



Detailed Lean Improvement Project Report

For the June 1, 2014, through December 31, 2014, reporting period

Agency name:

Department of Retirement Systems (DRS)

Improvement project title:

Improving DRS Communication with Employers

Date improvement project initiated:

April 1, 2014

Summary:

DRS has improved how we communicate with employers by building a web tool that streamlines all contact, and allows DRS team members to both initiate dialogue and respond in an effective and efficient manner. This allows quicker response time for our customers.

Details:

Description of the problem: There are a number of services DRS provides to members and retirees that require additional information from employers. DRS and employers did not have a standard process for both soliciting additional information and responding to inquiries. The majority of requests were sent via email or regular mail.

Not having a standardized process resulted in employers receiving multiple requests for information as well as extra steps and rework for DRS. For customers, it meant a less accurate initial benefit calculation and a delay in their final benefit calculation.

Initial improvements included development of a spreadsheet. Using the spreadsheet, one team member tracked all contact made with employers, so that 30, 60, and 90 day reminders could be sent to ensure all requests received a response. This process took about 92 hours per month.

Description of the improvement: A web tool that processes all requests to employers and the employer responses, and tracks the status of each request.

Specific results achieved: The new tool creates a centralized, streamlined system for managing all requests for additional employer information, including automation of process reminders and tracking. It ensures that all communications about a customer account are documented in the customer file, and it eliminates accidental duplicate requests in cases where a response has already been received by DRS. The initial result is an annual time savings of 1,163 hours in DRS team member time that can be redirected to other activities. It also saves time for employers while helping DRS provide timely responses to our customers.

How we involved customers or stakeholders in this effort:

DRS worked very closely with employers to ensure that this improvement would meet their needs and improve processes for them.

Contact person/s:

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