determined prior to submitting an updated IV-B.
4. Improved stability, reliability, and maintainability of the application.
5. Improved Reemployment Assistance service to Florida Citizens.
6. Predictable maintenance cost for the application.

#### Key Activities:
1. Review current state documentation.
2. Work with program areas to define and prioritize business process optimization (BPO) requirements.
3. Work with program areas to define functional requirements changes to align with BPO requirements.
4. Work with program areas and citizens to define and prioritize CX/UX requirements.
5. Work with technology areas to estimate work required to implement BPO, functional, and CX/UX requirements.
6. Provide work estimates to modernization leadership to submit updated IV-B for RA system transformation.
7. Populate and prioritize the backlog of work needed to complete the modernization.
8. Allocate the work into fixed duration sprints.
9. At the completion of each sprint, validate successful completion through both testing and demonstrations with the program areas.
10. Reprioritize the backlog as needed to ensure maximum value is delivered to the program areas while still meeting the modernization goals.

#### Risks and Constraints:
1. Business requirements not in sync with system functionality.
2. Funding availability.
3. Stopping the incremental modernization when not complete could result in significantly degraded maintainability due to the need to essentially support two applications using two different software architectures and platforms.
4. Desire by program areas for enhancements to legacy components could detract from modernization efforts.
### RA Contact Us Project

**Project Description:**
“RA Contact Us” includes the development of a front-end website that is a one stop site for citizens/claimants to find answers to commonly asked questions and to enable easy navigation through all RA processes and related documentation. Phase one of this project is limited to informational and navigational web page content development. Phase two of this project includes citizen master data management and data analytics to ensure that citizens have a complete view of all of their current and historical information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 6 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note: 6-month duration includes the web front end; the data management and analytics effort would be part of the data engineering and master data management projects.</td>
<td>1. Single location to get direction. 2. Consolidated citizen records. 3. Streamlined Quality Assurance process. 4. Improved CX/UX.</td>
<td>1. Gather requirements for the look and feel of Contact Us. 2. Gather requirements for the content for Contact Us. 3. Design the look and feel and navigational paths. 4. Build the web pages and manage site content.</td>
<td>1. Further planning is needed to refine the scope of this project and the scope of the CX/UX transformation project to ensure that functionality is separated into unique modules rather than duplicated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Strategic Planning Office (SPO) Project

**Project Description:**
The Strategic Planning Office consists of the project managers that manage projects within the Modernization Program. The SPO enables DEO to maintain focus and direction across all projects within the program. The SPO serves as the single point of contact for budget, schedule, scope, and status reporting. A critical role and function of the SPO is to ensure that approved projects effectively engage stakeholders and maintain a high level of efficient, coordinated, and productive collaboration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 6 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note: 6-month duration includes the establishment of the Modernization Program and Project Management Plan as well as transfer of knowledge to the DEO SPO team.</td>
<td>1. Single location to get direction. 2. Consolidated citizen records. 3. Streamlined Quality Assurance process. 4. Improved CX/UX.</td>
<td>1. Acquire the services of 1 Senior PM. 2. Establish the project management plan (PMP) for the Modernization Program. 3. Transition of PMP documentation to DEO SPO team. Note: The Modernization Program PMP adheres to PM requirements established in 6oGG-1 F.A.C.</td>
<td>1. Further planning is needed to refine the scope of this project and the scope of the CX/UX transformation project to ensure that functionality is separated into unique modules rather than duplicated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Data Warehouse Project

**Project Description:**
Establish a cloud-hosted data warehouse designed for reporting purposes. The warehouse will establish a single source of truth for customers, be independent of batch cycles, and maintain historical transactions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 12 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                     | 1. Once new reporting solution is in place, improved reporting performance.  
2. Once new reporting solution is in place, reduced load on the production database resulting in improved performance.  
3. Improved database scalability to better accommodate seasonal reporting needs.  
4. Data standardization resulting in a clear and consistent representation of system data. | 1. Design the data warehouse based on expected reporting and data analytics needs.  
2. Analyze CONNECT to identify invalid or inconsistent data that could affect reporting.  
3. Perform data cleansing to correct invalid or inconsistent data.  
4. Develop loading processes to transfer data from the CONNECT database to the data warehouse. | 1. Funding Availability.  
2. Incorrect data due to delay in data transfer.  
3. Incorrect data due to defect in data transformation rules. |

### Reporting Project

**Project Description:**
Rewrite all system reports using the data warehouse as a source of reporting data.
### Reporting Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration:</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12 months | 1. Improved reporting performance.  
2. Reduced load on the production database resulting in improved performance. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Evaluate reporting tools to determine if the current reporting tool is appropriate or if another is needed.  
2. Rewrite all reports with the data warehouse as the data source.  
3. Test by comparing reports generated by the business units against reports generated from the data warehouse. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Funding availability.  
2. Incorrect data due to defect in report logic. |

### Archival and Purge Project

**Project Description:**
Establish a process to archive and purge data in both the production database and file store.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration:</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12 months | 1. Reduced storage costs.  
2. Improved data access performance.  
3. Improved stability due to operation within database platform capacity. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Determine the criteria for selecting data that can be purged.  
2. Establish archive storage.  
3. Archive and purge database storage.  
4. Archive and purge file storage. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Inaccurate purging could incur legal liability.  
2. Inaccurate purging could result in incorrect reporting. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Master Data Management and Interoperability Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Description:</strong> Create a Department data catalog and data dictionary to enable standardization of data elements and interoperability across business units and other Departments per Florida Digital Services (FLDS) 282.206 F.S. requirements. A second phase of this project (in year 2) may include the development and deployment of APIs to an enterprise API management platform.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 12 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note: initial 6 months is to produce the catalog and dictionary and identify potential data sources for shared APIs. Additional duration required to develop and deploy APIs is dependent on scope of required APIs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Benefits are to the state of Florida Departments and Citizens in overall de-duplication and sharing of data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Department benefits in potential reduction in public record requests work resulting from shared open data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Collaborate with FLDS to verify requirements for the data catalogs and data dictionary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Produce a catalog of data sources per defined FLDS format and identify potential data sources for sharing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Produce a data dictionary to define database tables and fields in support of common interoperable data formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Design, develop, and deploy the APIs necessary to make shared data available to consuming entities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Required as part of FLDS statutory requirements; may be dependent on the implementation of an enterprise API service by FLDS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Funding may be necessary to remediate any downstream maintenance projects affected by utilization of new or updated data sources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Security Architecture Review Services Project

**Project Description:**
Application security architecture services will help ensure the application, underlying platform, and associated operations and development processes meet modern application security standards. Incorporating appropriate security controls from early in the application and system development lifecycle ensures security is inherent to the application and avoids incurring significant risk and major costs from rework needed to meet security and compliance needs later.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Six months, starting in year one.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Improved security.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cost avoidance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Procure services to assess, consult, and review proposed application design, architecture, platform, tools, security controls, anti-fraud capabilities, system hardening, access management, and secure development and operations practices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Funding availability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Identity Management and Access Control Project

### Project Description:
Acquire and integrate a cloud-based multi-factor authentication service for utilization by all users of the system. This project includes the updating of identity management policies and the migration of existing user accounts to the new service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Duration:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Benefits:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12 months    | 1. Improved confidence that access is appropriate to need.  
              2. Removal of unnecessary and duplicated users and roles. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Key Activities:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Audit security policies involving identity management and access control.  
  2. Audit conformance to security policies involving identity management and access control.  
  3. Review roles, permissions, and user assignments.  
  4. Identify duplicated users and roles.  
  5. Provide guidance to perform remediation of the current configuration to remove unnecessary or duplication users and roles. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Risks and Constraints:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Funding availability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Security Architecture Audit Services Project

#### Project Description:
This technical audit will consist of a system, platform, application, and network hardening review, including a penetration testing engagement with scope involving, at a minimum, all application user and administrative interfaces, a sampling of all application environments and tiers, critical application infrastructure, access management platform, and staff resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: Six months, starting in year two.</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Improved security.</td>
<td>1. Procure contractor to engage with DEO staff, gathering all necessary information for execution of the audit and determining scope and rules of engagement.</td>
<td>1. Funding availability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Cost avoidance/better cost predictability.</td>
<td>2. Contractor executes review and penetration test per agreed-upon scope, following best practice techniques.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Risk reduction.</td>
<td>3. Contractor provides deliverables to include methodology, findings, recommendations, and high-level priorities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8 Conclusion and Next Steps

There is no “silver bullet” turnkey RA/UI system or IT solution for achieving organizational agility and creating a sustainable culture of continuous modernization. The goal of continuous modernization is not an end point, but an ongoing journey. It is a journey that will require a transformation of institutional vision, commitment, effort, and discipline.

Due to the pace of technology advancement and the fluidity of citizen and employer RA needs, the modernize and freeze approach is not sustainable. The initiatives and projects recommended in this document address the immediate need to improve RA system performance and usability while establishing the architectural framework and processes necessary to implement future business process and technology change efficiently and effectively.

The next step in this project is the completion of a final report with a summary of the findings, analysis, and recommendations of this project and the finalization of the Schedule IV-B for modernization of the RA system. The IV-B includes many components of the project covered in this and previous deliverables, as well as additional analysis including cost/benefit, return on investment, risk assessment, project management, governance, and other tools to demonstrate due diligence in this planning effort.
9 Appendix

9.1 Federal Regulations

This section includes summaries and reference links for federal and state regulations that drive the RA business processes and system functionality.

Federal Unemployment Tax Act 26 U.S.C. Ch. 23

The Federal Unemployment Tax Act (or FUTA, I.R.C. Ch. 23) is a United States federal law that imposes a federal employer tax used to help fund state workforce agencies. Employers report this tax by filing an annual Form 940 with the Internal Revenue Service. In some cases, the employer is required to pay the tax in installments during the tax year.

FUTA covers a federal share of the costs of administering the unemployment insurance (UI) and job service programs in every state. In addition, FUTA pays one-half of the cost of extended unemployment benefits (during periods of high unemployment) and provides for a fund from which states may borrow, if necessary, to pay benefits.

Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. Ch. 7

The Federal Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. Ch. 7, defines the use of available funds, amounts made available for the purpose of assisting the states in the administration of their unemployment compensation laws, payments to states, computation of amounts, state law provisions required, judicial review process, demonstration projects authorized, and grants to states for reemployment services and eligibility assessments.

Employee Benefits Title 20 C.F.R

The U.S Department of Labor, Title 20 C.F.R., Parts 601-625, defines the requirements for employment and training administration and the unemployment compensation eligibility requirements. Part 640 defines the standards for benefit payment promptness, and Part 650 defines the standards for appeal promptness.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

WIOA ensures that employment and training services provided by state core programs are coordinated and complementary so that job seekers acquire skills and credentials that meet employers’ needs. Every state must develop and submit a four-year strategy, in the form of a single unified strategic plan for core programs, for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, and meeting the workforce needs of employers.
9.2 State Regulations

This section includes summaries and reference links for Florida statutes and rules that drive the business requirements and objectives, as well as the technology, data, and security architecture for the RA system.

Reemployment Assistance Statutory Requirements

Chapter 443, Florida Statutes, codifies Florida legislative requirements for the RA program. The short title for Chapter 443 is Reemployment Assistance Law.

Chapter 443, Florida Statutes, Requirements outline the following:

- 443.012 – Reemployment Assistance Appeals Commission
- 443.091 – Benefit eligibility conditions
- 443.101 – Disqualification for benefits
- 443.111 – Payment of benefits
- 443.1113 – RA Claims and Benefits Information System

Section 443.1113 (2), Florida Statutes, Business Objectives - In advance of the RA system implementation project in 2010, section 443.1113, Florida Statutes, was codified to define business requirements and objectives for the RA Claims and Benefits Information System.

Section 443.1113 (2), Florida Statutes, outlines the following Business Objectives:

- Reduce paper processes and enhance existing automated workflows
- Enable self-service access to claimant and employer information and federal and state reporting
- Comply with all requirements established in federal and state law for reemployment assistance
- Integrate with the DOR statewide unified tax system that collects reemployment assistance taxes

Reference Link: 443 F.S.

Emergency Orders

COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Executive Order 20-52, signed on March 1, 2020 by Governor DeSantis, granted state agencies the right to suspend the provisions of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business, if strict compliance with the provisions of the statute, order, or rule would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency. This includes, but is not limited to, the authority to suspend any and all statutes, rules, ordinances, or orders which affect leasing, printing, purchasing, travel, and the condition of employment and the compensation of employees.
The Department executed Emergency Order 20-011 on March 20, 2020, Emergency Order 20-014 on March 26, 2020, and Emergency Order 20-016 on March 31, 2020, all of which suspend certain provisions of regulatory statutes that may prevent, hinder, or delay necessary actions to assist Florida’s Reemployment Assistance Program.

Emergency Order 20-055 was signed on December 4, 2020 with the purpose of suspending the work registration and the work search requirements for claimants due to COVID-19. The suspension was applied retroactively for RA claims filed the week beginning March 15, 2020, and remain in effect through December 26, 2020. Emergency Order 20-060 modifies 20-055 such that the suspensions remain in effect through February 27, 2021.

The initial Executive Order signed by Governor DeSantis and all subsequent Department emergency orders signed by the Department’s Executive Director are referenced below.

Reference Link: [Governor DeSantis Executive Order 20-52](#)
Reference Link: [DEO Emergency Order 20-060 (the most recent emergency order issued; references all prior emergency orders issued pursuant to Executive Order 20-52)](#)

**Project Management and Oversight**

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-1 establishes project management standards when implementing Information Technology (IT) projects. State of Florida Agencies must comply with these standards when implementing all IT projects. Cabinet Agencies must comply with these standards when implementing IT projects that have a total cost of $25 million or more and that impact one or more other agencies pursuant to section 282.0051(13)(a), Florida Statutes.

60GG-1 Requirements outline the following:

- 60GG-1.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions.
- 60GG-1.002 Project Risk and Complexity (R&C) Assessment
- 60GG-1.003 Project Initiation Phase Requirements by R&C Category
- 60GG-1.004 Project Planning Phase Requirements by R&C Category
- 60GG-1.005 Project Execution Phase Requirements by R&C Category
- 60GG-1.006 Project Monitoring and Controlling Requirements by R&C Category

Reference Link: [60GG-1, F.A.C.](#)
Reference Link: [282.0051, F.S.](#)

**Florida Cybersecurity Standards**

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-2, also referred to as Florida Cybersecurity Standards (FCS) establishes minimum standards to be used by state of Florida Agencies to secure IT resources. The FCS consist of five high-level functions: Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover. These functions support lifecycle management of IT risk. The functions identify underlying key categories and subcategories for each function. Subcategories contain specific IT controls. Section 282.318 Florida Statutes, requires that a security plan be maintained, and submitted annually to Department of Management Services (DMS) by July 31.
60GG-2 Requirements outline the following:

- 60GG-2.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 60GG-2.002 Identify (Asset Management, FIPS Classifications, and Risk Assessment)
- 60GG-2.003 Protect (Identity Management, Data Security, Awareness and Training)
- 60GG-2.004 Detect (Event Monitoring and Detection Processes)
- 60GG-2.005 Respond (Communications, Analysis, Mitigation, Improvement)
- 60GG-2.006 Recover (Planning, Communications, Improvements)

Reference Link: [60GG-2, F.A.C.](#)
Reference Link: [282.318, F.S.](#)

Data Center Operations

DMS is responsible for developing and implementing cost-recovery mechanisms that recover the full direct and indirect cost of services through charges to applicable customer entities. Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-3 documents the State Data Center (SDC) cost-recovery methodology, including the process for cost estimation, invoicing, and reconciliation. Customer entities are required to make the SDC aware of any changes in anticipated utilization by May 31 and November 30 annually pursuant to section 282.206, Florida Statutes.

60GG-3 Requirements outline the following:

- 60GG-3.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 60GG-3.002 Physical Access and Security
- 60GG-3.004 Service Requests and Approvals
- 60GG-3.007 Budgeting and Accounting; State Data Center Cost-Recovery Methodology

Reference Link: [60GG-3, F.A.C.](#)
Reference Link: [282.206, F.S.](#)

Cloud Computing

Section 282.206, Florida Statutes, requires state agencies to show a preference for cloud computing services that minimize or do not require the purchasing, financing, or leasing of state data center infrastructure when cloud-computing solutions meet the needs of the agency, reduce costs, and meet or exceed the applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and standards for information technology security. Section 282.206., Florida Statutes, requires that each agency develop a strategic plan to address its inventory of applications located at the state data center. The plan must be submitted annually to DMS, the Executive Office of the Governor, and the chairs of the legislative appropriations committee by October 15.

