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# Department of Transitional Assistance Report on Agency Paper Reduction Efforts

April 2017

Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance



## **REPORT ON PAPERLESS DOCUMENTATION**

### **APRIL 2017**

#### **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE MISSION**

The mission of the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) is to assist and empower low-income individuals and families to meet their basic needs, improve their quality of life, and achieve long-term economic self-sufficiency. DTA offers a comprehensive system of programs and supports to achieve this mission, including food and nutritional assistance, cash assistance, and employment supports. DTA serves one out of every eight people in the Commonwealth including working families, children, elders, and people with disabilities.

#### **Description of the Report**

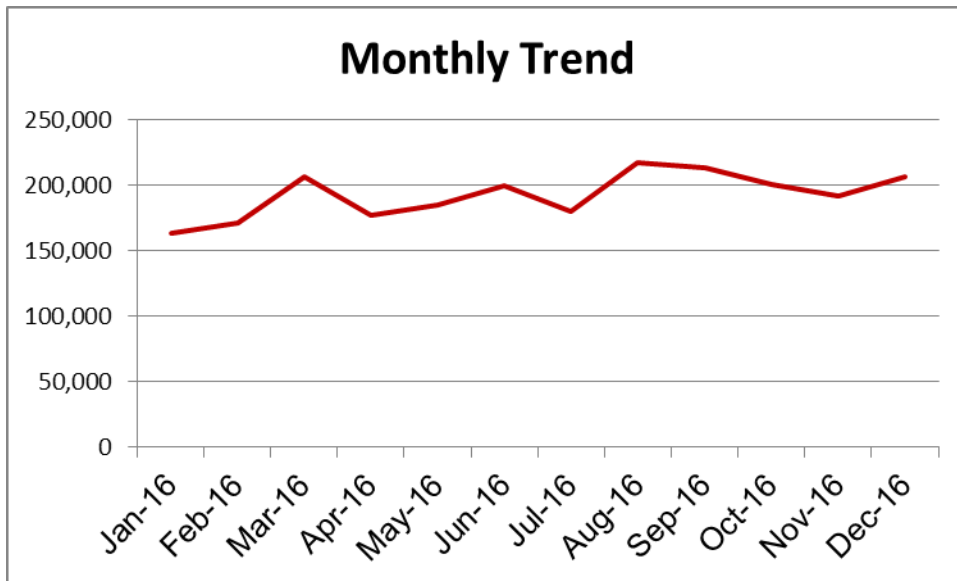
Chapter 158 of the Acts of 2014, Section 32, requires DTA to develop, implement, and maintain a plan to reduce the use of paper records and documentation and to eliminate the sole reliance on paper records for its operations. The plan must progressively eliminate the need to use hard copies of forms. The following report provides information to the clerks of the House of Representatives and the Senate on DTA's progress in meeting these requirements.

#### **History of the Document Processing Center**

DTA partnered with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and MassHealth to implement an Document Processing Center (DPC) for managing applicant and client eligibility documents, as well as documents used by the Hearings and Program Integrity units. This project, known as Scanning and Future Automation is to ensure documents are indexed accurately and timely, ultimately improving the processing of cases for DTA clients. Throughout 2016, approximately 193,000 documents monthly (or 44,463 weekly) were processed. Documents included in that figure are: mail, electronic faxes, and documents scanned from Multi-Functional Devices (MFD) located in DTA's local transitional assistance offices (TAO). On the following page, please see the number of documents processed at DPC for the period from January 2016 through December 2016.

### DPC Processed DTA Documents

Total Document Count Per Month for DTA Documents	
Jan-16	163,625
Feb-16	170,868
Mar-16	206,367
Apr-16	176,837
May-16	185,059
Jun-16	199,645
Jul-16	180,121
Aug-16	217,604
Sep-16	213,043
Oct-16	200,811
Nov-16	191,793
Dec-16	206,104
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,311,877</b>
Each Document average = 7 pages	



### Comparing 2015 to 2016 Document Source distribution

Doc Source	2015		2016		2015 Vs 2016 %
	Count	%	Count	%	
<b>Mail</b>	920,589	41.87	572,786	24.78	-13.09
<b>eFax</b>	607,960	27.65	552,997	23.92	-3.73
<b>MFD</b>	670,300	30.48	1,186,082	51.30	20.82
<b>Total</b>	2,198,849		2,311,865		

## **DPC has documented that for the period from January 2016 to December 2016:**

- 5% increase in total volume of documents in 2016 from 2015;
- 20% increase of scanned documents via multifunctional (MFD) devices with an associated reduction in mailed and faxed documents during 2016;
- 85% of documents were processed within 24 hours;
- 96% of documents were processed within 48 hours; and
- It is estimated there was an error rate during this period of 2% due to human and mechanical errors.

### **How DPC Works**

At DPC, a staff of 41 DTA workers utilizes a task management software product called DTA myWorkspace, which was customized for DTA based on staff input. With myWorkspace, scanned and indexed documents are electronically routed to the appropriate TAO or Central Office Business Unit for processing.

### **Reducing Paper Strategy**

The goal of scanning and future automation is to ensure documents are indexed accurately and timely, ultimately improving the processing of cases for DTA clients. During 2016, scanning functionality was enhanced (Phase 3) to reduce time for document submission and reduce paper handling. Since DTA began its efforts in 2014, the following scanning efficiencies have been implemented:

- Phase 1: the goal of phase 1 was to ensure that all offices scan processed documents through DPC. This phase was successful and completed in April 2015.
- Phase 2: the goal of phase 2 was to ensure that all SNAP Applications/Urgent Documents are scanned. This phase was successful and completed in July 2015.
- Phase 3: the objective of phase 3 was to successfully scan all documents presented at the TAO (i.e., dropped off documents). All offices will be able to scan unprocessed documents, with the new multi-functional devices to be installed in all local offices. This phase was successful and completed in February 2016.
- Phase 4: the objective was to provide waiting room scanning function for clients. Through this process, DTA and the DPC have continued to collaborate on business process improvements. During 2016 the appropriate equipment was procured to support this phase of scanning efficiencies. During January 2017, scanning in each local DTA office for clients in the waiting area was fully implemented.

To ensure quality transmission of scanned documents DTA has provided staff with standard instructions which must be followed.

### **Additional Improvements**

DTA implemented a significant customer service system, DTA Connect mobile application, in September 2016. In November 2016, the DTA Connect was enhanced to include functionality allowing clients to upload documents directly to DPC by submitting a picture of their document through the mobile application. During the first two months of implementation an average of approximately 600 documents have been uploaded daily, primarily client verification documents.

This enhancement has further reduced the need for paper documents to be exchanged, and has provided convenience for clients, and efficiency for DTA staff.

### **Document Management Improvements**

The DPC has made consistent improvements since its launch. These improvements include:

- Ongoing DPC document management software and storage improvements. Captiva-7.1 upgrades have been completed to facilitate the use of leading edge technology for document submission and management;
- DTA and DPC use a document error report to identify and resolve current and new found issues; and
- Daily communication between DPC and DTA works well, as it strengthens and maintains a positive working relationship and limits potential gaps in communication regarding policy, process, notice and volume changes.

### **Summary**

The centralized Document Processing Center for scanning and uploading all mailed, faxed and mobile application uploaded documents into DTA's eligibility system, BEACON, has resulted in significant reduction in the amount of paper used and stored as part of DTA business. Throughout 2016 DTA has aggressively implemented business process and system enhancements resulting in additional reduction in the use of paper. DTA continues to develop methods and systems to reduce the use of paper resulting in a sustainable paperless system.