



Rethinking Child Support: Smarter Workflows, Stronger Families

A hands-on look at Business Process Optimization and Human-Centered Design in action

WICSEC 2025
Minneapolis, MN

September 8 – 12



Agenda

- 1** Business Process Optimization (BPO)
- 2** Human-Centered Design (HCD)
- 3** Business-Led Modernization

Introductions

Kristie Gordy, Senior Administrator
Wyoming Department of Family Services

Erin Frisch, Director, Office of Child Support
Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

David Ramm, Executive Consultant
Greys Peak Strategies

Leo Ribas, Managing Partner
Human Services Group

Marie Waite, Moderator
Kelly Harder, Moderator



Business Process Optimization (BPO)

Innovate First, Then Automate

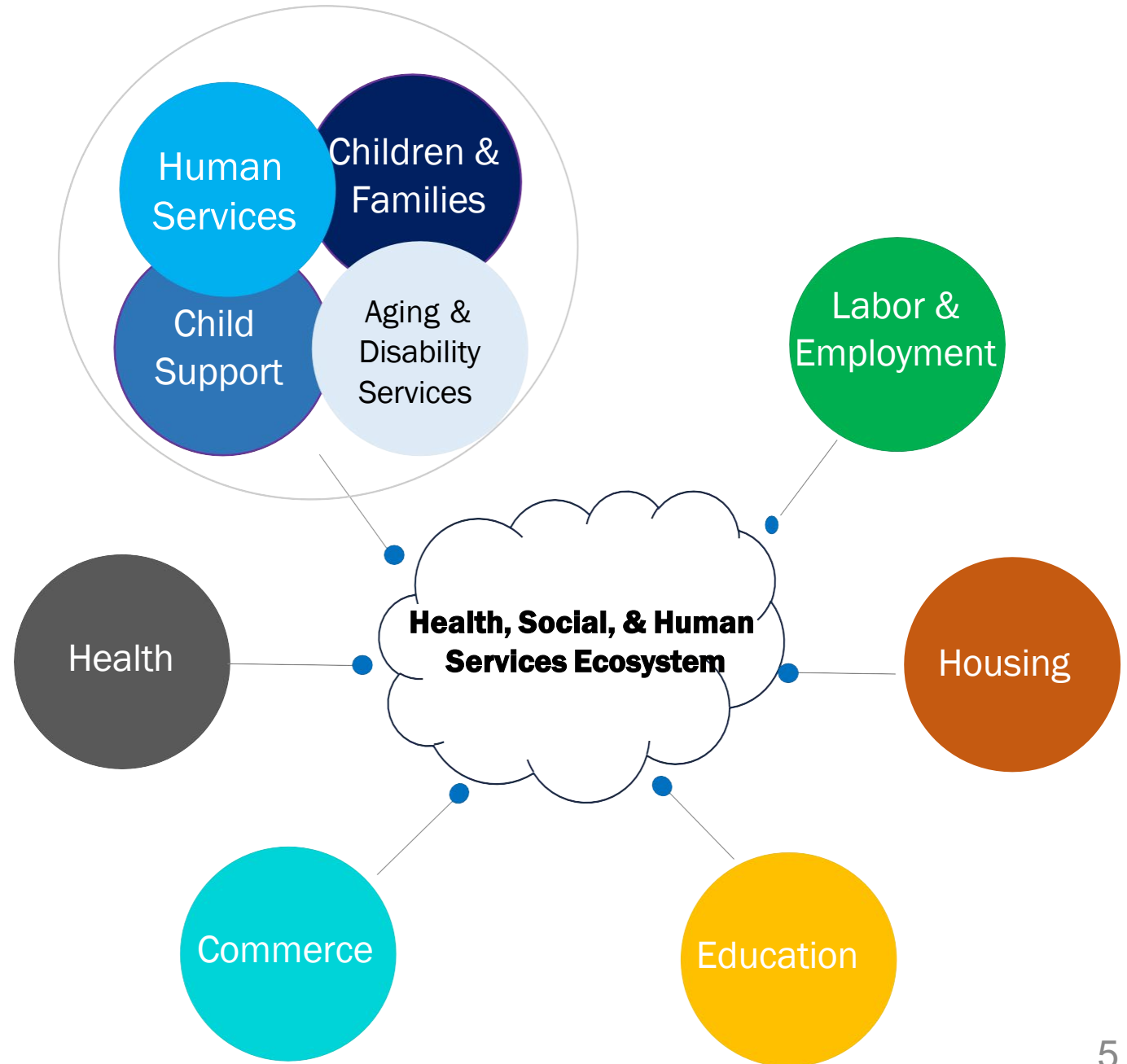
Improve the way work gets done to increase organizational capacity and deliver faster services to families