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-4 is designed to further state agency implementation of the cloud-first policy as provided in Section 282.206, Florida Statutes. 60GG-4 includes requirements for Florida state agencies to produce formal cloud procurement and contractual procedures, cloud financial controls and processes, and cloud security and risk mitigation strategies. 60GG-4 further requires that a
security assessment be conducted for the implementation of each cloud service, which will contain data classified as moderate or higher based on the data classification of FIPS Publication No. 199, and consider the potential risk of breach of data deployed in the cloud.

6oGG-4 Requirements outline the following:

- 6oGG-4.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 6oGG-4.002 Cloud Procurement and Contractual Elements
- 6oGG-4.003 Cloud Financials
- 6oGG-4.004 Cloud Security and Risk Mitigation Strategy

Reference Link: [282.206, F.S.](#)
Reference Link: [60GG-4, F.A.C.](#)

Identity Management

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 6oGG-5 rule is designed to ensure that Identity Management (IDM) Services provide secure, reliable, and interoperable mechanisms for authenticating the identity of devices, application services, and users that consume state information and application resources. 6oGG-5 extends, and further specifies, the Identity Management, Authentication, and Access Control requirements defined in Florida Cybersecurity Standards Rule section 60GG-2.003.

Each agency is required to perform and maintain an assessment that documents the gaps between requirements of the IDM rule and existing IDM services, applications, architectures and capabilities currently in place. At a minimum, the assessment must: identify any plans, target dates, and resources necessary to achieve compliance with each requirement of the IDM rule, and document any compensating controls or risk acceptance for requirements that are not applicable or cannot be met.

6oGG-5 Requirements outline the following:

- 6oGG-5.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 6oGG-5.003(1) Assessment (Inventory all IDM services utilized, identify primary IDM services)
- 6oGG-5.003(2) Interoperability (Protocol and data format standards for IDM services)
- 6oGG-5.003(3) Privacy (Data minimization, retention, and disposal)
- 6oGG-5.003(4) Security (Data integrity, token control, MFA, key management, security logs)

Reference Link: [60GG-5, F.A.C.](#)

Interoperability and Data Management

Section 282.0051, Florida Statutes, establishes the powers, duties, and functions of the Florida Digital Services (FLDS) within DMS. The FLDS is created within DMS to propose innovative solutions that securely modernize state government, including technology and information services, to achieve value through digital transformation and interoperability, and to fully support the cloud-first policy as specified in section 282.206 Florida Statutes.
Specific functions of the FLDS related to interoperability include the development of an enterprise architecture that acknowledges the unique needs of entities within the enterprise, supports the cloud-first policy, and addresses how information technology infrastructure may be modernized to achieve cloud-first objectives.

The FLDS is further responsible for the development of standards that support the creation and deployment of an application programming interface to facilitate integration throughout the enterprise and standards necessary to facilitate a secure environment of data interoperability that is compliant with the enterprise architecture.

Specific functions of the FLDS related to data management include, not later than October 1, 2021, the creation of a comprehensive indexed data catalog in collaboration with the enterprise that lists the data elements housed within the enterprise and the legacy system or application in which these data elements are located. Further, the FLDS will develop and publish, not later than October 1, 2021, in collaboration with the enterprise, a data dictionary for each agency that reflects the nomenclature in the comprehensive indexed data catalog.

Section 282.201, Florida Statutes, Interoperability and Data Management requirements outline the following:

- 282.201(1)(b) Enterprise Architecture
- 282.201(3)(a) Enterprise Data Catalog
- 282.201(3)(b) Enterprise Data Dictionary
- 282.201(3)(c) Enterprise API Solution or Service
- 282.201(3)(d) Enterprise Interoperability Standards

Reference Link: 282.0051, F.S.
SCHEDULE IV-B FOR
RA IT MODERNIZATION
For Fiscal Year 2021-22

February 26, 2021

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
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I. Schedule IV-B Cover Sheet

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency: Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Name: Reemployment Assistance (RA) Services Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2021-22 LBR Issue Code: 36201C0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency Contact for Schedule IV-B (Name, Phone #, and E-mail address): Garrick Wright, 850.245.7344, <a href="mailto:Garrick.Wright@deo.myflorida.com">Garrick.Wright@deo.myflorida.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AGENCY APPROVAL SIGNATURES**

I am submitting the attached Schedule IV-B in support of our legislative budget request. I have reviewed the estimated costs and benefits documented in the Schedule IV-B and believe the proposed solution can be delivered within the estimated time for the estimated costs to achieve the described benefits. I agree with the information in the attached Schedule IV-B.

**Agency Head:**  
Printed Name: Dane Eagle, Executive Director  
Date:

**Agency Chief Information Officer (or equivalent):**  
Printed Name: Edward L. Wynn, Chief Information Officer  
Date:

**Budget Officer:**  
Printed Name: William S. Currie, Jr., Chief Financial Officer  
Date:

**Planning Officer:**  
Printed Name: Adrienne Johnston, Director of Division of Workforce Services  
Date:

**Project Sponsor:**  
Printed Name: Brian McManus, Chief of Staff  
Date:

**Schedule IV-B Preparers (Name, Phone #, and E-mail address):** Garrick Wright, 850.245.7344, Garrick.Wright@deo.myflorida.com
Documentation Requirements

The type and complexity of an IT project determines the level of detail an agency should submit for the following documentation requirements:

- Background and Strategic Needs Assessment
- Baseline Analysis
- Proposed Business Process Requirements
- Functional and Technical Requirements
- Success Criteria
- Benefits Realization
- Cost Benefit Analysis
- Major Project Risk Assessment
- Risk Assessment Summary
- Current Information Technology Environment
- Current Hardware/Software Inventory
- Proposed Technical Solution
- Proposed Solution Description
- Project Management Planning

Compliance with s. 216.023(4)(a)10, F.S. is also required if the total cost for all years of the project is greater than or equal to $10 million.

A description of each IV-B component is provided within this general template for the benefit of the Schedule IV-B authors. These descriptions and this guidelines section should be removed prior to the submission of the document.

Sections of the Schedule IV-B may be authored in software applications other than MS Word, such as MS Project and Visio. Submission of these documents in their native file formats is encouraged for proper analysis.

The Schedule IV-B includes two required templates, the Cost Benefit Analysis and Major Project Risk Assessment workbooks. For all other components of the Schedule IV-B, agencies should submit their own planning documents and tools to demonstrate their level of readiness to implement the proposed IT project. It is also necessary to assemble all Schedule IV-B components into one PDF file for submission to the Florida Fiscal Portal and to ensure that all personnel can open component files and that no component of the Schedule has been omitted.

Submit all component files of the agency's Schedule IV-B in their native file formats to the Office of Policy and Budget and the Legislature at IT@LASPBS.STATE.FL.US. Reference the D-3A issue code and title in the subject line.
II. Schedule IV-B Business Case – Strategic Needs Assessment

A. Background and Strategic Needs Assessment

Purpose: To clearly articulate the business-related need(s) for the proposed project.

1. Business Need

During the COVID-19 response period, an unprecedented volume of services and program benefits were requested and provided by DEO’s Reemployment Assistance (RA) Bureau. The impact to RA workload resulting from the economic crisis in response to COVID was pervasive nationwide. Many of Florida’s RA services were negatively impacted, with issues ranging from inability to establish a claim to inability to talk to program staff, and delays in the provision of RA benefits. While the system supporting RA was never intended, designed, or implemented to support the workload it experienced during the COVID-19 period, the increased load exposed weaknesses in the RA system and business processes.

The historic efforts of DEO staff were supported by a seven-year old system that required immediate technology investment to meet the sudden surge in demand for program benefits. The following substantial changes were implemented during 2020 to address the unprecedented demand for program services:

- Additional staff augmentation personnel
- Pooling of staff resources from a number of partner agencies
- Implementation of 72 dedicated web servers and load balancing in the cloud
- Implementation of a cloud-based Customer Portal and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to accept initial claims submissions
- Expansion of Contact Center staffing and acquisition of additional Contact Center technology licenses
- Additional software including Identity Proofing Services and a Virtual Waiting Room

![Figure 1: Budget Request Composition](image)

The base IT budget for the RA system is approximately $12 million. During the 2020 emergency response, approximately $39 million in emergency funding was utilized to implement the above staff augmentation, hardware, and software changes. As a result of the emergency spend, there is a recurring funding need within this budget request for fiscal year 2021-22 of approximately $29.3 million dollars. The recurring $29.3 million dollars is requested for inclusion in base budget starting in fiscal year 2021-22, resulting in new base budget of $41.3 million.
Modernization projects that were initiated pre-pandemic were placed on hold due to the focus directed at handling the increased demands. The modernization projects recommended and prioritized within this document collectively represent the RA Modernization Program and represents the funding need established within this budget request for fiscal year 2021-22 of approximately $32.9 million. Project costs for FY 2022-23 are $40.4 million.

An update to this Schedule IV-B in the fall of 2021 is anticipated to refine future year budget requirements and maintenance costs. Base budget and ongoing maintenance costs will be re-evaluated post-COVID and in advance of each fiscal year’s annual budget request. Additional information on the scope of the projects within the Modernization Program are available in the technology planning and Cost/Benefit sections of this document.

The following list identifies the key architectural and cost data points for the modernization program:

- Business Process and Customer Experience (CX) Transformation project represents the highest cost.
- Cloud Migration project represents the second highest cost, and most foundational modernization effort.
- Software architecture modernization is a pre-requisite to the CX Transformation project.
- All projects are scheduled to complete by the end of fiscal year 2022-2023.
- The total two-year modernization cost is approximately $73 million.
- Human Resources are the largest cost (61% of total) then software (27%), and hardware (12%).
- Maintenance costs are expected to decrease beginning in fiscal year 2023-2024.

2. Guiding Principles

The RA Modernization Program will embrace the following guiding principles throughout the improvement of RA service implementation efforts:

- **Enable**: Enable citizens to complete processes by ensuring that system functionality is secure, easy to use, and intuitive.
- **Fulfill**: Ensure citizen RA transactions can be and are completed at or above documented and regularly reported upon target performance metrics.
- **Assist**: Ensure that citizens have timely access to contact and help resources.
- **Improve**: Embrace a culture of continuous improvement with specific focus on transcending organizational boundaries, engaging end-users, and innovating RA services.
- **Secure**: Secure data access via industry standard authentication capabilities.
- **Govern and Manage**: Govern and manage an inventory of business processes, documentation, data, technologies, and capabilities in support of enterprise reuse and interoperability.
- **Optimize**: Optimize services by utilizing cloud-based scaling and pricing models to maximize performance and minimize operational costs.

3. Business Objectives

*NOTE: For IT projects with total cost in excess of $10 million, the business objectives described in this section must be consistent with existing or proposed substantive policy required in s. 216.023(4)(a)10, F.S.*

This section contains a clear articulation of business goals as defined by the Division of Workforce Services in the 2021-22 Long Range Program Plan (LRPP), and the objectives associated with achieving progress toward each goal as expressed by the Department. Objectives were developed as a result of lessons learned in 2020. The subsequent recommendations and project summaries provided in this document support continuous improvement and promote progress in achieving one or more business objectives.

1. **Goal: Improve organizational agility and create a sustainable culture of continuous improvement.**
   2. Objective: Adjust hiring, retention, and compensation policies accordingly.
   3. Objective: Implement a governance process that incorporates both top down and bottom up input.
2. **Goal: Achieve workforce and RA national prominence.**
   1. Objective: Meet or exceed current Quality Assurance performance metrics.
      - LRPP measure 2.2.6: Percent of RA benefits paid accurately meets or exceeds 90%\(^1\).
   2. Objective: Meet or exceed current Claims Processing performance metrics.
      - LRPP measure 2.2.7: Percent of RA first payments paid timely meets or exceeds 87%\(^2\).

3. **Goal: Reduce operating costs.**
   1. Objective: Establish baseline costs for fiscal year 2021-22 RA and recurring costs resulting from the COVID-19 response.
   2. Objective: Estimate RA costs through fiscal year 2025-26 to include RA system modernization costs.

**B. Baseline Analysis**

*Purpose: To establish a basis for understanding the business processes, stakeholder groups, and current technologies that will be affected by the project and the level of business transformation that will be required for the project to be successful.*

1. **Current Business Process(es)**
   Functional business processes supported by CONNECT include the following:
   - Claims Processing, including the Wage Determination Unit and Benefits Integrity Unit
   - Adjudication
   - Appeals
   - Contact Center
   - Quality Assurance and Training

The customer-facing process flow for RA Benefits is illustrated below in Figure 2: Customer-Facing RA Business Processes.

---

\(^1\) This measure reflects the accuracy of processing Reemployment Assistance benefits paid by conducting random samples of claims filed using guidelines established by USDOL, including benefits paid in terms of overpayments and underpayments.

\(^2\) This measure reflects the processing of Reemployment Assistance percentage of all first payments made within the timeliness requirement established by the USDOL, UI Performance Core Measures. This is also necessary to compare the results to the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Performance core measures.
Figure 2: Customer-Facing RA Business Processes

Reemployment Assistance Process Flow

Contact Center
(Supports all RA Business Processes)

Initial Claim Filing
Authentication
Wage Determination
Monetary Reconsideration
Adjudication

Payment
Benefits Integrity*

Payment
Benefits Integrity*

Non-Payment

Appeals**

Non-Payment

* As a general rule, functions performed by the Business Integrity Unit follow a payment of program benefits. Preventive functions such as fraud detection and investigation can occur without any payment of benefits.

** The Contact Center provides support for all functional business units within the Bureau, but calls relating to the merits or substance of an appeal are routed to authorized staff within the Appeals Unit.
The responsibilities and activities currently performed in each of the functional business units are described below.

**Claims Processing, including the Wage Determination Unit and Benefits Integrity Unit**

Individuals who file for RA program (unemployment) benefits with the State of Florida are referred to as claimants. Employers for whom the claimants previously worked are referred to as employers. Generally, claimants can file an automated claim for RA benefits as a first-time claimant if they have not filed for RA benefits before or as a repeat claimant if they have previously filed for RA benefits. When filing a claim for an existing claimant, the claimant is guided through an automated series of questions, messages, screens, and forms to enter required information in the system to complete the claim application. In addition, CONNECT is designed to verify the identity of claimants as part of the completion of a claim application. Once a claim application has been completed in CONNECT by the claimant, notice of claims (claim notices) are distributed to employers. A monetary determination is then issued indicating whether and in what amount a claimant is monetarily eligible for benefits based on the claimant’s wages during the base period of the claim.

Depending on the nature of the claim and the data entered by the claimant, CONNECT may generate one or more claim issues. The Department uses the term “claim issue” to represent that any such issues will need to be reviewed or resolved before a claimant is considered eligible to receive benefit payments.

**Wage Determination Unit**

The Wage Determination Unit investigates claimant wages by reviewing the information provided from CONNECT and through contacting employers. If DEO staff finds issue with the information reported within CONNECT, the Department of Revenue (DOR) is contacted to investigate. Once the correct wages are determined, Department staff updates the information in CONNECT and issues a redetermination.

The Wage Determination Unit also investigates the claimant’s base period employment based on receipt of a request for monetary reconsideration from Claims Intake or the claimant.

Activities undertaken in the Wage Determination Unit include the following:

- Requests for wage verification
- Reviewing tax screens and wage report responses
- Sending claimant proof of employment request
- Sending employer letter requesting wage information
- Issuing redeterminations
- Initiating investigations if unable to verify employment

Special Programs Unit activities include the following:

- Short Term Compensation
- Combined Wage Claims from other states
- Federal and Military Claims

The review of claim issues is referred to as “adjudication” and the resolution of claim issues for eligibility is referred to as a “determination.”

**Benefits Integrity Unit**

The Benefit Integrity Unit performs functions related to wage audits, investigations of fraud and overpayments, recovery of program funds (due to fraud and/or overpayments) and oversight of the Special Payment Unit. Processes performed in each of these four areas are listed below.

1. **Wage Audits**

Processes related to Wage Audits include, but are not limited to the following:

- DEO/DOR crossmatch of earnings
- Establish non-fraud and fraud overpayments
- Redetermination of overpayment
- Earning corrections
- Appeals
2. Investigations of Fraud and Overpayments

Investigations of fraud and overpayments are initiated based upon information on overpayments obtained from processed cross-matches, non-monetary determinations, appeals decisions and Bureau conducted audits within CONNECT.

