

# Strategic Lean Project Report



**For Reporting Period:** July 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015

## I. General Information:

Lead agency name: Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)

Partner agencies: N/A

**Improvement project title:** Background Check Central Unit Equivalencies Value Stream Mapping (VSM) Event

**Date improvement project was initiated:** 6/2/2014

**Project type:** Previously reported project

**Project is directly connected to:**

- Results Washington performance measure
- Agency Strategic Plan
- Other

**If applicable, specify the alignment:**

Reducing BCCU background check crime equivalency backlog while identifying areas to streamline and standardize processes.

**Report reviewed and approved by:** Kathy Marshall, Assistant Secretary, Financial Services Administration

## II. Project Summary:

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) improved Background Check Central Unit Equivalencies, resulting in 90 percent decrease in the time it takes to conduct one crime equivalency. Furthermore, a subsequent standard work assessment conducted in July 2015 revealed gaps in procedures and inconsistencies resulting in further streamlining of processes in place.

## III. Project Details:

**Identify the problem:**

When the DSHS Background Check Central Unit (BCCU) receives information, in which an individual discloses a conviction or pending charge from another state or when the FBI criminal history reflects crimes were committed in other states, the BCCU is responsible for requesting an equivalency. An equivalency compares the out-of-state crime to a crime in Washington so that BCCU staff can determine if the out-of-state crime is equivalent to a crime on the Secretary's *List of Disqualifying Crimes and Negative Actions*. Washington State law and regulations disqualify individuals from unsupervised access to vulnerable populations if they have been convicted or have been charged with a crime that is equivalent to a crime on the DSHS Secretary's List or in WAC.

Equivalencies that were more technical were sent to the state Attorney General's Office (AGO) for equivalency review. The more routine ones were done in house. Due to the increased complexity, all equivalencies were sent

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the AG's office. In December 2013, it was determined the equivalency review required a specific legal skill set, expertise, and access to legal websites to be completed accurately. Due to the volume and backlog of these equivalency requests, the AGO asked BCCU to refrain from sending any additional requests. This afforded BCCU the opportunity to review its process, identify any waste in the procedures and determine the best party to process the equivalencies.

In December 2013, BCCU collaborated with Central Contracts and Legal Services (CCLS) unit within DSHS to conduct equivalencies in house. CCLS and BCCU are part of the same division within DSHS and are located close to one another. CCLS staff has the legal skill sets needed to perform the equivalency reviews. BCCU funded one position in CCLS whose sole function was to perform the equivalency review.

In July 2015, a sub-workgroup reviewed the implemented processes to ensure applied changes remained in place. The group found that while the changes were implemented, staff had found various methods of accomplishing the same tasks. The group discussed this and then using the variation identified, determined the best practices and agreed to implement those as new standards.

The team met two more times to guarantee consistency in quality, create standard work and get rid of added steps that weren't necessary. These modifications didn't reduce processing time but did prevent process deviations, work arounds and non-standard work.

During the evaluation of this one process, gaps were identified that impacted other processes. We are continuing discussions to address these gaps.

The group is committed to Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) and is dedicated to ongoing conversations that continuously improve their work and transforming lives.

**Problem statement:** Our current turnaround time for equivalency analysis is four to six weeks and our target is two days. We want to reach our target goal within 90 days of the Value Stream Mapping (VSM).

**Improvement description:** As of June 9, 2014 our backlog was approximately 120 equivalency analysis requests. While working on the backlog, we determined that the process, roles and responsibilities needed clarification. Additionally we determined that feedback from program recipients was necessary to understand expectations and determine value-added and non-value-added tasks.

This VSM created standard work that eliminated overproduction and rework

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loops.

**Customer involvement:** Customers were involved throughout the planning and execution of the VSM, which improved relationships and helped us better understand their needs. A greater investment of time was also made educating customers about information we need from them to ensure that what's collected is both thorough and accurate. This expedites the process and increases accuracy.

Customers included representatives from Children's Administration, Developmental Disabilities Administration, Home and Community Services, Residential Services, Central Contracts and Legal Services.

## IV. Project Details:

<b>Improved process as measured by:</b> <i>(Click those that apply)</i>	<b>Specific results achieved:</b> <i>(Complete the narrative boxes below)</i>	<b>Total Impact:</b> <i>(Actuals; Current Reporting Period)</i>	<b>Results status:</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Time</b>	Decreased <b>Turnaround time from 4-6 weeks to 1-2 days.</b>	90% reduction	Final

## V. Contact information:

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**VI. Optional Visuals:** Delete section if not using. Provide before and after photos or simple charts. If using an image, please keep the image file size under 100KB.

The following image was taken after the future state was created at the VSM event. It shows the total reductions in cycle time (CT), touch time (TT) and queue time (QT).

- Cycle time is the entire amount of time it takes to complete a process, including touch and queue times. It includes time from when an operator starts a process until the work is ready to be passed on.
- Touch time is the amount of time the product is actually being worked on and value is being added. This is typically only a small proportion of the total production time. Most of the time is taken by movement, queuing, etc.
- Queue time is the amount of time between processes, including movement, transfers, and waiting for someone to work on it.

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Current State  
CT = 5,589 min = 11.6 days  
TT = 320 min = 7 days  
QT = 1,800 min = 3.75 days

Future State  
CT = 588 min = 1.2 days  
TT = 115 min = .24 days  
QT = 180 min = .375 days

Reductions:  
CT = -89.48%  
-10.4 days  
TT = -64.06%  
-.42 days  
QT = -90%  
-3.375 days

In June 2014, shortly before the Equivalency VSM, BCCU identified a backlog of 120 equivalencies ranging between 4-6 weeks turnaround time. Data collection prior to the VSM was limited. One of the improvement ideas from the VSM was to roll out SharePoint to provide ease in tracking, consistent communication and data collection etc. In late November 2014, SharePoint was rolled out and therefore data was accurately collected after this date demonstrating the decline in the turnaround time to complete equivalencies.