BPO in Human Services:

Examples across
the US

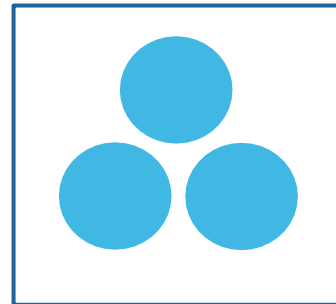


Example in Health And Human Services

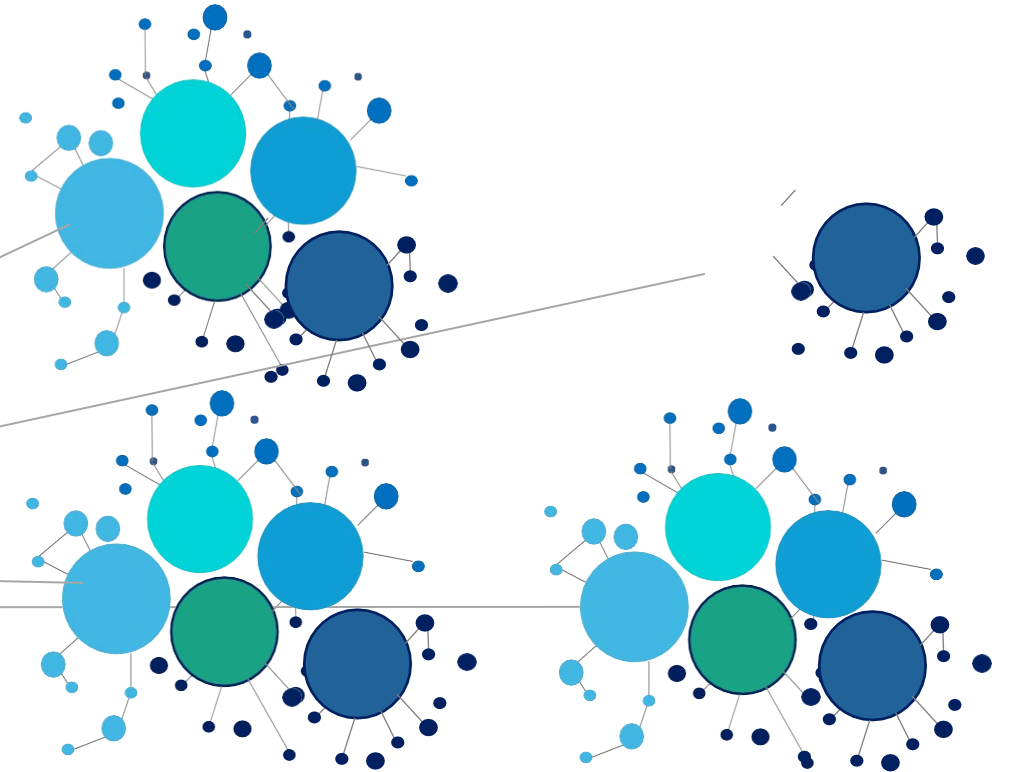
monthly eligibility applications and renewals vs. customer interactions

Medicaid (MAGI, Non-MAGI, LTSS), SNAP, TANF, Child Care

For every customer contacting the agency to initiate a service, there are three more navigating the process, asking for a status update, rescheduling appointments, or calling to make sure verifications were received.



