Government can work for the people, by the people, in the digital age
“This paycheck is going to the rent, and with the following paycheck I want to make sure that we are able to pay for the bills. And I know that’s life, but a little help would be so much. It would be a lot!”
The two biggest levers for improving people’s lives at scale are technology and government

Build equitable systems
Put people first
Inform with evidence
Empower for action
Respond to changing needs
Creating a Stronger Social Safety Net

- Food Assistance (SNAP + GetCalFresh)
- Integrating Benefits (MI Pilot, MN statewide)
- Responsiveness (Pandemic EBT, disaster relief)
What is the status quo?

First-of-its-kind analysis of online public benefit applications nationwide, including 3,600+ screenshots.
The New Reality

- Technology is guiding new norms that are reshaping how we work, learn, and live.
- There is an unprecedented demand for social safety net services and government digital services.
- People are turning locally for help, energizing a renewed sense of people power.
- The convergence of COVID-19, economic uncertainty, antiracist uprisings, and political turmoil opens the door for rethinking and reimagining government services and systems.
A Strong Social Safety Net

CALIFORNIA
Improve customer service with a streamlined SNAP application.

COLORADO
Maintain and keep benefits by simplifying change reporting and processing.

ALASKA
Reach everyone especially the most remote communities.

MINNESOTA
Unify the application experience with a human-centered, mobile-first integrated benefits application.

MICHIGAN
Faster eligibility determination with an interactive, integrated application assister.

VERMONT
Ease verifications through tools that facilitate document submission and intake.

PENNSYLVANIA
Instrument the application funnel by embedding analytics into the online application to discover client pain points.

LOUISIANA
Reduce client churn through a multi-program text message service that provides reminders, notices, and confirmations.

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Unify the application experience with a human-centered, mobile-first integrated benefits application.

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Applying for food benefits is incredibly frustrating online. 30% of those eligible never got the benefit in CA.

GetCalFresh makes applying online easy. The participation gap is closing with 2M more Californians reached.
COVID 19: GetCalFresh Increased Tenfold

Total Weekly SNAP Applications: February 10 - May 10, 2020
Submitted in California via GetCalFresh.org

Applications via GetCalFresh.org

Total weekly applicants

Date week began

We are helping states integrate service delivery across programs like SNAP, Medicaid, TANF, and WIC. And taking what we’ve learned to drive policy change both at the state and federal level.

Completed state pilot of a SNAP+Medicaid integrated application. Now expanding to SNAP + TANF + Medicaid in Minnesota.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Previous Baseline</th>
<th>Pilot Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time to apply</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days to determine eligibility</td>
<td>13 days</td>
<td>11 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval rate</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Congress passed a new program for 30M+ families who relied on the School Lunch Program. The new system provided cash benefits to families for groceries.

We worked with several states to provide technical assistance, and help them submit plans for approval.

We helped CA and MN with direct implementation, serving over 2.5M children, placing 400M in the pockets of families in need.
What *should* the status quo be?

Implementing an actionable framework for change

**Blueprint for a Human-Centered Safety Net**

Transforming the delivery of public benefits in the digital age

**Many Welcoming Doors**

Provide an equitable and positive experience both online and in person.

**Easy to Understand**

Clients should be able to make it through the process with minimal caseworker support.

**Informed Decisions**

Clients should clearly understand the implications of all of the actions they have to take throughout the process.

**Responsive to Changing Needs**

Build things that can change based on clients’ needs, as well as shifts in policy and budget.

**Simple Actions**

Each stage in the enrollment and eligibility process should be able to be completed in as few steps as possible.
Thank you.

For more information, contact Tracey Patterson at tpatterson@codeforamerica.org