Processes related to investigation include but are not limited to the following:

- RA fraud overpayment investigations for recoupment and prosecution
- RA identity theft investigations and support for prosecution
- In-person identity verification
- Escalated Benefit Payment Control (BPC) mailbox/hotline tip investigations
- Escalated deceased claimant investigations
- Escalated incarcerated claimant investigations
- Fraudulent payments/hijacked claims

3. Recovery of Program Funds

Sources from which program funds may be recovered include but are not limited to the following:

- Treasury Offset Program
- Collection Agency
- Florida Lottery
- Small Claims Court
- Interstate Reciprocal Overpayment Recovery Arrangement (IRORA)

4. Special Payments Unit (oversight)

Processes related to the oversight of the Special Programs Unit include but are not limited to the following:

- Child support
- 1099G’s
- Unpinned debit cards
- Internal Revenue Service
- Payment issues
- Claims cancellation
- Veterans Affairs request
- Deceased claimant issuance of benefits
- 1099G’s on fraudulent claims
- Voucher certifications
- Earning corrections

Adjudication

Nonmonetary claim issues are automatically or manually created in CONNECT when circumstances are presented that are potentially disqualifying. These issues can either be auto-adjudicated based on pre-defined business logic within CONNECT, or manually handled by an Adjudicator. An example of an issue which is currently auto-adjudicated occurs when an employer has informed the Department of a layoff due to a lack of work. Once a claimant has been determined monetarily eligible, non-monetary issues are adjudicated. After reviewing the available facts, the Adjudicator may be required to contact one or more parties to gather additional information and rebuttals prior to issuing a quality determination based on state UI law. Nonmonetary determinations have the potential to affect the claimants’ past, present, or future benefits. Once a determination is processed, the claimant and affected employers will then receive copies of the non-monetary determination.

Non-monetary determinations relate to eligibility factors such as:
• Ability and availability issues
• Separation issues
• Earnings reported incorrectly
• Refusal of work issues
• New hire return to work issues (created when CONNECT cross-matches with the DOR “New Hire” database)

Appeals

Claimants may appeal any adverse monetary or non-monetary benefit determinations, and employers have the right to appeal adverse non-monetary or charge-related benefit determinations to which they are a party.

If a determination is provided that adversely affects a claimant or employer, the affected party may file an appeal regarding eligibility, qualification, experience benefit charges, child support deductions, overpayment, special programs eligibility and/or fraud. Appeals are heard and decided by appeals referees. When an appeal is filed, the Office of Appeals must provide an opportunity for an administrative hearing providing all due process rights and in compliance with Florida’s administrative code, evidence rules, and applicable rules of procedure. Pertinent files and documents must be made available to all parties. Following each hearing, a written decision is issued establishing findings of fact and conclusions of law with a ruling affirming, reversing or modifying the determination. The written decision can be appealed to the Reemployment Assistance Appeals Commission (RAAC) and then to a Florida District Court of Appeal (DCA).

Employers may also file appeals on determinations of their tax liability tax rate and benefit reimbursement. For each tax appeal, the Office of Appeals provides the opportunity for an administrative hearing and holds a hearing providing all due process rights and in compliance with Florida’s administrative code, evidence rules, and rules of procedure. Following each hearing, a written recommended order is issued establishing recommended findings of fact and conclusions of law with a recommended ruling affirming, reversing or amending the determination. A Final Order is then issued based on the recommended order and any filed exceptions. Final Orders in these cases may be appealed directly to the DCA.

RA Contact Center

In addition to general information made available by the Department through the CONNECT webpage on the DEO website and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sections (Claimant FAQs (New) - FloridaJobs.org), the RA contact center receives calls routed from Interactive Voice Response (IVR) menu options to contact center representatives based on the nature of the caller’s inquiry. Calls can relate to questions seeking general information or questions related to the status of a specific claim. A majority of calls processed at the primary contact center site, located in Orlando, Florida, are calls received from individual claimants inquiring about the status of a new or continuing claim. In addition to claim status inquiries, contact center representatives also process address changes, provide payment information relating to a specific claim, reset claimant Personal Identification Numbers (PIN), and place a “Stop” on payments if a claimant has returned to work.

Prior to the COVID-19 period beginning in March 2020, Contact Center volumes fell within an average of 25,000 attempted calls per week. During the COVID-19 period, the maximum number of calls attempted in a single day exceeded 1.1 million. The maximum attempted daily call volume to the contact center during the COVID-19 claims period was more than 200 times the previous daily average or an increase of nearly 22,000%.

Quality Assurance

Although not customer-facing, the Quality Assurance Unit performs a broad and varied range of essential business functions that are not performed by other functional units elsewhere within the Bureau. Those various functions include, reporting required by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), management reports and audits, records requests, central mail intake, SME oversight for functional requirements development, testing and maintenance of CONNECT, oversight of a self-service task force driving improvements in Customer Experience, programmatic and quality training, and federally-required Benefit Accuracy Measurement, including Benefits Data Validation and Benefits Timeliness and Quality of non-monetary determinations.

A listing of activities performed within each functional area within the Quality Assurance Unit is provided below.

Federal Required Reporting and Management Reports/Audits:
- Responsible for submitting 36 core federal reports required by USDOL
- Reports are used for economic statistics, allocating RA administrative funding based on state workload, measuring state claimant eligibility criteria and performance in providing benefits, and accounting for fund utilization
- Coordinating, managing, and providing statistical data and program information
- Manage the State Quality Service Plan (SQSP)
- Serve as RA liaison for all business units during Federal, State, or internal audits
- Coordinate and provide audit responses for the Department to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) or other relevant party

**Records Requests:**
- Responsible for handling records requests received for employer or claimant records, which are received by phone, fax, or email
- Responsible for processing any request payments received and delivery to DEO Financial Management

**Central Mail Intake:**
- Responsible for receiving and processing all the RA Program’s incoming mail
- Open, sort, and prep mail for scanning
- Mail received via certified, priority, courier, or overnight is logged and processed as time sensitive
- Returned mail is separated from regular mail and then returned to the originating unit or scanned and indexed to the appropriate workflow
- Preparation and scanning of documents into the document management tool for indexing to the appropriate workflows in CONNECT
- Process faxed documents

**SME Oversight for functional requirements development, testing and maintenance of CONNECT:**
- Oversight for all development work, testing, and maintenance for CONNECT
- Responsible for the development and coordination of a statewide training plan and change management activities for RA
- Manage all internal and external communications regarding programmatic changes or initiatives
- Responsible for the development and maintenance of all RA documentation and correspondence
- Responsible for changes or updates to the RA benefits website, CONNECT, and the program’s Intranet site

**Oversees a Self-Service Task Force driving improvements in Customer Experience (CX):**
- Captures and reviews the “Voice of the Customer” in order to identify areas for improvement
- Drafts projects and business changes aimed at improving the customer experience and/or creating efficiencies
- Ensures the Department’s front-line staff participate in development through the use of focus groups across the program
- Benchmarks initiatives and projects against other states and industry experts, when possible
- Reviews and develops content using plain language guidelines
- Assists in requesting, developing, testing, and deploying new technology
- Supports other units with unique requests as needed (e.g. drafting communication for claimants and employers)

**Programmatic and Quality Training:**
- Develop, schedule, and perform programmatic training sessions to improve quality of the RA Program
- Supervise technical training for staff
- Conduct orientation sessions for recently hired staff
- Create brochures and training materials
- Conduct statewide RA programmatic training for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) as needed

**Benefit Accuracy Measurement:**
• Federally required unit that provides the basis for assessing accuracy of RA benefits payments and
  accuracy of benefits denied
• Assess improvements in program accuracy and integrity
• Conduct performance reviews to determine federal and state quality standards

Benefits Data Validation:
• Validates reported workload data, identifies and addresses discrepancies, and reports findings to USDOL
• Assesses the accuracy of reported counts, the validity of the counts, and that the correct information is
  being counted
• A required activity assessing accuracy of RA Benefits required reports used to measure performance and
  allocate RA benefits administrative funding

Benefits Timeliness and Quality:
• Responsible for completing federally required quarterly reviews of nonmonetary determinations which
  provides USDOL with data needed to help assess an aspect of the state’s RA operational performance
• Responsible for completing weekly reviews of a defined sample of nonmonetary determinations, based on
  the federal Benefits Timeliness and Quality (BTQ) model, which provides reports and documents trends to
  assist adjudication management with training tools for individualized coaching
• Responsible for assisting with reviews of RA operations with regards to monitoring first payment
  promptness performance
• Responsible for maintaining the RA Adjudication Manual and other related resource materials such as
  procedural instructions and memorandums
• Conduct statewide RA quality training, primarily for fact-finding and adjudication
• Provides statewide technical assistance when needed

2. Assumptions and Constraints
• Current business processes described satisfy all federal and state legal and regulatory requirements
• The ability to modify or restructure current business processes may be materially constrained by:
  o Governing provisions of federal laws and regulations
  o Governing provisions of state laws and regulations
  o Federal funding formula for administrative funding of state UI programs
  o Supplemental state funding for program improvement costs not covered by federal funds

C. Proposed Business Process Requirements

Purpose: To establish a basis for understanding what business process requirements the proposed solution must
meet in order to select an appropriate solution for the project.

1. Proposed Business Process Requirements

The Department plans to re-engineer RA processes and technology used for initial claims, continued claims, core
claims status, user, and employer business processes. In year one, a procurement project will be initiated to obtain
the services of one or more System, Software, and Integration (SSI) service providers to further define the solution
plans and costs associated with the Modernization Program.

Once SSI staffing is on-board business process optimization (BPO) will begin. BPO will be initiated for each
module within the CX/UX Transformation project to analyze and prioritize process improvement requirements and
further refinement of the functional and technical requirements provided in Section II.D. of this document.

The scope of SSI services will include refining and executing on the Cloud Migration Plan, and planning and
executing the CX/UX Transformation project. The SSI services procurement may also include requirements to
support additional projects defined in the roadmap and project definitions provided in Section VI.C. of this
document.
The SSI service providers must ensure the existing system remains stable while providing immediate and continuous value by implementing the highest priority requirements in a phased and incremental approach. The solution must include a detailed cost assessment, architectural design, and master project schedule for the modernization of business processes, functionality, and technology architecture over a two-year duration.

2. Business Solution Alternatives

The following four options are alternatives similar to Florida system modernization efforts that have been considered in recent years and are considered for this RA IT Modernization.

1. Retain Existing System (do not modernize)
2. Custom development (modernize and enhance)
3. COTS/SaaS (utilize where feasible)
4. Other State Agency System

The recommended alternative is a combination of alternatives two and three, utilizing COTS/SaaS where feasible, while modernizing and enhancing the current RA system in situations where COTS/SaaS solutions are not feasible. A cloud-based solution that enables timely enhancements and customizations provides the best alignment of business needs with technology optimization, and flexibility moving forward.

Although business solution alternatives two through four may all be viable, the proposed approach and solution is independently supported by information received during multiple meetings with the Technology Director of the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA).

Among key observations from those meetings, it was noted that migration away from the historical data center model to a cloud environment will become a strategic imperative for all state UI programs in order to scale up or down as necessary to adjust to dramatic fluctuations in future workload demands.

The flexibility of any platform adopted to continuously evolve and adapt to changes in technology, as well as market conditions that drive demand for program services, was also observed as a necessary strategic consideration. The proposed solution set forth in this document satisfies these strategic objectives.

3. Rationale for Selection

A cloud-based solution that enables timely enhancements and customizations is the recommended alternative as it provides the best alignment of business needs with technology optimization, and flexibility moving forward. Of the four options presented in section 2 above, option one is not viable as there are both technology and business process performance and efficiency improvements required and documented in current state findings.

Based on research conducted with NASWA and other states, option four is not available as states have traditionally implemented monolithic systems with very little flexibility to adapt business requirements and rules. As state’s modernize their systems with open-standard, service-oriented technologies, there is an opportunity to implement modular, rules-based, system components that could potentially be adapted or reused by other states.

The recommended alternative is a combination of alternatives two and three, utilizing COTS/SaaS where feasible, while modernizing and enhancing the current RA system in situations where COTS/SaaS solutions are not feasible. A cloud-based solution that enables timely enhancements and customizations provides the best alignment of business needs with technology optimization, and flexibility moving forward.

4. Recommended Business Solution

NOTE: For IT projects with total cost in excess of $10 million, the project scope described in this section must be consistent with existing or proposed substantive policy required in s. 216.023(4) (a) 10, F.S.

The recommended business solution is to continue the Department’s path toward utilization of cloud-based deployment and delivery models to enable the modernization of the RA system. To fully define business process improvement, functional, and technical requirements, and to plan and execute the cloud migration and mobile-
responsive application development projects, it is recommended that the Department procure the services of one or more SSI service providers. The utilization of SSI service providers will assist in ensuring that the modernized RA system is aligned with defined business requirements, and that cost, scaling, and performance efficiencies available via cloud delivery and pricing models are realized.

D. Functional and Technical Requirements

*Purpose: To identify the functional and technical system requirements that must be met by the project.*

Include through file insertion or attachment the functional and technical requirements analyses documentation developed and completed by the agency. The module, functional, and technical requirements in tables 1 and 2 represent the capabilities that the new RA mobile-responsive software transformation project must include.

*Table 1: RA Functional Modules*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module #</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>Account Creation and Authentication</td>
<td>Benefit recipients should be able to create an account and be authenticated by the system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>Initial Claim</td>
<td>Benefit recipients should be able to submit the initial claim, upon response of successful authentication by various external and internal partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M3</td>
<td>Maintain Claim</td>
<td>Benefit recipients should be able to modify the account and demographic information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4</td>
<td>Additional Claim</td>
<td>Benefit recipients should be able to submit the additional claim as per the RA program requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M5</td>
<td>Continued Claims</td>
<td>Benefit recipients should be able to submit the continued claim as per the RA program requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M6</td>
<td>Payments &amp; overpayment verification</td>
<td>Benefit recipients should be able to verify the payments and overpayment information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M7</td>
<td>Repayments submission</td>
<td>Benefit recipients should be able to submit the repayment against the overpayment as per the RA program requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M8</td>
<td>Fact-finding submission</td>
<td>Benefit recipients should be able to submit and view the factfinding as per the RA program requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M9</td>
<td>Document Review &amp; Submission</td>
<td>Benefit recipients should be able to review and submit the documents as per the RA program requirements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### RA Functional and Technical Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement #</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>Provide Customer and Employer user experience strategy by proposing business process redesign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Provide the ability to host the system in the public cloud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td>Provide benefit recipients a self-service capability to create an account and complete and submit a claim for reemployment assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td>Provide benefit recipients a self-service capability to complete and submit a continued claim for reemployment assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>Provide benefit recipients a self-service capability to complete and submit an Additional claim for reemployment assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>Provide benefit recipients a self-service capability to complete and submit a maintenance claim for reemployment assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R7</td>
<td>Provide benefit recipients a self-service capability to retrieve certain pertinent information related to the claimant’s existing claim (predominately based on the most frequently called reasons from the Reemployment Assistance Contact Center).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R8</td>
<td>Provide benefit recipients a self-service capability to claim payments for approved weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R9</td>
<td>Provide benefit recipients a self-service capability to verify the fact finding and upload documents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R10</td>
<td>Provide a push notification feature to inform benefit recipients of an action required of the claimant to perform an action in the RA system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R11</td>
<td>Provide DEO leadership mobile insights into the number of users using the system, e.g. reporting on number of users resetting PINs, and number of users retrieving pertinent claim information to provide real-time data insights relating to system usage and support responsive decision-making by DEO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R12</td>
<td>Provide DEO a responsive user interface application that is cloud-based, serverless-based and scales based on actual usage of the application, i.e. DEO pays for what is used so architecture should scale horizontally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R13</td>
<td>Provide DEO an application that uses a messaging broker and caching capabilities to retrieve and use data on a real-time and incremental basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R14</td>
<td>Provide DEO the ability to customize a message on the initial screen of the multi device friendly application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R15</td>
<td>Provide the claimant the ability in real-time to reset a PIN.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### RA Functional and Technical Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement #</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R16</td>
<td>Provide the ability to integrate with the back-office RA system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R17</td>
<td>Provide the ability to queue the requests and responses using a messaging queue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R18</td>
<td>Provide the ability to integrate with external partners including but not limited to ICON, SSA, HSMV, and Employ Florida.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R19</td>
<td>Be available for at least Android and Apple devices via appropriate app download stores.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R20</td>
<td>System should have the inbuilt capability of elasticity and resilience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R21</td>
<td>Provide employers the ability to create an account and locate their information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R22</td>
<td>Provide employers the ability to respond to all inquiries regarding claimants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R23</td>
<td>Provide employers the ability to file a protest against a benefit charge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R24</td>
<td>Provide employers the ability to choose whether they receive notifications electronically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R25</td>
<td>Provide third-party agents the ability to perform RA Benefit activities on behalf of an employer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R26</td>
<td>Provide third-party representatives the ability to perform RA activities on behalf of a claimant during the appeal process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### III. Success Criteria

**Purpose:** To identify the critical results, both outputs and outcomes, that must be realized for the project to be considered a success.