300,000



1.2 million

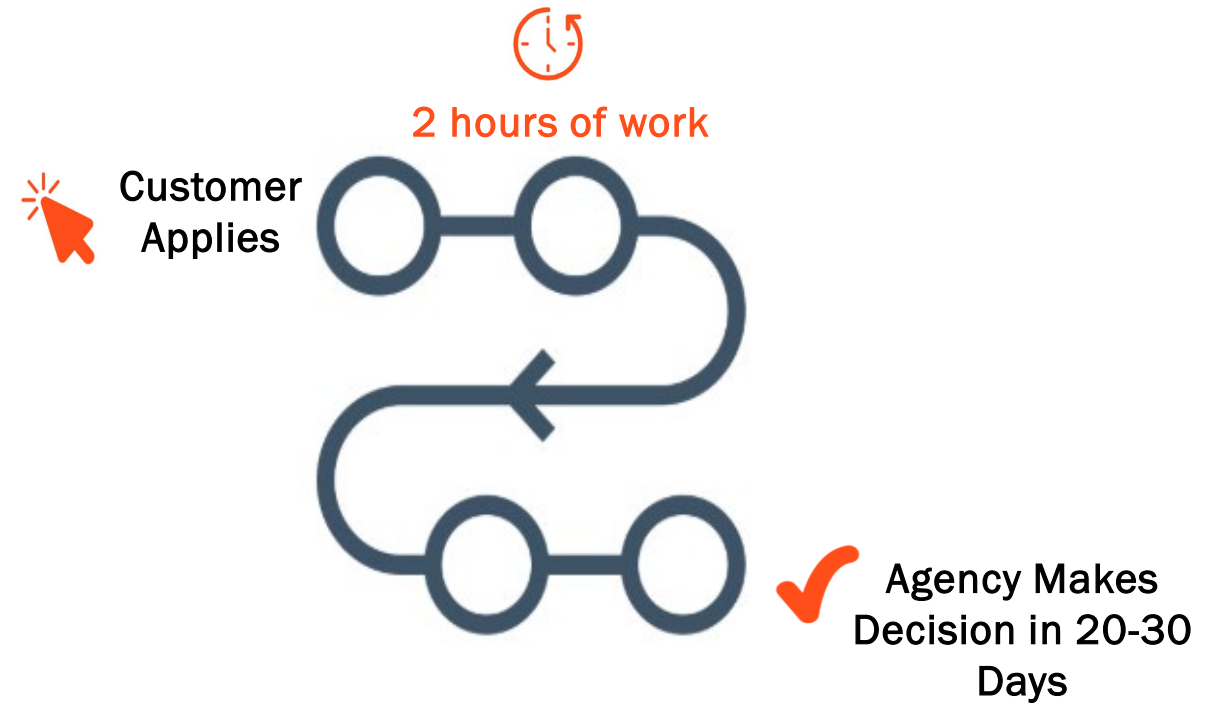
**CUSTOMER
INTERACTIONS / TASKS**

Why Eligibility Teams Struggle to Keep Up:

Capacity Challenges Explained

Completing a complex eligibility determination (application or annual renewal for Medicaid, SNAP, or TANF) **requires only 1 to 2 hours of staff work time**. Yet, **customers often wait several weeks** for a final decision.

In other words, agencies perform 2 hours of work spread across 30 days



2 Hours of Work Performed Over 30 Days

....and how does 2 hours of work become 30+ days?

Business Practice
(or policy choice)



Impacts on Customers and Agency

Scheduling



Adds 5-10 days. Guarantees additional customer interactions
50% no-show rate for scheduled appointments requiring staff rework

+ Pending



+ 10-15 days and additional customer interactions
Create repeat and unnecessary customer calls and visits

