

## **Broadband USA Applications Database**

**Applicant Name:** New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

**Project Title:** A Functional Roadmap to Enhance New York State Benefits Delivery Using Broadband

**Project Type:** Sustainable Adoption

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### **Executive Summary**

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This project will produce a functional roadmap (FRM) for modernizing the existing welfare case management, eligibility and benefits issuance capabilities and technology platform that support over 35,000 users, connect with over 2 million households and issue over \$50B worth of benefits annually. The goal is to improve the benefits application, access and usage experience for the low-income population who are seeking health insurance/medical assistance, cash assistance, child care, food stamps, home energy assistance, protective services for adults and domestic violence/support services throughout New York State (NYS).

Through the adoption of Internet broadband, clients will have the self-service capability to screen, apply for and receive benefits at their convenience, and not be limited by the operating hours of governmental offices and potential work hour conflicts. At the same time, State agencies can maintain program integrity by having a holistic view of the client's comprehensive service history, vetted demographic information and benefit profile for provisioning the right client services while minimizing fraudulent activities, service duplication and overpayments.

According to the 2009 Pew Research Center study, low-income families (making \$30,000 or less annually) have a broadband adoption rate of less than 50%. The same report also cites that the reasons low-income stakeholders chose not to have Broadband at home are relevance (50%), price (19%), availability (17%) and usability (13%). FRM will address issues associated with relevance and usability.

This project is innovative from the perspective that we will use Business Process Modeling (BPM) analytical tools in conjunction with operational data to drive process and organizational changes in 58 county Social Services districts responsible for delivering our health and human services. Through computer simulations, we can identify, prioritize and design localized technology solutions that are aligned with program goals and organizational capability at each county Social Services department, thereby improving the timeliness, appropriateness and accuracy of services and benefits delivery. Another goal is to overcome the barriers associated with face-to-face interviews, and achieve better client outcomes. These changes will support the screening, application, and eligibility maintenance for

client service and benefit delivery via broadband, with relevant content, ease of use and appropriate training that will increase the demand for broadband.

The current caseload data for the programs supported by this project are summarized in the table below. The number of cases reflects the estimated number of potential broadband subscribers at over 2 millions.

Program	Cases	Recipients
Medicaid	2,811,856	4,319,324
Food Stamp	1,267,045	2,384,027
Federal TANF	110,940	247,510
State TANF	163,934	273,578
HEAP	1,506,464	N/A

This is a “shovel-ready” project. First Data Government Solutions has been chosen as the primary contractor through a competitive bidding process. Pending NYS’s Comptroller Office approval, they are scheduled to begin work in 2009. Major deliverables are scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2010, with follow-up organizational change management activities continuing through October 2011.

OTDA’s qualifications to implement this project are well established. OTDA is the New York State agency responsible for the administrative management and oversight of the federal and state programs: SNAP, TANF, Welfare to Work, Low Income Energy and Heating Assistance, Homeless Programs, Refugee Assistance, and SSI. OTDA has the organizational capacity to manage and implement this project. OTDA is the lead agency for the FRM on behalf of DOH and OCFS. As such, OTDA has created a Functional Roadmap Project team, awarded a contract to First Data Government Solutions, and has received appropriate Annual Planning Document approvals from USDA FNS and HHS. OTDA also has an established track record in developing sustainable internet solutions, having launched myBenefits.ny.gov in May 2009. It is currently processing about 15,000 transactions a month with over 40% of its traffic coming from non-governmental entities. Excellent user experience was demonstrated with 100% site uptime since December 2008 and less than 10% abandonment rate. A pre-screening transaction can be completed in less than 10 minutes.

This request seeks \$9.6M in federal funding for April 2010 through October 2011 to pay for First Data's professional services. State funding for this project is in place through March, 2010. However, State funding for the State Fiscal Year beginning April 2010 and for subsequent years is not yet budgeted. This budgeting gap puts this highly innovative project at risk for completion. Receipt of this grant funding will deflate the one-time cost during a challenging State fiscal situation and ensure the completion of this project.

The jobs created by this project will consist of positions provided to OTDA through the contract with First Data. First Data's staffing for this project is 28 professional positions ranging from Project Managers, Business Analysts, Subject Matter Experts, and Technology Specialists.

OTDA – Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

OCFS – Office of Children and Family Services

USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture

FNS – Food and Nutrition Services

HHS – Department of Health and Human Services

TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

SNAP - Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program