**Table 3: Success Criteria Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Description of Criteria</th>
<th>How will the Criteria be measured/assessed?</th>
<th>Who benefits?</th>
<th>Realization Date (MM/YY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The current system must be able to continue meeting the demand needs demonstrated during the peak COVID unemployment periods.</td>
<td>Utilizing the established peak user sessions and transactions processed metrics from 2020.</td>
<td>Citizens/System Users</td>
<td>06/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The new system must provide process and customer experience improvement via incremental functional releases beginning in fiscal year 22-23.</td>
<td>The new solution will be tested against process and usability requirements defined in the RFQ for the SSI solution provider.</td>
<td>Citizens/System Users</td>
<td>06/23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUCCESS CRITERIA TABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Description of Benefit</th>
<th>Who receives the benefit?</th>
<th>How is benefit realized?</th>
<th>How is the realization of the benefit measured?</th>
<th>Realization Date (MM/YY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The new system must reduce operations, maintenance and support costs in the long run including the cost reduction resulting from the elimination of Tallahassee and Winter Haven Data Center costs.</td>
<td>Cost baseline required to support current system is established for fiscal year 21-22. These baseline costs will be compared against actual costs in years fiscal years 22-23 through 25-26.</td>
<td>DEO and the State of Florida</td>
<td>06/23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The new system must result in less need for call center staffing by providing improved customer self-service capabilities and streamlined support processes.</td>
<td>Cost baseline required to support current system is established for fiscal year 21-22. These baseline costs will be compared against actual costs in years fiscal years 22-23 through 25-26.</td>
<td>Citizens and RA system users, DEO and, the State of Florida</td>
<td>06/23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. Schedule IV-B Benefits Realization and Cost Benefit Analysis

A. Benefits Realization Table

*Purpose: To calculate and declare the tangible benefits compared to the total investment of resources needed to support the proposed IT project.*

For each tangible benefit, identify the recipient of the benefit, how and when it is realized, how the realization will be measured, and how the benefit will be measured to include estimates of tangible benefit amounts.

Table 4: Benefits Realization Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Description of Benefit</th>
<th>Who receives the benefit?</th>
<th>How is benefit realized?</th>
<th>How is the realization of the benefit measured?</th>
<th>Realization Date (MM/YY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Auto-scaling results in reduction in Capital costs</td>
<td>Citizens</td>
<td>Performance and Reliability</td>
<td>Comparison of actual costs for 21-22 against actual costs for 22-23</td>
<td>FY 2022-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>File storage costs will be lower in the Cloud than in on-premises data center</td>
<td>DEO and State of Florida</td>
<td>Cost Savings</td>
<td>Comparison of cost of storage per TB in state data and in cloud</td>
<td>FY 2022-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Customer savings due to reduced hours in system from improved claimant user experience</td>
<td>Citizens</td>
<td>Customer Satisfaction Increases</td>
<td>Feedback from Customers</td>
<td>FY 2023-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Benefit Description</td>
<td>Stakeholder</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Employer savings due to reduced hours in system from improved employer user experience</td>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>Customer Satisfaction Increases</td>
<td>FY 2023-2024</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Robotic Process Automation results in time savings to customer and the Department in submitting and processing claims</td>
<td>Citizens</td>
<td>Customer Satisfaction Increases</td>
<td>FY 2021-22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rules Engine will reduce development costs</td>
<td>DEO</td>
<td>Decrease in number of locations in the system where business rules are maintained</td>
<td>Average time to update a business rule currently compared with average time once rules engine is in place</td>
<td>FY 2023-24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA)

Purpose: To provide a comprehensive financial prospectus specifying the project’s tangible benefits, funding requirements, and proposed source(s) of funding.

The chart below summarizes the required CBA Forms which are included as Appendix A on the Florida Fiscal Portal and must be completed and submitted with the Schedule IV-B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Description of Data Captured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBA Form 1 - Net Tangible Benefits</td>
<td>Agency Program Cost Elements: Existing program operational costs versus the expected program operational costs resulting from this project. The agency needs to identify the expected changes in operational costs for the program(s) that will be impacted by the proposed project. Tangible Benefits: Estimates for tangible benefits resulting from implementation of the proposed IT project, which correspond to the benefits identified in the Benefits Realization Table. These estimates appear in the year the benefits will be realized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBA Form 2 - Project Cost Analysis</td>
<td>Baseline Project Budget: Estimated project costs. Project Funding Sources: Identifies the planned sources of project funds, e.g., General Revenue, Trust Fund, Grants. Characterization of Project Cost Estimate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| CBA Form 3 - Project Investment Summary   | Investment Summary Calculations: Summarizes total project costs and net tangible benefits and automatically calculates:  
  - Return on Investment  
  - Payback Period  
  - Breakeven Fiscal Year  
  - Net Present Value  
  - Internal Rate of Return |

V. Schedule IV-B Major Project Risk Assessment

Purpose: To provide an initial high-level assessment of overall risk incurred by the project to enable appropriate risk mitigation and oversight and to improve the likelihood of project success. The risk assessment summary identifies the overall level of risk associated with the project and provides an assessment of the project’s alignment with business objectives.

NOTE: All multi-year projects must update the Risk Assessment Component of the Schedule IV-B along with any other components that have been changed from the original Feasibility Study.

The Risk Assessment Tool and Risk Assessment Summary are included in Appendix B on the Florida Fiscal Portal and must be completed and submitted with the agency’s Schedule IV-B. After answering the questions on the Risk Assessment Tool, the Risk Assessment Summary is automatically populated.
VI. Schedule IV-B Technology Planning

Purpose: To ensure there is close alignment with the business and functional requirements and the selected technology.

A. Current Information Technology Environment

1. Current System

The RA system and supporting middleware software is currently deployed on a combination of physical, on-premises servers and cloud deployed web servers managed exclusively in-house. Most of the physical infrastructure is original from go-live in 2013, is at the end of its life cycle, and was due for replacement by 2020. In terms of application architecture, the RA system has a tiered architecture consisting of presentation, business, data, and integration tiers. This is augmented by integrated authorization, workflow, document storage, and document generation components. Additionally, the help desk utilizes an integrated IVR system to aid in assisting claimants.

a. Description of Current System

DEO administers Florida’s RA Program which provides temporary, partial wage replacement benefits to qualified individuals who are out of work through no fault of their own. The Program’s primary goals are to connect claimants to reemployment services, pay RA benefits to qualified workers in an accurate and timely fashion, provide an efficient first level appeals process to claimants and employers, and promptly register employers liable for the payment of RA taxes or the reimbursement of claims.

The program operates as a federal/state partnership. The administrative framework is established in federal law, and state law governs program operations. States are responsible for determining program eligibility and providing funds to cover RA benefit payments, while the federal government is responsible for providing states with funds to administer the program.

The RA program is funded by two separate payroll taxes paid by employers – one paid to the federal government as required by the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) and one paid to the state as required by Chapter 443, Florida Statutes. State tax proceeds can only be used for RA benefit payments but the federal tax proceeds, in addition to funding extended benefits, may also be used for other designated programs that support workforce services. While the majority of the FUTA allocation from the federal government covers the RA program’s administrative costs, these funds are also used to support workforce programs including labor market statistics, veterans’ programs and labor exchange services. The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) funds the administrative costs of the RA program.

In accordance with State law, the Department launched the Reemployment Assistance Claims and Benefits Information System, CONNECT, on October 15, 2013. CONNECT is a fully integrated web-based claims management system that encompasses work activities performed under RA Assistance functional business processes. Claimants, employers, and third-parties can access information about filed claims and communicate with Department staff through CONNECT. Five categories of users can access CONNECT:

1. Claimants
2. Employers
3. Department staff
4. Third-Party Representatives / Third-Party Administrators
5. Other State agency staff with authorized access

CONNECT interfaces with various State and Federal systems as needed to process and report data applicable to the RA Program.

b. Current System Resource Requirements

This section provides an overview of CONNECT including, a detailed description and the area of focus for
improvement of system hardware, network, and storage assets. Figure 3: CONNECT Architecture provides overview of the main components of CONNECT as well as the interaction between these components.

**Figure 3: CONNECT Architecture**

![CONNECT Architecture Diagram]

**Hardware**

CONNECT utilizes processing hardware to support both the main CONNECT application as well as the Treasury Offset Program (TOP), Digital Appeals Recording System (DARS), Fraud Initiative Rating and Rules Engine (FIRRE), IVR, database, and reporting/analytics. Integration services within the CONNECT application provide communications to other CONNECT components as well as external agencies. The bulk of this hardware is hosted on-premises at DST with web servers for the CONNECT application being hosted in the cloud.

Table 5: CONNECT Hardware outlines the processing hardware characteristics for all system components.

**Table 5: CONNECT Hardware**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONNECT Component</th>
<th>Hosting</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Used for providing the user interface components. Scaled from 4 pre-COVID to 72 at the peak of COVID. Scaling is a manual process. This component was shifted from on-premises to cloud hosting in response to COVID.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT Component</td>
<td>Hosting</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Used for exposing API to the user interface components. Scaled from 4 pre-COVID to 60 at the peak of COVID. Scaling is a manual process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for document generation software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for document storage and workflow software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for email software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for running batch processes including processes that integrate with external systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>SaaS</td>
<td>Software as a Service offering hosted externally and used to queue initial claims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Hosting for Robotic Process Automation (RPA) software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for session management software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasury Offset Program</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Used for hosting the user interface components.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasury Offset Program</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Used for running batch processes including processes that integrate with external systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Recording Software</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for Appeals Hearing Recording software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud Detection Application</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for fraud detection software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVR</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for IVR software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting/Analytics</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for report generation software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting/Analytics</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for Dashboards and analytics software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Clustered hardware used to host Oracle database software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for TOP software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Hosting for cloud database software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Hosting for the FIRRE database software.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Network

The CONNECT application is currently utilizing a hybrid network infrastructure with a portion of the infrastructure located at the DST state data center in Tallahassee, Florida, and a portion hosted in the Azure East-US region datacenters in Ashburn, Virginia.

Table 6: CONNECT Network Components provides additional details on the system’s network components.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network Component</th>
<th>Hosting</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal Load Balancer</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Balances load that is distributed to application servers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Load Balancer</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Balances load that is distributed to web servers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloud Connectivity</td>
<td>Cloud, DST, and MFN</td>
<td>Connects DEO internal network to the cloud network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewall</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Blocks potentially malicious incoming web traffic to cloud-hosted assets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewall</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Blocks potentially malicious incoming web traffic to on-premises assets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Network</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Provides connectivity within the DEO internal network.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Storage

Table 7: CONNECT Storage Components outlines the major database storage components within CONNECT used to store both structured and unstructured data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONNECT Component</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Hosting</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>File storage</td>
<td>Store all files used by CONNECT components in the DST</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>No archival process in place and the volume is stretching capabilities of some CONNECT components such as the document management application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database storage</td>
<td>Database storage for all CONNECT components in the DST</td>
<td>DST</td>
<td>No archival process in place and the volume is stretching capabilities of some CONNECT storage components.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloud storage</td>
<td>Database and file storage</td>
<td>Cloud</td>
<td>Software only, no database.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Software

Table 8: CONNECT Software Components provides an inventory of current software supporting RA and CONNECT. For each business capability of CONNECT a description of supporting software and the current status
**Table 8: CONNECT Software Components**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONNECT Component</th>
<th>Business Capability</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>Authentication</td>
<td>Used for non-claimant authentication and authorization. Claimant authentication and authorization is performed with a custom process using the database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information Technology Service Management (ITSM)</td>
<td>The ITSM tool is used for tracking work initiated from business units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source Code Control</td>
<td>Used for source code control and tracking work within the development teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Application Performance Monitoring</td>
<td>Assesses the performance of CONNECT components.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT Application</td>
<td>CONNECT Web Application</td>
<td>This application is implemented using an older version of Microsoft .Net Framework and the Web Forms user interface technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web Server</td>
<td>Delivers web pages and API responses to both end users and API consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Document generation</td>
<td>Provides the capability to generate correspondence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Batch Management and Scheduling</td>
<td>Schedules and initiate batch jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workflow and Document Storage</td>
<td>Tracks the flow of work within the CONNECT application and stores any documents generated from and received into the CONNECT application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Object Relational Mapping</td>
<td>Development tool that facilitates database access and updates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Queue CONNECT Access</td>
<td>Provides the equivalent of a waiting room to ‘throttle’ end user sessions and support maintaining a manageable system load and avoid negative consequences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robotic Process Automation</td>
<td>Automates repetitive claims processing that does not require human intervention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initial Claims Processing</td>
<td>Offloads initial claims processing from the CONNECT application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Session Management</td>
<td>Tracks and stores user information (session state) after the user logs into the CONNECT application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Document Conversion</td>
<td>Converts documents between various format such as Word or PDF.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Redacted File Viewing</td>
<td>Redacts and displays documents that have redactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNECT Component</td>
<td>Business Capability</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Recovery Application</td>
<td>TOP Web Application</td>
<td>User interface for tracking interaction with the IRS for recovering overpayments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web Server</td>
<td>Delivers web pages and API responses to both end users and API consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Software</td>
<td>DARS Application</td>
<td>Records appeals hearings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web Server</td>
<td>Delivers web pages and API responses to both end users and API consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud Detection Application</td>
<td>FIRRE Application</td>
<td>Flags potentially fraudulent claims activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web Server</td>
<td>This component delivers web pages to fraud detection application users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVR</td>
<td>Contact Center Services</td>
<td>IVR guides claimants with getting support as well as provides claimant information to support staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web Server</td>
<td>Delivers web pages and API responses to both end users and API consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting/Analytics</td>
<td>Report generation</td>
<td>Generates both internally and externally consumed reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dashboards and analytics</td>
<td>Provides dashboards and visualizations of CONNECT data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dashboards and analytics</td>
<td>Provides dashboards and visualizations of CONNECT data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database</td>
<td>Data Management and Storage</td>
<td>Used to store structured data for CONNECT components other than TOP and TFS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data Management and Storage</td>
<td>These applications are used to stored structured data for the TOP and TFS applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File Storage</td>
<td>This component is used to store files for CONNECT components.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. **Current System Performance**

The total number of claims submitted in 2012 that drove the metrics for initial 2013 system performance tests was 744,755. In the nine-month period from March 2020 – November 2020, there were over four million initial RA claims submitted, or six times the number of claims submitted in 2012. In response to the unprecedented demand, substantial infrastructure and human capital investments were made in 2020 including the addition of 72 new IaaS web servers and a new SaaS customer portal to handle all initial claim submissions.

As a result of these investments, the current system is capable of handling up to 80,000 concurrent user sessions without performance degradation. The total number of user sessions per month peaked at 1,179,234 for the month of April 2020. Total sessions dropped to approximately 628,601 per month in August 2020. Completion of the Cloud Migration project will result in additional compute and storage capabilities to further improve the elasticity and resiliency of the system.

During the Cloud Migration project it is recommended that new peak demand requirements above the peak demand levels that occurred during the COVID emergency be established within the Cloud Service Provider (CSP) Service Level Agreements (SLAs). CSP SLA’s should include documentation of server and storage capacity and scalability requirements, transaction response time requirements, and service resiliency requirements.
Service resiliency requirements and metrics typically include Mean-Time to System Recovery (MTSR) and Mean-Time to Switchover (MTSO). MTSR is the time expected for a resilient system to perform a complete recovery from a service failure. MTSO is the time expected to complete a switchover from a severe failure to a replicated instance in a different geographical region.

During the CX/UX Transformation project, it is recommended that performance testing, at both normal, peak, and beyond peak (stressed) workloads, be completed and that CSP SLA’s be fully evaluated to ensure that performance expectations and metrics are being met or exceeded in advance of CX/UX Mobile-Responsive deployment.

2. Information Technology Standards

Project Management and Oversight

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-1 establishes project management standards when implementing Information Technology (IT) projects. State of Florida Agencies must comply with these standards when implementing all IT projects. Cabinet Agencies must comply with these standards when implementing IT projects that have a total cost of $25 million or more and that impact one or more other agencies pursuant to section 282.0051(13)(a), Florida Statutes.

60GG-1 Requirements outline the following:

- 60GG-1.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions.
- 60GG-1.002 Project Risk and Complexity (R&C) Assessment
- 60GG-1.003 Project Initiation Phase Requirements by R&C Category
- 60GG-1.004 Project Planning Phase Requirements by R&C Category
- 60GG-1.005 Project Execution Phase Requirements by R&C Category
- 60GG-1.006 Project Monitoring and Controlling Requirements by R&C Category

Reference Link: 60GG-1, F.A.C.
Reference Link: 282.0051, F.S.