+ Batching



Only doing certain things at certain times

+ Bottlenecks



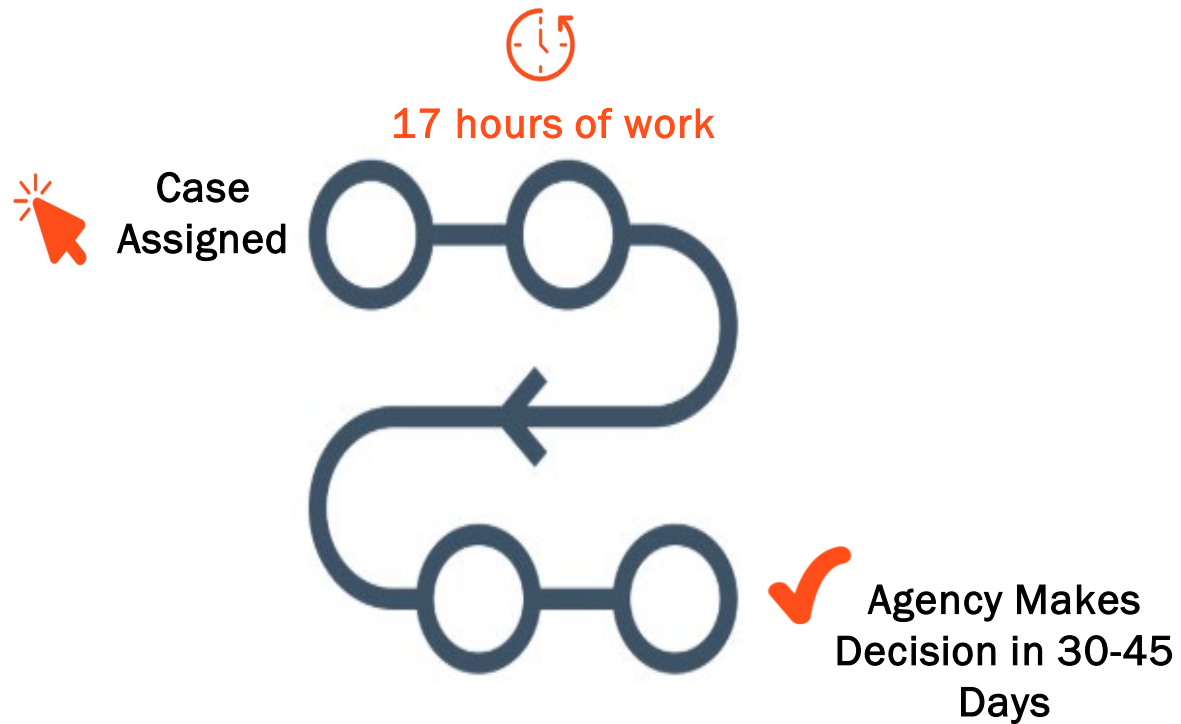
More demand through a point than capacity to handle

= Backlogs



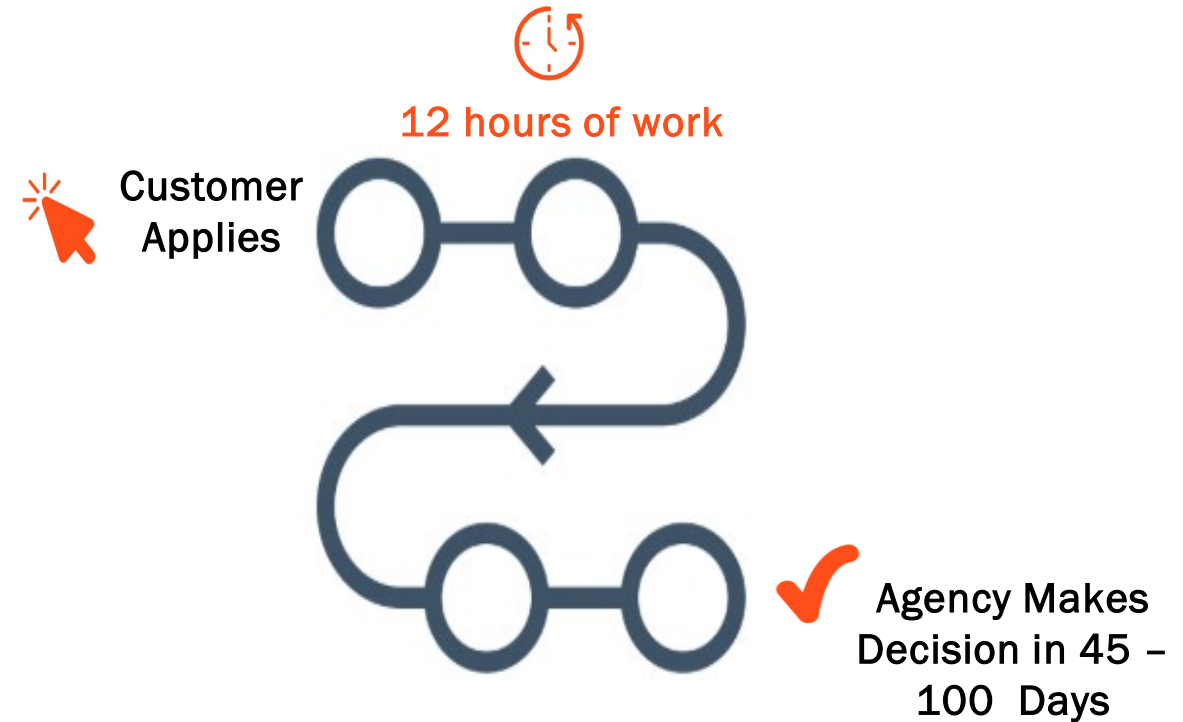
Unfinished work drives repeat customer interactions eroding staff capacity

