

Case Study

Oklahoma Firefighters Pension Program

“When the time came to transition from manual checks to an electronic payment system, we turned to Conduent to provide the technology and help us manage the process... without Conduent’s expertise and leadership, the transition wouldn’t have been as successful.”

– Duane Michael, CFO/Deputy Director, Oklahoma Firefighters Pension System



The Challenge

The Oklahoma State Firefighters Pension and Retirement System has more than 24,000 members representing union and non-union paid firefighters, volunteer firefighters and chief officers, and is responsible for firefighters’ pension benefits when they retire. State pension programs give firefighters a basic monthly stipend to make retirement security more achievable.

In the past, retired Oklahoma firefighters received a monthly paper check in the mail presenting several issues for the state as well as firefighters including:

- **Fraud:** Paper checks often result in lost funds, clerical errors and fraud and abuse.
- **Costly:** On average, the state distributes 34,000 checks a year, costing agencies between four and six dollars per check.
- **Access to funds:** many firefighters live in rural areas and rely on check cashing businesses to redeem their pension benefits. Approximately 3 percent of an entire paycheck would go to a check cashing business.

In order to improve efficiency and cut costs, the House Bill 1086 required that beginning July 1, 2012, funds disbursed from the State Treasury be sent electronically.

The Solution

Oklahoma looked for a technology partner to help them not only transition to an electronic payment system but also implement, operate and manage the government payment program. The State chose Conduent, the second largest pensions and benefits administrator globally, to implement the company’s Go Program to help them securely and effectively deliver firefighters’ benefits.

Through the new program, more than 200 citizens get a monthly automatic deposit on their Way2Go Card that can be used as a debit card anywhere MasterCard is accepted. It can also be used for a bank withdrawal, giving retirees instant access to their pension funds quickly and easily.

The transition to the new card-based system was a seamless process and only took less than 3 months to implement. The user-friendly system made it easy for employees to add new clients, set up account and routing numbers and make changes quickly.

The Results

Moving from a paper-based system to a more up-to-date, electronic payment platform has significantly improved operations and cut costs for the State. With the new electronic payment platform the State expects to save \$10,000 annually.

Additionally, the Go Program increased payment security and accuracy, reduced fraud and eliminated mailing delays so retired firefighters now have instant, secure access to their funds from anywhere.

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