Florida Cybersecurity Standards

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-2, also referred to as Florida Cybersecurity Standards (FCS) establishes minimum standards to be used by state of Florida Agencies to secure IT resources. The FCS consist of five high-level functions: Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover. These functions support lifecycle management of IT risk. The functions identify underlying key categories and subcategories for each function. Subcategories contain specific IT controls. Section 282.318 Florida Statutes, requires that a security plan be maintained and submitted annually to Department of Management Services (DMS) by July 31.

60GG-2 Requirements outline the following:

- 60GG-2.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 60GG-2.002 Identify (Asset Management, FIPS Classifications, and Risk Assessment)
- 60GG-2.003 Protect (Identity Management, Data Security, Awareness and Training)
- 60GG-2.004 Detect (Event Monitoring and Detection Processes)
- 60GG-2.005 Respond (Communications, Analysis, Mitigation, Improvement)
- 60GG-2.006 Recover (Planning, Communications, Improvements)

Reference Link: 60GG-2, F.A.C.
Reference Link: 282.318, F.S.

Data Center Operations

DMS is responsible for developing and implementing cost-recovery mechanisms that recover the full direct and indirect cost of services through charges to applicable customer entities. Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-3 documents the State Data Center (SDC) cost-recovery methodology including the process for cost estimation, invoicing, and reconciliation. Customer entities are required to make the SDC aware of any changes in...
anticipated utilization by May 31 and November 30 annually pursuant to section 282.206, Florida Statutes.

60GG-3 Requirements outline the following:
- 60GG-3.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 60GG-3.002 Physical Access and Security
- 60GG-3.004 Service Requests and Approvals
- 60GG-3.007 Budgeting and Accounting; State Data Center Cost-Recovery Methodology

Reference Link: 60GG-3, F.A.C.
Reference Link: 282.206, F.S.

Cloud Computing

Section 282.206, Florida Statutes, requires state agencies to show a preference for cloud computing services that minimize or do not require the purchasing, financing, or leasing of state data center infrastructure when cloud-computing solutions meet the needs of the agency, reduce costs, and meet or exceed the applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and standards for information technology security. Section 282.206, Florida Statutes, requires that each agency develop a strategic plan to address its inventory of applications located at the state data center. The plan must be submitted annually to DMS, the Executive Office of the Governor, and the chairs of the legislative appropriations committee by October 15.

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-4 is designed to further state agency implementation of the cloud-first policy as provided in Section 282.206, Florida Statutes. 60GG-4 includes requirements for state of Florida agencies to produce formal cloud procurement and contractual procedures, cloud financial controls and processes, and cloud security and risk mitigation strategies. 60GG-4 further requires that a security assessment be conducted for the implementation of each cloud service, which will contain data classified as moderate or higher based on the data classification of FIPS Publication No. 199, and consider the potential risk of breach of data deployed in the cloud.

60GG-4 Requirements outline the following:
- 60GG-4.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 60GG-4.002 Cloud Procurement and Contractual Elements
- 60GG-4.003 Cloud Financials
- 60GG-4.004 Cloud Security and Risk Mitigation Strategy

Reference Link: 282.206, F.S.
Reference Link: 60GG-4, F.A.C.

Identity Management

Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C., rule 60GG-5 rule is designed to ensure that Identity Management (IDM) Services provide secure, reliable, and interoperable mechanisms for authenticating the identity of devices, application services, and Users that consume state information and application resources. 60GG-5 extends, and further specifies, the Identity Management, Authentication, and Access Control requirements defined in Florida Cyber Security (FCS) Rule section 60GG-2.003.

Each agency is required to perform and maintain an assessment that documents the gaps between requirements of the IDM rule and existing IDM services, applications, architectures and capabilities currently in place. At a minimum, the assessment must perform the following: identify any plans, target dates, and resources necessary to achieve compliance with each requirement of the IDM rule, and document any compensating controls or risk acceptance for requirements that are not applicable or cannot be met.

60GG-5 Requirements outline the following:
- 60GG-5.001 Purpose and Applicability; Definitions
- 60GG-5.003(1) Assessment (Inventory all IDM Services utilized, Identify Primary IDM Services)
- 60GG-5.003(2) Interoperability (Protocol and Data Format Standards for IDM Services)
- 60GG-5.003(3) Privacy (Data Minimization, Retention, and Disposal)
• 60GG-5.003(4) Security (Data Integrity, Token Control, MFA, Key Management, Security Logs)

Reference Link: 60GG-5, F.A.C.

**Interoperability and Data Management**

Section 282.0051, Florida Statutes, establishes the powers, duties, and functions of the Florida Digital Services (FL [DS]) within DMS. The FL [DS] is created within DMS to propose innovative solutions that securely modernize state government, including technology and information services, to achieve value through digital transformation and interoperability and to fully support the cloud-first policy as specified in section 282.206 Florida Statutes.

Specific functions of the FL [DS] related to interoperability include the development of an enterprise architecture that acknowledges the unique needs of entities within the enterprise, supports the cloud-first policy, and addresses how information technology infrastructure may be modernized to achieve cloud-first objectives.

The FL [DS] is further responsible for the development of standards that support the creation and deployment of an application programming interface to facilitate integration throughout the enterprise and standards necessary to facilitate a secure environment of data interoperability that is compliant with the enterprise architecture.

Specific functions of the FL [DS] related to data management include, not later than October 1, 2021, the creation of a comprehensive indexed data catalog in collaboration with the enterprise that lists the data elements housed within the enterprise and the legacy system or application in which these data elements are located. Further, the FL [DS] will develop and publish, not later than October 1, 2021, in collaboration with the enterprise, a data dictionary for each agency that reflects the nomenclature in the comprehensive indexed data catalog.

Section 282.201, Florida Statutes, Interoperability and Data Management requirements outline the following:

• 282.201(1)(b) Enterprise Architecture
• 282.201(3)(a) Enterprise Data Catalog
• 282.201(3)(b) Enterprise Data Dictionary
• 282.201(3)(c) Enterprise API Solution or Service
• 282.201(3)(d) Enterprise Interoperability Standards

Reference Link: 282.0051, F.S.

**B. Current Hardware and/or Software Inventory**

*NOTE: Current customers of the state data center would obtain this information from the data center.*

See Section V.A.1.b for the hardware and software inventory. Note that the hardware was initially used in production in 2013 and reached end-of-life in 2020. Also, note that a portion of the current hardware is hosted in the cloud.

**C. Proposed Technical Solution**

This section provides alternatives considered, the rationale for selecting an alternative and the recommended technical solution.

**1. Technical Solution Alternatives**

As previously noted, the following four options are alternatives similar state of Florida system modernization efforts have considered in recent years and are considered for this RA IT Modernization.

1. Retain Existing System (do not modernize)
2. Custom development (modernize and enhance)
3. COTS/SaaS (utilize where feasible)
4. Other State Agency System
2. Rationale for Selection

Of the four options presented above, option one is not viable as there are both technology and business process performance and efficiency improvements required and documented in current state findings. Option four is also not available based on research conducted with other states.

The recommended alternative is a combination of alternatives two and three, utilizing COTS/SaaS where feasible, while modernizing and enhancing the current RA system in situations where COTS/SaaS solutions are not feasible. A cloud-based solution that enables timely enhancements and customizations provides the best alignment of business needs with technology optimization, and flexibility moving forward.

This alternative is the result of the timely and high performing implementation of a SaaS Customer Portal during 2020 and the desire to continue leveraging cloud service provider delivery and pricing models to ensure cost efficiencies, and ease of maintenance moving forward. To ensure that an optimized cloud service and delivery model is utilized to deliver business process improvements, functional enhancements, a mobile-responsive application, and modernized architectural efficiencies, the services of a System, Software, and Integration (SSI) service provider will be procured during year one of the modernization program.

3. Recommended Technical Solution

The modernization program represents a number of projects that will be implemented across a two-year duration. Two of the largest projects within the modernization effort are the cloud migration and the implementation of a custom cloud-based mobile-responsive web application. The mobile-responsive benefit recipient application will interface with the RA system which will be retained and utilized for back-office Department and Employer processes. This section illustrates and describes each of the key projects that are included within the scope of this IV-B.

The model below represents an enterprise approach to ensuring that all areas of the Modernization Program receive appropriate assessment, planning, and improvements to enable the realization of desired outcomes and goals. There are four interconnected areas, each aligned with the four key initiatives:

1. Infrastructure
2. Software
3. Data and Analytics
4. Security

Foundational to the enterprise approach is ensuring that appropriate project prioritization takes place via a defined and governed decision-making process. Also critical is the presence of an efficient process to document and maintain requirements and compare solutions in advance of implementing architectural change. Governance processes are illustrated and described in Section VII.B. of this document.
Security touches all other aspects of the pyramid from policies and procedures to security controls implemented in the infrastructure, software, and data layers.

Management of data to include standardization and de-duplication of data sources tracked in catalogs and defined in dictionaries enables cross program interoperability.

Applications that utilize open-standard, service-oriented architecture (SOA) designs, as well as APIs, to enable timely implementation of business-driven, user-experience (UX) focused services.

Implementation of modern, cloud-based infrastructure is critical to achieving agile business and technology change, efficient pricing models, and auto-scaling based on workload and demand.

This section lists the key projects that are considered to be the most important projects to initiate in year one (fiscal year 2021-22) of the modernization program. This list is ordered by associated initiative area. Further elaboration on these projects is provided in subsequent sections of this document as well as descriptions of additional projects recommended for inclusion in year two of the modernization roadmap. Project prioritizations and estimated costs should be re-evaluated in advance of the annual budget request cycle as part of a foundational governance process. Creation of a governance structure and process that aligns with specific Department and program area needs is identified as a year-one activity.

**Cloud Migration**: Complete planning for remaining migration, readiness activities, and migrate RA infrastructure from the State Data Center and Winter Haven Disaster Recovery sites to a Cloud Service Provider using an IaaS hosting model.

**Cloud Application Performance Management**: A modern approach to application performance management includes functionality like root cause analysis, custom dashboards showing key performance indicators to communicate performance at-a-glance and system monitoring with clearly defined thresholds for when remedial action must take place and defining those actions.

**Applications that utilize open-standard, service-oriented architecture (SOA) designs, as well as APIs, to enable timely implementation of business-driven, user-experience (UX) focused services.**
- **SDLC – DevOps:** Improve the completeness and correctness of the application design documentation, related artifacts, and dataflow diagrams for the RA system and ensure that a process is in place that aligns RA System functionality with management’s business requirements.

- **.NET & ORM Upgrade:** Establishes a solid architectural basis in support the continuous modernization by upgrading the RA application to the latest version of the .Net Framework and defining a new architecture based on .Net Core and Web API framework for the modernized RA application.

- **SOA and API Layer:** Establishes a solid architectural basis in support of the continuous modernization by defining a new architecture based on .Net Core and a service-oriented architecture for the modernized RA application.

- **SSI & IV&V Procurements:**
  - **SSI Procurement:** Procure the contractual services of a third-party System and Software Integration (SSI) services provider with experience in strategic, planning, design, development, and integration for large multi-component system modernization efforts.
  - **IV&V Procurement:** Procure the contractual services of a third-party consulting firm with experience in conducting IV&V assessments to provide these services for the RA modernization and CX/UX Transformation project.

- **Business Process Optimization:** Procure the contractual services of a third-party with experience in evaluating existing business processes and human computer interaction to identify the improvements and requirements for modernization of the RA system modules.

- **RA Contact Us:** Complete implementation of customer facing capability to provide single point of contact focused on all facets of RA claims and benefits for any customer-focused need.

- **Data Warehouse:** Establish a cloud-hosted data warehouse designed for reporting purposes.

- **Reporting:** Rewrite all CONNECT reports using the data warehouse as a source of reporting data.

- **Security Architecture Review:** Application security architecture services will help ensure the application, underlying platform, and associated operations and development processes meet modern application security standards.

- **Identity Management and User Authentication:** Audit both policies and implementation of those policies with regards to identity management and access control.
Proposed Solution Description

The timeline provided below depicts each of the 18 recommended projects in the RA Modernization Program, estimated durations, and expected project dependencies. Note, the CX/UX Mobile-Responsive project includes sub-projects for the incremental mobile-responsive development of the four RA functional modules.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (July 1 – Jun 30)</th>
<th>FY 21-22</th>
<th>FY 22-23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Software</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software Architecture Modernization</td>
<td>Incremental CX/UX Mobile-Responsive Software Transformation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDLC - DevOps</td>
<td>BPO</td>
<td>BPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.NET &amp; ORM Upgrade</td>
<td>Initial Claims</td>
<td>Continued Claims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules Engine</td>
<td>BPO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOA and API Layer</td>
<td>Core Claims/Claim Status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA Contact Us</td>
<td>BPO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning Office (SPO)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System and Software Integration (SSI) and Oversight (IV&amp;V)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data and Analytics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Warehouse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival and Purge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Architecture Review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Management and User Authentication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Architecture Audit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5: Strategic Roadmap
1. Summary Description of Proposed System

This section provides project charters for the recommended RA system modernization projects.

---

### Cloud Migration Project

**Project Description:**
Complete planning for remaining migration, readiness activities, and migration of RA infrastructure from the State Data Center and Winter Haven Disaster Recovery sites to a Cloud Service Provider using an IaaS hosting model. Included within the migration project is the selection and implementation of a new document storage solution and a new document generation solution and the transition to a cloud-based IVR solution. Once the migration is completed, focus on assessment of additional, long term, cloud costs, performance, and maintainability considerations such as utilization of pay-as-you-go models, and potential utilization of Platform as a Service (PaaS) as the long-term development and delivery model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 18 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Cloud deployment and delivery models offer on demand resource acquisition and auto-scaling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Cloud deployment and delivery models reduce or eliminate Cap-Ex and offer pay-as-you-go Op-Ex resource costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Cloud deployment and delivery models provide cost and operational efficiencies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Complete migration plan and modification of application and data layer readiness modifications in advance of migration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Complete the re-hosting and testing of the application, database, and disaster recovery infrastructure to an IaaS hosting model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Compare and implement a new document storage and workflow solution in IaaS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Compare and implement new document management and IVR solutions in IaaS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. There are application and database layer remediation or readiness modifications that must take place in advance of being “cloud-ready”. Those modifications are currently being planned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The replacement of document storage and generation components will require application layer configuration and coding changes to integrate the new solutions with the RA system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Funding availability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cloud Application Performance Management Project

Project Description:
The Department's current approach to assessing system performance is highly reactive and dependent on manual feedback mechanisms. A modern approach to application performance management includes functionality like root cause analysis, custom dashboards showing key performance indicators to communicate performance at-a-glance and system monitoring with clearly defined thresholds for when remedial action must take place and then defining those actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration:</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| One year  | 1. System of alerts to identify any noteworthy activity and approaching thresholds.  
2. Dashboards to assist in proactive monitoring of key performance indicators.  
4. Rendering of topology maps and system application networks.  
5. Root cause analysis of identified issues.  
6. Improved user experience. | 1. Gather requirements.  
2. Establish metrics that are indicative of upcoming problems rather than problems that have already occurred.  
3. Design visualizations that make metrics and thresholds easily visible, including trend analysis to support proactive action.  
4. Ensure that metrics capture inputs which would drive automatic scaling.  
5. Identify and procure a solution.  
6. Implement the solution. | 1. Funding availability. |

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### System Development Lifecycle (SDLC) - DevOps Project

**Project Description:**
Improve the completeness and correctness of the application design documentation, related artifacts, and dataflow diagrams for the RA system and ensure that a process is in place that aligns RA System functionality with management’s business requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Key Activities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Benefits</strong></th>
<th><strong>Duration:</strong> 6 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Implement Agile/Scrum processes for managing and tracking all RA development work and documentation in DevOps.</td>
<td>1. Updated system documentation is necessary prior to beginning analysis of new requirements needs. 2. Standardization of process leads to work and resource efficiencies. 3. Utilization of a single tool provides a single source of truth for work tracking and documentation. 4. Opportunity exists to utilize DevOps for improved operational efficiencies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Update current RA business process and system documentation to establish the baseline for future state enhancements.</td>
<td>2. System functionality may not align with business needs. 3. Potential regression in terms of functionality or performance due to the upgrades.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Enter, track, and prioritize all in-progress and planned work items in DevOps.</td>
<td>3. Software License Costs: Acquisition of additional DevOps licenses are required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Build an initial release plan focusing on the implementation of immediate enhancements to be completed by current Scrum teams.</td>
<td>4. Build an initial release plan focusing on the implementation of immediate enhancements to be completed by current Scrum teams.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Support the requirements gathering and planning for the incremental mobile-friendly modernization effort.</td>
<td>5. Support the requirements gathering and planning for the incremental mobile-friendly modernization effort.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Risks and Constraints:**
1. CONNECT documentation may again become outdated.
2. System functionality may not align with business needs.
3. Software License Costs: Acquisition of additional DevOps licenses are required.