Child Welfare Safety Assessment



17 Hours of Work Performed Over 45 Days

Long-Term Care Eligibility (financial and services)



12 Hours of Work Performed Over 100 Days



Audience Question #1

Who Else is Like Us

From your personal experience, as consumers of goods and services, who else seems to struggle with speed of delivery, work time vs. elapsed time, etc.?



1

Cable Installation:

A customer may wait 7 to 10 days (elapsed time) for the cable company to turn the service on, but the actual work time for the process is 30 – 45 minutes.

2

Building Permits:

It might take 6 months to get approval for construction, while the review process takes 10- 15 hours.

3

Passports:

The process to issue a passport may take 8–12 weeks, but the actual work time for processing and printing is a few hours.

4

Mortgage Approvals:

A home loan application might take 45 days (elapsed time) to close, while the actual work time of processing, underwriting, and approving is 5–10 hours.

5

Insurance Claims:

It may take 2 months (elapsed time) to provide all the information and answer multiple questions, while the actual work time of processing the claim is 5 hours.

6

Health Care:

A person spends 3 months waiting for an appointment (elapsed time), but the actual medical care they receive (work time) is 15 minutes.



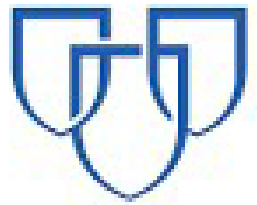


Audience Question #2

Who Has Solved for this Problem

Can you think of a business or industry that has already solved challenges like speed of delivery and balancing “work time” versus “elapsed time”?





MAYO CLINIC

Redesigned its business processes to become the leader in patient outcomes and operational efficiency

1

Center for Innovation:

- Apply Design-Thinking to Health Delivery
- Clinicians, project managers, IT specialists, and service designers reimaged how care is delivered

2

Outcome:

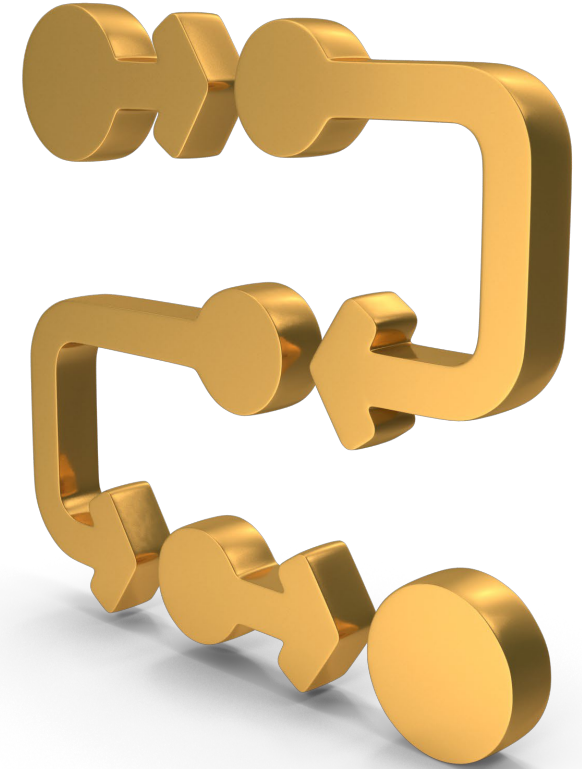
- Multidisciplinary teams collaborate in real time to address all a patient's health needs in a single visit

3

Business-led technology aligned with the business model, including integrated medical records, instant clinical communication tools, AI, etc.



