

Case Study

Delaware Division of Child Support Enforcement

“[Conduent] was committed from the start to ensuring that they delivered the system we expected on time and within budget.”

– Gertrude “Midge” Holland, Esq.,
Chief of Administration,
Delaware Division of Child Support Enforcement



The Challenge

Every year, the Delaware Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) manages a caseload of almost 95,000. Historically, these cases were managed with the state's legacy Delaware Automated Child Support Enforcement System (DACSES). The system was implemented almost 30 years ago and most information and all documents were stored in case folders requiring significant storage. Similar to other state child support programs at the time, Delaware implemented its system to meet the requirements of The Family Support Act of 1988 and subsequently The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), achieving federal system certification with the mainframe-based technology available in the 1980's.

Although DACSES' technical core was sound in 1987, by the 2000s it was antiquated and nearing obsolescence. Integrating new or upgraded functionality required labor-intensive coding that couldn't keep pace with DCSE's changing needs. Consequently, to make necessary changes more quickly than full integration would require, shortcuts were taken and over time the system became very fragmented and complex. This made maintenance very difficult and the results of changes were unpredictable.

However, the main factors driving DCSE to replace DACSES were the functional limitations that could not be overcome with a mainframe system: there was no capacity for real time updates, there was little ability to support the logical flow of DCSE's business processes, automation was limited, and there was no option for documentation management. Functions that could be more efficiently initiated and monitored by a more automated system were manually performed

by overburdened workers. As the caseload increased, the need for more flexible, integrated technology became more imperative, and DCSE looked to streamline the process of establishing and working a case by moving to an automated system.

The Solution

In October 2010, Delaware DCSE teamed up with Conduent to develop and implement a new system to replace the outdated DACSES. The more robust and reliable Delaware Child Support System (DECSS) was built to streamline the process and help child support specialists keep track of and manage the status of each case.

The modernized system has the ability to:

- Receive electronic applications and referrals
- Automatically analyze the completeness of applications, referrals and open cases
- Completely automate activities to locate case members and assets
- Monitor if someone is or isn't fulfilling their child support obligations
- Automatically initiate enforcement remedies when DCSE-defined criteria isn't met
- Determine how payments should be distributed across different cases
- Disburse payments to multiple parties
- Alert workers to decisions they need to make or actions they need to take
- Determine if the case meets case closure criteria and prompt the case worker to affirm that action
- Index scanned documents to the appropriate cases, ultimately leading to a more complete case record



Implementation went very smoothly – the cutover took two days – as a result of the manner in which Conduent team leaders partnered with state technical team members to both plan and execute the deployment. Another key factor in the success of DECSS was training and support throughout the implementation. Conduent worked closely with the Delaware DCSE team to ensure workers were trained on the new system prior to the transition, and our subject matter experts were on site for several weeks to provide timely support to workers. We were committed to ensuring that workers had the tools and support they needed to successfully navigate the new technology and be productive from the first morning DECSS was in operation.

A key factor in the success of DECSS was training and support throughout the implementation. Conduent worked closely with the Delaware DCSE team to ensure workers received thorough training prior to the transition. When it came time to deploy the system, workers felt comfortable with the new technology and could easily access all the migrated data and information. In total, the switch took two days and went very smoothly due to extensive preparation.

The Results

Along with the help of Conduent, the new system has resulted in a number of internal and external benefits:

- Improved transparency into worker productivity allowing strategic management
- Streamlined data transmission between agencies
- Improved intergovernmental communication between agencies
- Reduced reliance upon paper files
- More time for case workers to attend to issues truly requiring their attention rather than manually initiating locate and enforcement actions

All of the above have helped improve constituent service, providing reliable, accurate handling of casework. Fewer cases languish on the system unnoticed when they could be moving forward, and instead of pushing paper, caseworkers take action with a click or a keystroke.

Building on the initial success of the system, the Delaware DCSE is looking to bring automation to other parts of the process, including adding application and customer websites so customers can easily go online to apply for services or change or verify information instead of sending in paper documents. An employer website will give employers the option of receiving and acknowledging notices electronically and the ability to update their records with DCSE from their desktops.

The existing CSES system is flexible and modular, allowing for changes and updates to accommodate increased functionality – a far cry from the rigid mainframes of the 1990s, and a huge step forward for the families of Delaware.

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