### .NET and ORM Upgrade Project

**Project Description:**
This project establishes a solid architectural basis in support the continuous modernization by upgrading the RA application to the latest version of the .Net Framework and defining a new architecture based on .Net Core and Web API framework for the modernized RA application. This project also upgrades the Object Relational Mapping software to the most current version.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Key Activities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Benefits</strong></th>
<th><strong>Duration:</strong> 6 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Update the RA application to use the latest version of the .Net Framework</td>
<td>1. Improved support posture due to working with a supported version of the .Net framework and ORM library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Update the data access library to the latest version</td>
<td>2. System functionality may not align with business needs. 3. Potential regression in terms of functionality or performance due to the upgrades.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Risks and Constraints:**
1. Potential regression in terms of functionality or performance due to the upgrades.
## SOA and API Layer Project

**Project Description:**
This project establishes a solid architectural basis in support of the continuous modernization by defining a new architecture based on .Net Core and a service-oriented architecture for the modernized RA application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 6 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                    | 1. Improved scalability due to the service-oriented architecture allowing independent scaling of each service | 1. Prepare an inventory of desired services based on the existing API capabilities  
2. Identify any other architectural requirements such as Enterprise Service Bus or API Gateway usage  
3. Document the resulting architectural standard for enforcement during the CX/UX modernization  
4. Develop a proof of concept implementation that demonstrates all architectural components | 1. Coordination with the CX/UX requirements is needed to ensure services are in place to support the desired customer and user experience  
2. Architectural requirements must be identified for the System Software and Integration procurement |
|                    | 2. Clear direction for the CX/UX modernization | | |

## Rules Engine Project

**Project Description:**
This project will move RA system business rules into a user-visible and user-maintainable business rules engine. This will allow both maintaining business rules and developing new business rules without requiring code changes and subsequent deployments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 6 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                    | 1. New RA programs can be established much faster  
2. Implementation of business rules will be consolidated in situations where they may have been implemented differently  
3. Development effort required to both establish and maintain the RA application will be reduced  
4. Business rules will be more readily accessible to facility both auditing and troubleshooting | 1. Procure a business rules engine product  
2. Inventory a subset of business rules to validate suitability  
3. Migrate the selected subset of business rules implemented in the RA application to the business rule engine  
4. Perform regression testing to ensure the rules have been migrated successfully  
5. Utilize the business rules engine for all remaining modernization efforts | 1. Performance may be degraded in situations where the current business rule implementation has been highly optimized  
2. Determining the actual business rules may require reverse-engineering source code  
3. Consolidation of business rule implementations could result in inaccurate historical data |
### System and Software Integration Procurement Project

**Project Description:**
This project is to procure the contractual services of a third-party System and Software Integration (SSI) services provider with experience in strategic planning, design, development, and integration for large multi-component system modernization efforts.

**Duration:** 3 months  
**Benefits:**
1. SSI service providers bring resources across all necessary disciplines required to manage and deliver on large system development and integration projects.

**Key Activities:**
1. Utilize scope of work charters and the governance model developed in this document, and additional scope of work requirements developed by DEO, to submit an RFQ for SSI services.
2. Select the SSI vendor and on-board in parallel with initiation of the RA modernization project start date planned for 7/1/21.

**Risks and Constraints:**
1. Ability of the Department procurement office to handle two procurements in parallel.

### Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) Procurement Project

**Project Description:**
This project is to procure the contractual services of a third-party consulting firm with experience in conducting IV&V assessments to provide these services for the RA modernization and mobile-responsive software transformation project. In accordance with section 287.056, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and 60GG-2 Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) IV&V is required for all projects that have total project costs of $10 million or more.

**Duration:** 3 months  
**Benefits:**
1. IV&V provides objective and proactive risk identification and assessment.

**Key Activities:**
1. Utilize scope of work charters and the governance model developed in this document, and additional scope of work requirements developed by DEO, to submit an RFQ for IV&V services.
2. Select the IV&V vendor and on-board in parallel with initiation of the RA modernization project start date planned for 7/1/21.

**Risks and Constraints:**
1. Multiple procurements conducted in parallel could impact the other procurement project scope, schedule, and cost.
Incremental CX/UX Mobile-Responsive Software Transformation Project

**Project Description:**
An agile and incremental approach will be utilized to ensure that business process optimization is incorporated into the transformation activities for each of the four functional modules within scope of the CX/UX project. Modules to be optimized and transformed include Initial Claims, Continued Claims, Core Claims and Claim Status, Employers, and Third Party Administrators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration:</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 18 months | 1. Ensuring that business process improvements are documented prior to determining functional system change needs.  
2. Ensuring that business requirements align with functional and CX/UX requirements before initiating transformation.  
3. Ensuring that appropriate work and resource estimates are determined prior to submitting an updated IV-B.  
4. Improved stability, reliability, and maintainability of the application.  
5. Improved Reemployment Assistance service to Florida Citizens.  
2. Work with program areas to define and prioritize business process optimization (BPO) requirements.  
3. Work with program areas to define functional requirements changes to align with BPO requirements.  
4. Work with program areas and citizens to define and prioritize CX/UX requirements.  
5. Work with technology areas to estimate work required to implement BPO, functional, and CX/UX requirements.  
6. Provide work estimates to modernization leadership to submit updated IV-B for RA system transformation.  
7. Populate and prioritize the backlog of work needed to complete the modernization.  
8. Allocate the work into fixed duration sprints.  
9. At the completion of each sprint, validate successful completion through both testing and demonstrations with the program areas.  
10. Reprioritize the backlog as needed to ensure maximum value is delivered to the program areas while still meeting the modernization goals. | 1. Business requirements not in sync with system functionality.  
2. Funding availability.  
3. Stopping the incremental modernization when not complete could result in significantly degraded maintainability due to the need to essentially support two applications using two different software architectures and platforms.  
4. Desire by program areas for enhancements to legacy components could detract from modernization efforts. |
### RA Contact Us Project

**Project Description:**
“RA Contact Us” includes the development of a front-end website that is a one stop site for citizens/claimants to find answers to commonly asked questions and to enable easy navigation through all RA processes and related documentation. Phase one of this project is limited to informational and navigational web page content development. Phase two of this project includes citizen master data management and data analytics to ensure that citizens have a complete view of all of their current and historical information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 6 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Single location to get direction.</td>
<td>1. Gather requirements for the look and feel of Contact Us.</td>
<td>1. Further planning is needed to refine the scope of this project and the scope of the CX/UX transformation project to ensure that functionality is separated into unique modules rather than duplicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Consolidated citizen records.</td>
<td>2. Gather requirements for the content for Contact Us.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Streamlined Quality Assurance process.</td>
<td>3. Design the look and feel and navigational paths.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Improved CX/UX.</td>
<td>4. Build the web pages and manage site content.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** 6-month duration includes the web front end; the data management and analytics effort would be part of the data engineering and master data management projects.

### Strategic Planning Office (SPO) Project

**Project Description:**
The Strategic Planning Office consists of the project managers that manage projects within the Modernization Program. The SPO enables DEO to maintain focus and direction across all projects within the program. The SPO serves as the single point of contact for budget, schedule, scope, and status reporting. A critical role and function of the SPO is to ensure that approved projects effectively engage stakeholders and maintain a high level of efficient, coordinated, and productive collaboration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 6 months</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Single location to get direction.</td>
<td>1. Acquire the services of 1 Senior PM.</td>
<td>1. Further planning is needed to refine the scope of this project and the scope of the CX/UX transformation project to ensure that functionality is separated into unique modules rather than duplicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Consolidated citizen records.</td>
<td>2. Establish the project management plan (PMP) for the Modernization Program.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Streamlined Quality Assurance process.</td>
<td>3. Transition of PMP documentation to DEO SPO team.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Improved CX/UX.</td>
<td>Note: The Modernization Program PMP adheres to PM requirements established in 60GG-1 F.A.C.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** 6-month duration includes the establishment of the Modernization Program and Project Management Plan as well as transfer of knowledge to the DEO SPO team.
### Data Warehouse Project

**Project Description:**
Establish a cloud-hosted data warehouse designed for reporting purposes. The warehouse will establish a single source of truth for customers, be independent of batch cycles, and maintain historical transactions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 12 months</th>
<th><strong>Benefits:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Once new reporting solution is in place, improved reporting performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Once new reporting solution is in place, reduced load on the production database resulting in improved performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Improved database scalability to better accommodate seasonal reporting needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Data standardization resulting in a clear and consistent representation of system data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Activities:**
1. Design the data warehouse based on expected reporting and data analytics needs.
2. Analyze CONNECT to identify invalid or inconsistent data that could affect reporting.
3. Perform data cleansing to correct invalid or inconsistent data.
4. Develop loading processes to transfer data from the CONNECT database to the data warehouse.

**Risks and Constraints:**
1. Funding Availability.
2. Incorrect data due to delay in data transfer.
3. Incorrect data due to defect in data transformation rules.

### Reporting Project

**Project Description:**
Rewrite all system reports using the data warehouse as a source of reporting data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration: 12 months</th>
<th><strong>Benefits:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Improved reporting performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Reduced load on the production database resulting in improved performance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Activities:**
1. Evaluate reporting tools to determine if the current reporting tool is appropriate or if another is needed.
2. Rewrite all reports with the data warehouse as the data source.
3. Test by comparing reports generated by the business units against reports generated from the data warehouse.

**Risks and Constraints:**
1. Funding availability.
2. Incorrect data due to defect in report logic.
### Archival and Purge Project

**Project Description:**
Establish a process to archive and purge data in both the production database and file store.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12 months | 1. Reduced storage costs.  
2. Improved data access performance.  
3. Improved stability due to operation within database platform capacity. | 1. Determine the criteria for selecting data that can be purged.  
2. Establish archive storage.  
3. Archive and purge database storage.  
4. Archive and purge file storage. | 1. Inaccurate purging could incur legal liability.  
2. Inaccurate purging could result in incorrect reporting. |

### Master Data Management and Interoperability Project

**Project Description:**
Create a Department data catalog and data dictionary to enable standardization of data elements and interoperability across business units and other Departments per Florida Digital Services (FL[DS]) 282.206 F.S. requirements. A second phase of this project (in year 2) may include the development and deployment of APIs to an enterprise API management platform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12 months | 1. Benefits are to the state of Florida Departments and Citizens in overall de-duplication and sharing of data.  
2. The Department benefits in potential reduction in public record requests work resulting from shared open data. | 1. Collaborate with FL[DS] to verify requirements for the data catalogs and data dictionary.  
2. Produce a catalog of data sources per defined FL[DS] format and identify potential data sources for sharing.  
3. Produce a data dictionary to define database tables and fields in support of common interoperable data formats.  
4. Design, develop, and deploy the APIs necessary to make shared data available to consuming entities. | 1. Required as part of FL[DS] statutory requirements; may be dependent on the implementation of an enterprise API service by FL[DS].  
2. Funding may be necessary to remediate any downstream maintenance projects affected by utilization of new or updated data sources. |
### Security Architecture Review Services Project

**Project Description:**
Application security architecture services will help ensure the application, underlying platform, and associated operations and development processes meet modern application security standards. Incorporating appropriate security controls from early in the application and system development lifecycle ensures security is inherent to the application and avoids incurring significant risk and major costs from rework needed to meet security and compliance needs later.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration:</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Six months, starting in year one.</td>
<td>1. Improved security. 2. Managed risk/risk reduction. 3. Cost avoidance.</td>
<td>1. Procure services to assess, consult, and review proposed application design, architecture, platform, tools, security controls, anti-fraud capabilities, system hardening, access management, and secure development and operations practices.</td>
<td>1. Funding availability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Identity Management and Access Control Project

**Project Description:**
Acquire and integrate a cloud-based multi-factor authentication service for utilization by all users of the system. This project includes the updating of identity management policies and the migration of existing user accounts to the new service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration:</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>1. Improved confidence that access is appropriate to need. 2. Removal of unnecessary and duplicated users and roles.</td>
<td>1. Audit security policies involving identity management and access control. 2. Audit conformance to security policies involving identity management and access control. 3. Review roles, permissions, and user assignments. 4. Identify duplicated users and roles. 5. Provide guidance to perform remediation of the current configuration to remove unnecessary or duplication users and roles.</td>
<td>1. Funding availability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Security Architecture Audit Services Project

**Project Description:**
This technical audit will consist of a system, platform, application, and network hardening review, including a penetration testing engagement with scope involving, at a minimum, all application user and administrative interfaces, a sampling of all application environments and tiers, critical application infrastructure, access management platform, and staff resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration:</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Key Activities:</th>
<th>Risks and Constraints:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Six months, starting in year two. | 1. Improved security.  
2. Cost avoidance/better cost predictability.  
3. Risk reduction. | 1. Procure contractor to engage with DEO staff, gathering all necessary information for execution of the audit and determining scope and rules of engagement.  
2. Contractor executes review and penetration test per agreed-upon scope, following best practice techniques.  
3. Contractor provides deliverables to include methodology, findings, recommendations, and high-level priorities. | 1. Funding availability. |

**Benefits:**
1. Improved security.
2. Cost avoidance/better cost predictability.

**Key Activities:**
1. Procure contractor to engage with DEO staff, gathering all necessary information for execution of the audit and determining scope and rules of engagement.
2. Contractor executes review and penetration test per agreed-upon scope, following best practice techniques.
3. Contractor provides deliverables to include methodology, findings, recommendations, and high-level priorities.

**Risks and Constraints:**
1. Funding availability.
2. Resource and Summary Level Funding Requirements for Proposed Solution (if known)


D. Capacity Planning

(historical and current trends versus projected requirements)

Section VI.A.1.c details historical and current performance and capacity. Projected requirements are expected to decrease significantly due to the significant capacity added as a result of COVID. Once the claim volume starts to go down as the claims volume decreases, capacity can be reduced. Also moving to an auto-scaling configuration will additionally reduce needed capacity.

VII. Schedule IV-B Project Management Planning

Purpose: To require the agency to provide evidence of its thorough project planning and provide the tools the agency will use to carry out and manage the proposed project. The level of detail must be appropriate for the project’s scope and complexity.

Include through file insertion or attachment the agency’s project management plan and any associated planning tools/documents.

NOTE: For IT projects with total cost in excess of $10 million, the project scope, business objectives, and timelines described in this section must be consistent with existing or proposed substantive policy required in s. 216.023(4)(a)10, F.S.

a. Scope of RA Modernization

The vision for the modernization program is to implement immediate system performance and functional improvement needs while positioning the Department with a secure, scalable, and sustainable system architecture and agile support processes.

To realize this vision for immediate improvement and long-term sustainability, there are technology and resource investments necessary in fiscal years 2021-22 and 2022-23. These investments will result in long-term benefit to Citizens in immediate process improvement and long-term benefit to the Department in reduced system maintenance time and cost.

To ensure the most efficient and effective implementation of projects included in the modernization program, it is recommended that the Department acquire the services of a third-party SSI service provider experienced in the planning and implementation of multi-year system modernization initiatives. Modernization project teams will be comprised of a combination of Department and third-party resources.

Projects will be governed by the Department. The governance process ensures that there is an integrated process, vertically and horizontally, for requesting new projects and funding. It is further recommended that the Department acquire third-party services to support the Strategic Planning Office (SPO) and acquire third-party Independent Validation & Verification (IV&V) services to ensure that projects are executed with minimal cost and schedule variance.

The SPO serves as the single point of contact for budget, schedule, scope, and status reporting. A critical role and function of the SPO is to ensure that approved projects effectively engage stakeholders and maintain a high level of efficient, coordinated, and productive collaboration.

To ensure fiscal responsibility, the SPO and established governance will adjust operational cost needs for fiscal year 2022-2023 based on additional information that will be obtained from the cloud migration and procurement projects initiated in the first quarter of fiscal year 2021-2022. As projects complete, operational costs will shift away from managed third-party service providers, back to Department FTE and Staff Augmentation support needs.
b. Governance and Strategic Planning Office

Successful implementation of the proposed solution requires establishing a model of continuous modernization by applying a governed decision-making process. Functions critical to project success within this governance process will include measures to document and maintain requirements and compare solutions in advance of implementing architectural change. Such a process will also facilitate decision-making and manage all aspects of the modernization efforts.

The governance process ensures that there is an integrated process, vertically and horizontally, for requesting new projects and funding. Vertical integration will require receiving bottom up input on the costs and status of each project and top down prioritization and approval of prospective projects. Horizontal integration will require the internal transfer of knowledge and information between functional and operational support units to maximize effectiveness of prospective projects and mitigate against risks of unintended future consequences.