Human Centered Design

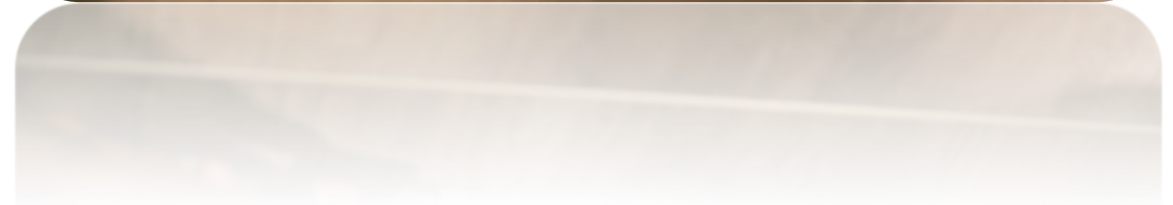




What is Human-Centered Design (HCD)?

An approach that puts individuals and families at the center of how services are designed and delivered. The goal is to create services that are accessible, respectful, and responsive to real-life needs.

- Ground design in the lived experiences of customers and staff
- Co-create solutions with those directly impacted
- Simplify and humanize processes, not just automate them
- Focus on usability, accessibility, and satisfaction





Michigan's Experience with Human Centered Design

Benefits of HCD in Health & Human Services



Why It Matters for HHS

- **Improves Outcomes:** Services are easier to access, reducing errors, backlogs, and missed appointments.
- **Increases Equity:** Builds systems that work for diverse populations, including vulnerable families.
- **Boosts Staff Efficiency & Morale:** Simplified workflows free up time for meaningful interactions.
- **Drives Trust & Compliance:** People are more likely to follow through when processes feel clear and respectful.
- **Aligns Policy with Practice** – Ensures reforms are practical and resonate with frontline realities.



Implementing Business Process Optimization (BPO) and Human-Centered Design (HCD):

Connecting Potential to Practice





BPO + HCD: Improving Systems that work for People

Aligning operations for efficiency (BPO) while designing around user needs (HCD)



Optimal Child Support Program

1

Business Process Optimization



Goal: Serve customers faster with fewer steps and greater efficiency

Levers:

- Reduce time to complete actions
- Simplify workflows for staff
- Remove inefficiencies and redundancies
- Align Policy with Process

2

Human Centered Design



Goal: Design an experience rooted in customers needs and perspectives

Levers:

- Understand the needs and experiences of customers
- Improve usability, accessibility, and satisfaction
- Design with customer experience with input from customers

3

Together



Goal: Builds efficient systems that work well for the people who use them

Levers:

- Drive modernization through business priorities, not just technology



BPO and HCD: Potential and Practice

- BPO and HCD have the **potential** to bring valuable change to many stakeholders simultaneously
- In **practice**, the success of both types of projects seems to rest primarily on how well your program:
 - Matches the tool (BPO or HCD) to the task
 - Balances bottom-up vs top-down tensions
 - Meshes with the organizational culture of the project team
 - Meets the real needs of as many stakeholders as possible
 - Trusts the process



A Sample Project Employing BPO and HCD Principles: Ramsey County (MN)

Gather Feedback on Forms

Asked staff for their input on forms—what's working and what isn't

Looked at examples of completed and submitted forms to see, question by question, what

Worked to align the new forms with program priorities

Redesign Forms

Designed to meet program goals and motivate participants to respond promptly and completely