For approved projects, the SPO will serve as the single point of contact for budget, schedule, scope, and status reporting. A critical role and function of the SPO will be to also ensure that approved projects effectively engage stakeholders and maintain a high level of efficient, coordinated, and productive collaboration.

Effective collaboration is essential to the successful implementation of the proposed solution. Collaboration provides visibility to stakeholders, produces the necessary exchange of information, coordinates work efforts, and produces useful information about stakeholder needs. The SPO will establish guidelines for effectively managing collaboration with project stakeholders before, during and between projects or project phases.

The Bureau’s enterprise approach and governance structure will be developed in order to make coordinated IT decisions at an enterprise level and align business decisions with strategic objectives. Below is the proposed organizational structure.
Roles and functions within the proposed organizational governance structure will evolve over time to ensure organizational agility and continuous modernization. For the initial structure, roles, responsibilities and/or process functions should include the following:

- **Leadership Team and Governance Chair**
  - Communicate policy objectives that will drive or materially impact IT strategy
  - Receive and review communications or reports from the SPO and meet regularly with SPO
  - Make “go / no-go” decisions, provide written approvals for proposed projects, and to the extent required in a given Project Management Plan, provide approvals for individual project phases
  - Provide final approval for acceptance of all active project deliverables
  - Make recommendations to close or terminate an active project

- **Legislative Staff, OPB, DMS-FL[DS] (External Stakeholders)**

  Collaboration and coordinated interaction with external stakeholders would include the following:
  - Maintain and strengthen established relationships with divisions throughout Agency and other state or federal agencies.
  - Conduct regular meetings to facilitate collaboration, exchange information vital to project success and gather essential input. Such regular meetings might include:
    - Touchpoints – Strategic one-on-one meetings with DEO Leadership Team and Governance Chair to discuss needs and concerns
    - Project and key stakeholder meetings – Monthly (or as needed) meetings to provide regular updates or obtain feedback
    - Quarterly project update meetings – Division/Unit staff meetings to provide updates on
project progress and upcoming activities

• Independent Validation & Verification (IV&V)

IV&V is required for all projects with a total budget over all years of greater than $10 million per 216.023(4)(a)10, F.S. The selected IV&V Contractor shall perform ongoing project monitoring activities, and will review and validate issues/deficiencies/risks identified with the project. Minimally required project monitoring activities and deliverables include, but are not limited to:

- Providing an independent, objective, third-party view of project efforts with the intent of protecting the State’s interests
- Providing personnel, processes, approaches and tools to perform IV&V services for Florida information technology projects
- Performing assessments on both project and program management processes and work products
- Providing objective observations and recommendations
- Assessing and reporting overall project performance, extrapolating future project progress and success, and identifying any possible impediments to successful project completion
- Examining all project artifacts and documents to evaluate the effectiveness of the project management controls, procedures and methodology
- Assessing the effectiveness of project communication, assessing Customer involvement
- Developing performance metrics that facilitate the tracking of progress / completion of project tasks and milestones
- Reviewing all project cost and expenditure documentation and making recommendations for efficient use of funds
- Validating identified risks and issues and proposed response(s) and assessing impact to the project progress or success
- Verifying and validating the quality of project work products (deliverables)
- Reviewing statements-of-work, solicitations, and contracts to verify alignment between requirements and solicited or contracted terms
- Providing guidance and training on standards and best practices for project management
- Ensuring project teams follow required standards, including, but not limited to, Administrative Rule, Florida Statutes, and federal requirements

• DEO Workforce Services Advisory Group

- Coordinate and align RA IT projects and project activities with broader goals and objectives of DEO Workforce Services
- Conduct regular meetings to facilitate collaboration, exchange information vital to project success and gather essential input. Such regular meetings might include:
  - Touchpoints – Strategic one-on-one meetings with DEO Leadership Team and Governance Chair to discuss needs and concerns
  - Quarterly project update meetings – Periodic meetings to provide updates on project progress and upcoming activities

• RA Business Chair

- Provide oversight and input to align RA IT projects and project activities with broader goals and performance objectives of RA Business Services
- Conduct regular meetings to facilitate collaboration, exchange information vital to project success and gather essential input. Such regular meetings might include:
  - Touchpoints – Strategic one-on-one meetings with RA Program Areas and SPO to identify needs and resolve concerns
  - Quarterly project update meetings – Periodic meetings to provide updates on proposed project planning, active project progress, and upcoming activities

• Information Technology Chair
o Provide oversight and input to align RA IT projects and project activities with broader goals and support objectives of RA IT Services
o Provide management and oversight for the following work activities:
  ▪ Information architecture
  ▪ Technical architecture
  ▪ Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC) management
  ▪ Software documentation management
  ▪ SSAE 18, SOC 1 – Type 2 and SOC 2 – Type 2 reports (as may be required)
  ▪ Systems testing / UAT
  ▪ Data Security
  ▪ System Security
o Conduct regular meetings to facilitate collaboration, exchange information vital to project success and gather essential input. Such regular meetings might include:
  ▪ Touchpoints – Strategic one-on-one meetings with RA Information Technology Teams and SPO to identify needs and resolve concerns
  ▪ Quarterly project update meetings – Periodic meetings to provide updates on proposed project planning, active project progress, and upcoming activities

• RA Program Areas
  o Provide necessary input and documentation regarding functional requirements and functional specifications for RA IT projects and project activities
  o Conduct regular meetings to facilitate collaboration, exchange information vital to project success and gather essential input. Such regular meetings might include:
    ▪ Touchpoints – Strategic one-on-one meetings with RA Business Chair and SPO to identify needs and resolve concerns
    ▪ Quarterly project update meetings – Periodic meetings to provide updates on proposed project planning, active project progress, and upcoming activities

• Information Technology Teams
  o Provide necessary input and documentation regarding technical specifications for RA IT projects and project activities
  o Perform IT project tasks in accordance with the Project Management Plan and Project Schedules
  o Maintaining RAID logs for active projects and reporting problems to the Information Technology Chair; monitoring reported problems until resolved
  o Conduct regular meetings to facilitate collaboration, exchange information vital to project success and gather essential input. Such regular meetings might include:
    ▪ Touchpoints – Strategic one-on-one meetings with Information Technology Chair and SPO to identify needs and resolve concerns
    ▪ Quarterly project update meetings – Periodic meetings to provide updates on proposed project planning, active project progress, and upcoming activities

• Citizens/Users

  Through the RA Program Areas group or subgroups, planned and coordinated interaction with citizens and other system end-users would include the following actions:
  o Provide essential feedback and input regarding needs desired functionality of citizens and other system users
  o Conduct CX/UX qualitative research (e.g. focus groups or structured interviews) and quantitative research (e.g., survey tools) to gather essential design input
  o To the extent feasible, conduct meetings and leverage digital platforms to facilitate collaboration, exchange information vital to project success and gather essential user input
  o Provide project updates at regular intervals leveraging digital platforms
• 3rd Party Vendors

Oversight and management of 3rd Party Vendors will be performed by the Information Technology Teams group or subgroups. Responsibilities and functions might include the following activities:

  o Contract management and monitoring of contract deliverables
  o Project management and monitoring of project deliverables to be provided by 3rd Party Vendors
  o Maintaining RAID logs for 3rd Party Vendor performance and reporting problems to the Information Technology Chair
  o Monitoring reported problems until resolved

c. Project Management Plan and Artifacts

Appendix VII.C. contains the RA Modernization Project Management Plan (PMP) outlining the control and project execution elements that will be in place at the initiation of this project. The PMP is compliant with State of Florida project management standard rule 60GG-2 F.A.C. and includes the following sections:

• Performance Management
• Cost Management
• Schedule Management
• Quality Management
• Procurement Management
• Staffing Management
• Project Scope and Change Management
• Risk Management
• Communications Management
• Issue Management
• Decision Management

VIII. Appendices

Number and include all required spreadsheets along with any other tools, diagrams, charts, etc. chosen to accompany and support the narrative data provided by the agency within the Schedule IV-B.

a. Cost-Benefit Analysis Workbook

Note: Cost-Benefit Analysis Workbook is a separate file attached to the Schedule IV-B.
b. Risk Assessment

Note: Risk Assessment Workbook is a separate file attached to the Schedule IV-B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>RA IT Modernization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2021-22 LBR Issue Code:</td>
<td>36201C0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2021-22 LBR Issue Title:</td>
<td>PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO SUPPORT DEPARTMENT-WIDE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY NEEDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment Contact Info (Name, Phone #, and E-mail Address):</td>
<td>Garrick Wright, 850.245.7344, <a href="mailto:Garrick.Wright@deo.myflorida.com">Garrick.Wright@deo.myflorida.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Sponsor</td>
<td>Brian McManus, DEO Chief of Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>Garrick Wright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared By</td>
<td>Garrick Wright 2/15/2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Risk Assessment Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Strategy</th>
<th>Level of Project Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Least Aligned</td>
<td>Least Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least Risk</td>
<td>Least Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Aligned</td>
<td>High Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Risk</td>
<td>High Risk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project Risk Area Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Assessment Areas</th>
<th>Risk Exposure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Assessment</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Exposure Assessment</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Change Management Assessment</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Assessment</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Assessment</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Organization Assessment</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management Assessment</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Complexity Assessment</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Project Risk</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c. Project Management Content

Project Management

DEO will use a project management methodology based on the project requirements and department experience with similar engagements. Predictability, accountability, and flexibility are key elements that must be embraced by the overall project management approach to ensure DEO’s satisfaction and project success. Successful project management must include active and visible leadership, multiple controls and checkpoints with measurable outcomes, and engagement with all stakeholders. DEO believes strong project management is critical throughout the life of any successful project.

For this project, DEO’s project management will include the following specific elements, in addition to our standard methodology:

- The project management team will advise leadership on areas of concern and will propose solutions to mitigate risk.
- Vendors will respond to inquiries or requests from DEO within one business day from receipt.
- In the case where additional time is needed for a task, vendors will provide an estimate, which must be approved by the DEO Project Manager.
- At the end of the contract, vendors will provide final copies of all reports in electronic format for archive purposes.

DEO’s project management approach will utilize the technical skills, tools, and techniques needed to succeed, as well as the dedication to accountability, resource commitment, and organizational focus. Project success will be the result of active communication among all individuals, understanding everyone’s role in the project, and clear delineation of responsibilities.

DEO believes successful project management hinges on the following:

- Clearly established project goals and requirements
- Ongoing assessment of quality against established standards
- Constant measurement of success against established deliverables and milestones
- Personal presence and commitment of key project leadership
- Proactive identification and communication of risks and issues

Quality Assurance

DEO will follow a rigid quality assurance process. The project will follow these processes and procedures to ensure the highest level of execution.

Quality Management. The Strategic Planning Office’s primary responsibility is to provide oversight and ensure DEO objectives are met by meeting regularly with project managers and department leadership.

The Project Manager is responsible for understanding project requirements and DEO expectations. A preliminary internal project meeting is held near the start of each project with all stakeholders. This meeting will include a discussion(s) of task assignments to clarify the scope of work and how it will be accomplished. The following quality management activities will be completed for each project:

- **Internal Kickoff Meeting** – Prior to project commencement, the Project Manager will ensure all team members understand the project’s requirements, scope, and quality control processes. This meeting includes a discussion of task assignments to clarify the scope of work and how it will be accomplished. This awareness is maintained throughout the duration of the project within ongoing and as necessary project team meetings.
- **Sponsor Checkpoints** – Each Project Manager will schedule regular contact with the Project Sponsor. This allows the Project Manager to voice their perspective on assignment progress and communicate any relevant risks, action items, issues or decisions made or encountered during the project.
• **Deliverable Reviews** – Prior to submission to DEO, all vendors’ deliverables are required to first undergo a thorough review. This review includes technical editing, validation, clarity, and ensuring conformance to DEO standards and expectations.

**Communication Management Plan**

Communication management seeks to provide a comprehensive framework for all communication necessary to keep stakeholders informed about the project’s direction and status. The project communication plan is to clearly identify the status of compliance efforts and to communicate the progress made in achieving a successful project outcome. The purpose of this plan is to communicate pertinent information related to discovery, design, and documentation in a clear and concise manner to the client, stakeholders, and the project team.

**Communication Plan**

The communication plan is designed to provide the right information, at the right level, to the right audience, at the right time. The plan addresses key audiences, messages, frequency, and methods of communication.

This plan, depicted in Table 3 below, describes the various forms of communication, appropriate channels of communication, and target audiences for this project. The communication matrix identifies the different tools that will be used to guide the planning for communication about the project to various audiences and purposes. It should be considered a general guide for the effective dissemination of information that is received, understood, and utilized by the target audiences for successful completion of the project. This communication matrix will be customized for each project to reflect the various communication forms, frequencies, and audiences that will actually be used during the course of the project and to ensure communication channels are properly maintained throughout the project and updated if communication needs to change.
### Table 9: Project Communication Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Initiator</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status Reports</td>
<td>Provide detailed information on the progress of the project against the plan</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Bi-Weekly</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>DEO Project Manager</td>
<td>Vendor Project Manager</td>
<td>Verbal and follow-up email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status Meetings</td>
<td>Review the status report, resolve issues, and make decisions</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Bi-Weekly</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>DEO Project Manager</td>
<td>Vendor Project Manager</td>
<td>Verbal and follow-up email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor Meetings</td>
<td>Review project progress, resolve issues, and make decisions at an executive level</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>Vendor Project Manager</td>
<td>DEO Project Sponsor Vendor Project Manager</td>
<td>Verbal and follow-up email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Deliverables</td>
<td>Provide deliverables to client for review</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Per project schedule</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>DEO Project Manager Vendor Project Manager for distribution</td>
<td>Written vetted, consolidated, and actionable comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliverable Review Feedback</td>
<td>Provide vetted, consolidated, and actionable written comments</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Per project schedule</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>Vendor Project Manager</td>
<td>DEO Project Manager</td>
<td>Written /email follow-up using Deliverable Review Comment Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliverable Review Meetings</td>
<td>Confirm mutual understanding of desired deliverable changes</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>As needed</td>
<td>Informational</td>
<td>DEO Project Manager Vendor Project Manager Vendor Subject Matter Experts (as needed)</td>
<td>Verbal or written</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Sessions</td>
<td>Gather information from subject matter experts (current providers)</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Per project schedule</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>DEO Project Manager</td>
<td>Provider subject matter experts (only if the Vendor Project Manager has approved the communication)</td>
<td>Verbal and follow-up email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Session Follow-Up</td>
<td>To answer questions or clarify information gathered</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>As needed</td>
<td>Informational</td>
<td>DEO Project Manager</td>
<td>Provider subject matter experts (only have Vendor Project Manager) has approved the communication</td>
<td>Verbal or email follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Format</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Initiator</td>
<td>Recipient</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Survey</td>
<td>Gather information from subject matter experts (former providers)</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Per project schedule</td>
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<td>DEO Project Manager</td>
<td>Provider subject matter experts (only have Vendor Project Manager) has approved the communication</td>
<td>Verbal or email follow-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project issues</td>
<td>Documentation of project issues</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>As needed</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>Any Stakeholder</td>
<td>DEO Project Manager Vendor Project Manager</td>
<td>Written/email follow-up</td>
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<td>Project issues escalation</td>
<td>To resolve project issues</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>As needed</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>DEO or Vendor Project Manager</td>
<td>DEO or Vendor Project Sponsor</td>
<td>Written/email follow-up</td>
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<td>Change requests</td>
<td>Document project changes to scope of work</td>
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<td>DEO or Vendor Project Manager</td>
<td>DEO or Vendor Project Sponsor</td>
<td>Written/email follow-up</td>
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<td>Project closeout and lessons</td>
<td>Formal project closeout meeting</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Per project schedule</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>DEO Project Manager</td>
<td>Vendor Project Manager</td>
<td>Written/email follow-up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bi-Weekly Status Reporting

Vendors will be required to submit status reports throughout the project at several levels. The primary source of status information is the bi-weekly written status report, which will communicate at minimum, the following information.

- **Project Status.** This section depicts the project status at a summary level using a red/yellow/green method supported by two to three essential questions that are answered to determine summary status. The red/yellow/green method is not meant to be a grading system but instead it is a way to easily identify the areas of the project that need the most attention in order to make the project successful.

- **Overview of Project Progress.** This section describes significant accomplishments achieved in the reporting period.

- **Overall Status.** This section provides a high-level overview of whether the project is on schedule, on budget, and on scope. A yellow or red status should be explained here in detail.

- **Project Milestones, Deliverables, and Latest Tasks.** This section contains the major deliverables of the project, their planned and actual completion dates, and their status.