Grounded in research about how reading really works

Visually lighter and with a clearer logic to the structure

Deliver in Print and Electronically

Giving participants options

Electronic options can be printed—but also can be filled in on a phone

Accept Responses Electronically and by Mail

Print and mail remain available

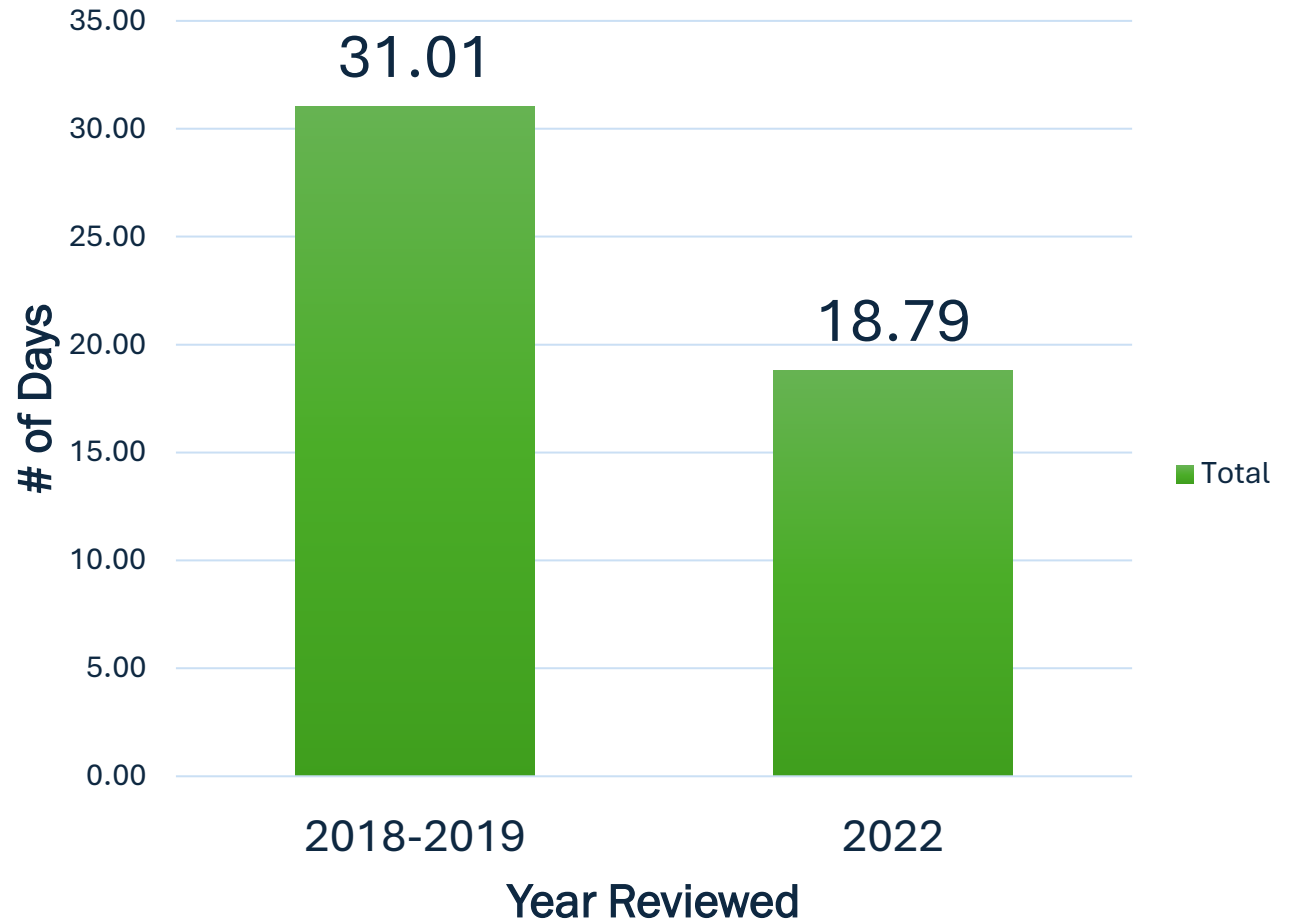
Responses can come as scans or a fillable PDF

Electronic signatures allowed



A Sample Project Employing BPO and HCD Principles: Ramsey County (MN)

Ramsey County reduced the average number of days to receive completed forms from clients by redesigning forms using behavioral economics principles and changing processes.





Call to Action

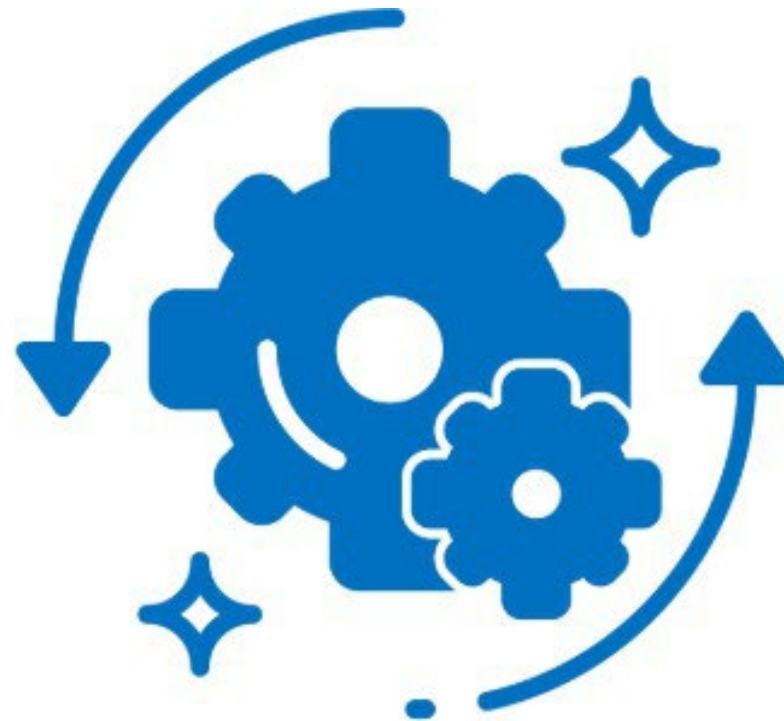




Business Led Modernization

1

Evaluate and optimize (fine-tune) workflows – the steps and methods used to complete Child Support orders, modifications, and related tasks.





Business Led Modernization

- 1** Evaluate and optimize (fine-tune) workflows.
- 2** Align Policy with Process within Federal and State statute flexibility.





Business Led Modernization

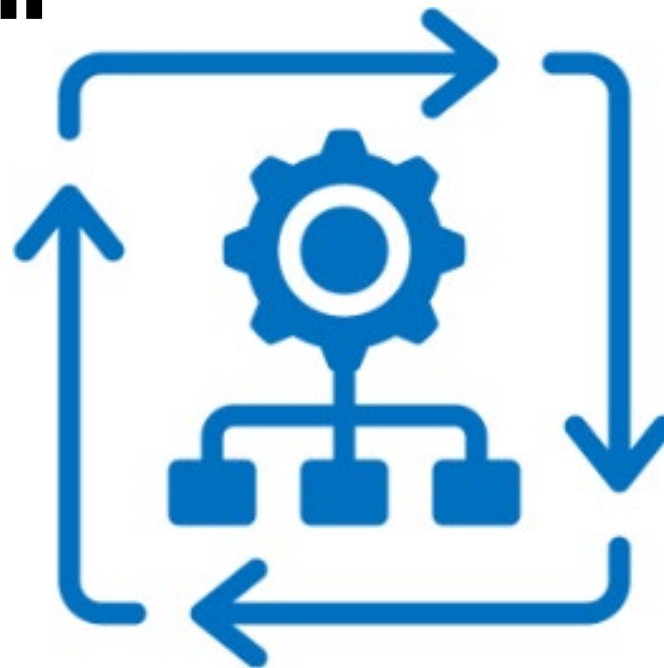
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Business Led Modernization

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- 3** Design with the customer and worker experience in mind.
- 4** Automate repetitive tasks and align work routing to the business model.





Business Led Modernization

- 1 Evaluate and optimize (fine-tune) workflows.
- 2 Align Policy with Process within Federal and State statute flexibility.
- 3 Design with the customer and worker experience in mind.
- 4 Automate repetitive tasks and align work routing to the business model.
- 5 Design new case management systems to support efficient service delivery.....not the other way around!





Thank You