- **Risks, Action Items, Issues, and Decisions.** This section will link to the project risk, action item, issue, and decision tracking tool. The project tracking tool contains all items tracked during the project.
Project Tracking
This section describes the “RAID” methodology for tracking risks, action items, issues, and decisions. DEO will follow a centralized approach that minimizes miscommunication or misinformation among project stakeholders. The Department will diligently maintain a project tracking log for each project, and a master log for RA Benefits System Modernization project overall, a Microsoft Excel workbook with multiple tabs intended to capture the details and the latest attributes of items tracked by Project Managers.

Note: RAID Workbook is a separate file attached to the Schedule IV-B. Each tab is fully explained in the following sections.

Risk Management
Risks are characteristics, circumstances, or features of the environment that may have an adverse effect on the project or the quality of the work products. The risk management plan outlines the process to identify and analyze the effects of uncertainties on the project. This plan establishes a framework of working practices, which enables project team members to identify, analyze, respond to, monitor, and communicate risks before they become issues and jeopardize the success of the project. If a risk becomes an issue, DEO will work with the involved stakeholders to assess its impact on the project and assign responsibility for issue resolution, including a target date for closure.

Risks will be managed in the following manner:

- During status meetings, any stakeholder can raise a risk for discussion.
- The Project team will discuss the risk and determine if it warrants being monitored in the risk log.
- The project manager will enter the item in the risk log.
- The team will discuss mitigation strategies and assign who will own the risk item.
- At each subsequent status meeting, the risk(s) will be reviewed until the risk(s) can be closed.

Action Items
Action items are unplanned tasks that occur during a project that are too small to be added to the schedule. These items must be within the scope of the project and are often tasks that support scheduled tasks, issue resolution, risk management, or some other aspect of the project. The action item log is created and maintained as part of the project tracking log.

Action items will be managed in the following manner:

- During status meetings, any stakeholder can raise an action item for discussion.
- The Project team will discuss the action item and determine if it warrants being monitored in the action item log.
- The project manager will enter the item in the log.
- The team will set the priority for the action item (high/medium/low), assign an action item owner, and set a planned completion date.
- At each subsequent status meeting, the action item(s) will be reviewed until they can be closed.

Issue Management
An issue is defined as a current situation or event that must be resolved to avoid adverse impact to the project. Issues can originate from a risk that has materialized. DEO will document all issues that are brought up in meetings.

When issues arise, they need to be resolved in a disciplined manner in order to maintain the quality of the work products and control the schedule and costs. The issue resolution process verifies differences, questions, and unplanned requests are defined properly, escalated for management attention, and resolved quickly and efficiently.
The issue resolution process is intended to handle technical problems, requirements, or issues/conflicts, as well as to address process, organizational, and operational issues of the engagement.

Issues will be managed in the following manner:

- During status meetings, any stakeholder can raise a potential issue for discussion.
- The Project team will discuss the potential issue and determine if the item is indeed an issue.
- If the team determines the item is an issue, the project manager will enter it in the issue log.
- The team will discuss resolution steps, assign who will own the issue item, and set a target date for resolution.
- At each subsequent status meeting, the issue(s) will be reviewed until they can be closed.

Decisions

Decisions are leadership answers to questions that arise during the project. The decision log is created and maintained as part of the project tracking log.

Decisions will be managed in the following manner:

- During status meetings, any stakeholder can raise a question that requires a decision.
- If the team determines a decision needs to be made, the project manager will enter it in the decision log.
- The team will discuss the impact to the project, assign a decision maker, and set a date for when the decision is needed.
- At each subsequent status meeting, the decision item(s) will be reviewed until they can be closed.

Change Control

It is possible that the project will encounter some degree of scope or schedule change. Change control ensures that all requests for change are considered in light of the project goals and objectives and are prioritized accordingly.

The project team will employ strict control over project scope changes throughout the life of the project. The change control process will empower the project sponsor to review, decline, postpone, or authorize and prioritize requests for change. Requested changes are evaluated and a determination made on how it impacts scope, time, and cost. If there are impacts to overall project cost or final project delivery date, a formal change order will be initiated. All other changes will be handled using the project change control process.

The change control log is used to track all change requests during the project. As a change request is submitted, the change control log will be updated with a description and ongoing progress updates until a final resolution is determined.

Changes will be managed in the following manner:

- During status meetings, any stakeholder can raise a potential change to the project’s scope, cost, and/or schedule.
- If the team determines a change needs to be made, the project manager will enter it in the change control log and create a formal change request.
- The team will prioritize the change, assign an owner and due date, and describe the impact to the project.
- At each subsequent status meeting, the change orders will be reviewed until they can be closed. No change order will be closed without agreement and sign-off from project sponsors.

Schedule Management

Schedule management consists of the following three areas: schedule development, schedule administration, and
schedule change control.

Schedule Development

Schedule development is the process of taking the work breakdown structure (WBS) and breaking it down into activities and tasks that can be assigned and managed. Tasks that are dependent on others are linked. Work efforts and resources are assigned to each task. Once the draft is complete and correct, the schedule will be baselined so that any future changes can be tracked.

The project schedule is the definitive source of project activity, dates, and assignment information. A high-level schedule is provided below. Prior to project initiation, a resource-loaded Microsoft Project Schedule will be generated with milestones and task durations.

Schedule Administration

The schedule will be kept up to date weekly. Task progress and percent completion will be input into the schedule. Variances between planned and actual progress will be managed with particular attention to the critical path. Each week the Project Manager will evaluate the baselined schedule against current progress, identifying the following at a minimum:

- Overdue tasks and computation of the percentage of late tasks related to total tasks to date (number of overdue tasks divided by number of total tasks).
- Overall task completion trending towards an overall project variance equal to or greater than 10%.

The Project Manager will communicate the variance explanation to the project's key stakeholders. This information will be used as input into the weekly status reporting. Any variance where the critical path is significantly behind will automatically result in a red status on the weekly status report.

Corrective actions will be developed as needed to resolve schedule variances. Schedule management techniques of crashing, fast-tracking, and compression will be considered as will other solutions like resource shifting or work rescheduling. Schedule forecasting will be used to look beyond the current status so that, to every extent possible, corrective actions can be applied before there are schedule variances.

Schedule Changes

Once the schedule has been developed, approved, and baselined any significant changes will have to be approved through the change control process. All other schedule changes can be made at the discretion of project leadership and will be reported and discussed with the weekly status report.
**Procurement Management**
The Procurement Management Plan seeks to outline how the project will procure resources necessary to complete the project objectives. It defines the procurement methodology for this project, lays out the process for managing procurement throughout the life of the project, and will be updated if and when project needs change. This plan identifies and defines the goods and services to be procured, the types of contracts to be used in support of this project, the contract approval process, and the decision criteria. The importance of coordinating the procurement activities, establishing firm contract deliverables, and metrics in measuring procurement activities is included in the following subsections.

**Procurement Management Approach**
The DEO Purchasing Office and any vendors contracted for procurement assistance will provide oversight and management along with the Project Manager for all procurement activities under this project. The Project Manager will work with the project team to identify all items to be procured for the successful completion of the project. The Department Strategic Planning Office (SPO) will then review any procurement requests prior to approving the development of procurement documentation.

**Procurement Definition**
The following table will be completed to record any procurement goods and/or services determined to be essential for any RA Modernization project’s completion and success. The Project Manager and/or SPO must approve any procurement before inclusion in this table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procurement</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Justification</th>
<th>Needed By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cost Management

The tables below will be completed and used to define and track project costs during each specific RA Modernization Project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Management Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Column** | **Definition**
--- | ---
Category | Type of expense
Description | Description of expense
Frequency | Describe whether the expense is annual or recurring or a onetime expense
Deliverable | List the deliverable associated with the expense
Cost | List the total expense in dollars e.g. $0.00

Staffing Management

The purpose of this section is to outline how the project is to manage staffing requirements and resource tasks appropriately. This project plans to procure additional staffing for most project initiatives through “Staff Augmentation” contracts. The needs for each individual project have been estimated before the project and will be refined during requirements gathering and procurement of services.

Quality Management

Whether DEO executes project tasks with internal resources, or oversees deliverables provided by contracted providers, Quality Management will be a key factor for project success. Quality Management details the processes to ensure quality services and deliverables. DEO will use disciplined processes and inspections to confirm quality throughout the life of the project. These inspections are performed at key points in the creation and review of documents and confirmation of the value of services the Project Team provides. Quality Management includes two components, Deliverable Quality Control and Services Quality. The purpose of this section is to provide instructions on these processes. DEO commits to the highest quality in project execution and project team members’ performance. To achieve a positive outcome, these processes will be carried out, so expectations are understood, aligned, and met.
### Net Tangible Benefits - Operational Cost Changes (Costs of Current Operations versus Proposed Operations as a Result of the Project) and Additional Tangible Benefits – CBAForm 1A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency (Recurring Costs Only – No Project Costs)</th>
<th>FY 2021-22</th>
<th>FY 2022-23</th>
<th>FY 2023-24</th>
<th>FY 2024-25</th>
<th>FY 2025-26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Personnel Costs -- Agency-Managed Staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Existing Program Costs</td>
<td>$7,789,838</td>
<td>$31,037,537</td>
<td>$34,827,374</td>
<td>$14,406,300</td>
<td>$15,653,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) New Program Costs resulting from Proposed Project</td>
<td>$31,037,537</td>
<td>$31,643,599</td>
<td>$46,049,899</td>
<td>$14,406,300</td>
<td>$15,653,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) + (b)</td>
<td>$38,827,374</td>
<td>$38,451,136</td>
<td>$60,456,299</td>
<td>$28,812,600</td>
<td>$31,307,887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A-1. State FTES (Salaries &amp; Benefits)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) New Program Costs of Current Operations</td>
<td>$4,200,796</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$4,200,796</td>
<td>$4,200,796</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Proposed Program Costs</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) + (b)</td>
<td>$4,200,796</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$4,200,796</td>
<td>$4,200,796</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A-2. OPS Staff (Salaries)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) New Program Costs of Current Operations</td>
<td>$83,250</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$83,250</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Proposed Program Costs</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) + (b)</td>
<td>$83,250</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$83,250</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A-3. Staff Augmentation (Contract Cost)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) New Program Costs of Current Operations</td>
<td>$1,247,643</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,247,643</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Proposed Program Costs</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) + (b)</td>
<td>$1,247,643</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,247,643</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A-4. Application Maintenance Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) New Program Costs of Current Operations</td>
<td>$3,211,789</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$3,211,789</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Proposed Program Costs</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) + (b)</td>
<td>$3,211,789</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$3,211,789</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A-5. Hardware</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) New Program Costs</td>
<td>$94,386</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$94,386</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Proposed Program Costs</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) + (b)</td>
<td>$94,386</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$94,386</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A-6. Software</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) New Program Costs</td>
<td>$2,653,760</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$2,653,760</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Proposed Program Costs</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) + (b)</td>
<td>$2,653,760</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$2,653,760</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A-7. Other</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) New Program Costs</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Proposed Program Costs</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) + (b)</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total of Recurring Operational Costs**

|            | $11,959,213 | $62,192,970 | $74,152,183 | $41,284,435 | $40,380,482 |

**F. Additional Tangible Benefits:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Estimate Confidence</th>
<th>Enter % (+/-)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F-1. Specify</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-2. Specify</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-3. Specify</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Net Tangible Benefits:**

|            | $(62,192,970) | $(40,380,482) | $(8,128,130) | $(8,068,596) |

**Total of Recurring Operational Costs:**

|            | $18,159,213 | $62,192,970 | $74,152,183 | $41,284,435 | $40,380,482 |

**Total Net Tangible Benefits:**

<p>|            | $(62,192,970) | $(40,380,482) | $(8,128,130) | $(8,068,596) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Project Cost Element</th>
<th>Appropriation Category</th>
<th>Current &amp; Previous Years Project-Related Cost</th>
<th>FY2021-22</th>
<th>FY2022-23</th>
<th>FY2023-24</th>
<th>FY2024-25</th>
<th>FY2025-26</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Costs for all state employees working on the project.</td>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>S&amp;B</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$62,192,970</td>
<td>$40,380,462</td>
<td>$8,203,265</td>
<td>$8,18,130</td>
<td>$8,068,596</td>
<td>$128,970,463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs for all OPS employees working on the project.</td>
<td>OPS</td>
<td>OPS</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing costs for personnel using Time &amp; Expense.</td>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>Contracted Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1,117,338</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project oversight to include Independent Verification &amp; Validation (IV&amp;V) personnel and related deliverables.</td>
<td>Project Oversight</td>
<td>Contracted Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2,340,000</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing costs for all professional services not included in other categories.</td>
<td>Consulting/Contractors</td>
<td>Contracted Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate requirements analysis and feasibility study services.</td>
<td>Project Planning/Analysis</td>
<td>Contracted Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>1,247,643</td>
<td>1,247,643</td>
<td>1,247,643</td>
<td>1,247,643</td>
<td>1,247,643</td>
<td>1,247,643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial software purchases and licensing costs.</td>
<td>Commercial Software</td>
<td>Contracted Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>5,783,228</td>
<td>6,080,313</td>
<td>4,690,038</td>
<td>4,690,038</td>
<td>4,690,038</td>
<td>25,933,655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional services with fixed-price costs (i.e. software development, installation, project documentation).</td>
<td>Project Deliverables</td>
<td>Contracted Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>20,963,736</td>
<td>28,186,261</td>
<td>1,247,643</td>
<td>1,247,643</td>
<td>1,247,643</td>
<td>52,892,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All first-time training costs associated with the project.</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Contracted Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include the quote received from the data center provider for project equipment and services. Only include one-time project costs in this row.</td>
<td>Data Center Services - One Time Costs</td>
<td>Data Center Category</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other contracted services not included in other categories.</td>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>Contracted Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include costs for non-state data center equipment required by the project and the proposed solution (insert additional rows as needed for detail).</td>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>Expense</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include costs associated with leasing space for project personnel.</td>
<td>Leased Space</td>
<td>Expense</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other project expenses not included in other categories.</td>
<td>Other Expenses (New Base Need)</td>
<td>Expense</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>62,192,970</td>
<td>40,380,462</td>
<td>8,203,265</td>
<td>8,18,130</td>
<td>8,068,596</td>
<td>128,970,463</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### CBAForm 2 - Project Cost Analysis

**Agency**: DEO  
**Project**: RA Modernization

#### Project Cost Summary (from CBAForm 2A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY 2021-22</th>
<th>FY 2022-23</th>
<th>FY 2023-24</th>
<th>FY 2024-25</th>
<th>FY 2025-26</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$62,192,970</td>
<td>$40,380,482</td>
<td>$8,203,285</td>
<td>$8,128,130</td>
<td>$8,068,596</td>
<td>$126,973,463</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Costs are carried forward to CBAForm3 Project Investment Summary worksheet.

### Project Funding Sources - CBAForm 2B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY 2021-22</th>
<th>FY 2022-23</th>
<th>FY 2023-24</th>
<th>FY 2024-25</th>
<th>FY 2025-26</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$62,192,970</td>
<td>$40,380,482</td>
<td>$8,203,285</td>
<td>$8,128,130</td>
<td>$8,068,596</td>
<td>$126,973,463</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Characterization of Project Cost Estimate - CBAForm 2C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choose Type</th>
<th>Estimate Confidence</th>
<th>Enter % (+/-)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detailed/Rigorous</td>
<td>Confidence Level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order of Magnitude</td>
<td>Confidence Level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placeholder</td>
<td>Confidence Level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FY 2021-22</td>
<td>FY 2022-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Cost</td>
<td>$62,192,970</td>
<td>$40,380,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Tangible Benefits</td>
<td>($62,192,970)</td>
<td>($40,380,482)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return on Investment</td>
<td>($124,385,940)</td>
<td>($80,760,964)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year to Year Change in Program Staffing</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RETURN ON INVESTMENT ANALYSIS – CBAForm 3B**

- **Payback Period (years)**: NO PAYBACK
  
  Payback Period is the time required to recover the investment costs of the project.

- **Breakeven Fiscal Year**: NO PAYBACK
  
  Fiscal Year during which the project's investment costs are recovered.

- **Net Present Value (NPV)**: ($238,201,047)
  
  NPV is the present-day value of the project's benefits less costs over the project's lifecycle.

- **Internal Rate of Return (IRR)**: NO IRR
  
  IRR is the project's rate of return.

**Investment Interest Earning Yield – CBAForm 3C**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>FY 2021-22</th>
<th>FY 2022-23</th>
<th>FY 2023-24</th>
<th>FY 2024-25</th>
<th>FY 2025-26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Capital</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
<td>3.42%</td>
<td>3.51%</td>
<td>3.63%</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>