Alaska Department of Health and Social Services

Public Assistance Division

December 10th, 2009

Facilitated by the Change and Innovation Agency

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Dear Brian,

It is my pleasure to provide a follow-up report from the Gambell Street Public Assistance Office Kaizen event the week of October 25th, 2009. It was an honor spending a week with Alaska Public Assistance Staff. Their passion to serve their customers was both impressive and contagious.

Even with double-digit increases in caseloads and a quantified food stamp payment error rate of 8%, Gambell Street staff still said that they wanted to provide services to their clients the same day they applied. This is impressive considering that many staff across the country have gone into survival mode and struggle to see beyond the piles of backlog on their desks.

Throughout the week we challenged the participants to completely change their beliefs about their work. We challenged them to believe that they could go from appointments to same-day service. We challenged them to believe that they can eventually handle their customer demand with no new staff. We challenged them to believe that they can realize a day with no backlog and vastly reduced levels of stress. As we expected, they were very skeptical. As they worked throughout the week, however, beliefs began to change. With those changed beliefs we began to plan for the most radical change that an agency can undergo – the change of the main business model.

The Gambell participants created recommendations to abandon the beloved Case Management model and switch to the Process Management model of operations, whereby the processes of Intake, Interview, Verification, Eligibility, Maintenance and Changes are managed. This report will take you into the week of October 25th, and explain what we hope will be a very exciting and high-performance future for the Public Assistance Division of the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.

Best Regards,

Blake Shaw
Senior Partner

UNDERSTANDING AND METHODOLOGY

Set-Up

In August 2009, DPA released an rfip to develop a weeklong Kaizen event focusing on improvement of not just the busiest Gambell Street Office in Anchorage, but eventual improvement across the state of Alaska. Specifically, DPA stated that it would like to:

- Improve accuracy rates in determining eligibility
- Eliminate delays in conducting face to face interviews with clients

At the time, the rfip stated that Alaska was facing double digit increases in caseloads and that the quantified food stamp payment error rate was at 8%. To help with this, the rfip required the following deliverables:

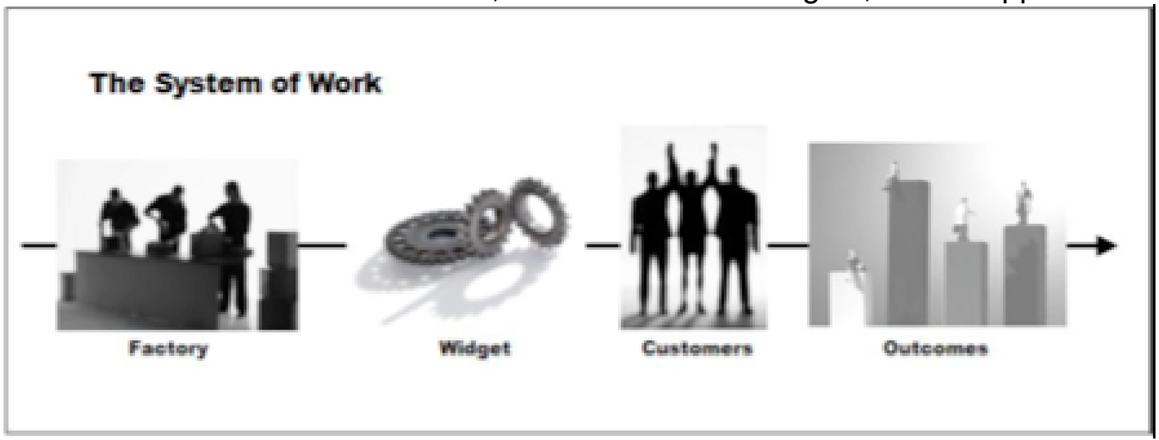
1. Assessment report detailing discoveries and observations resulting from the training session. This will include insights the offeror brings to the relationship based on past contractual engagement s and experience in the field.
2. Establish scope and focus of Gambell Event
3. Kaizen Team Selection / Active Participants / Facilitators who "Shadow"
4. Facilitate a weeklong Kaizen event in Anchorage, AK for up to 30 DPA staff members.
    a. Training for the team on "lean," and mapping and measuring current work processes
    b. Provide all course materials for up to 30 DPA staff
    c. Measure & analyze current work process, formulate process improvements
    d. Create and map new process, document new process, evaluate improvements, finalize new standard process
    e. Present results and launch to division
    f. Provide Kaizen Event "Report Out" for Senior Management

5. Review / evaluate sustainment at 30 days, 60 days, 90 days, and 1 year mark. These reviews are provided to assure sustained results.

This report will be the completion of Deliverable 1, while deliverables 2-4 have already been delivered. Deliverable 5 is ongoing.

Methodology

All work happens in systems. No matter what you do, the model of the System of Work taken from Ken Miller's book, "We Don't Make Widgets," below applies.



Whether you are Ford and your widgets are Ford Explorers, or you are a Public Assistance Office and your widgets are determinations, narratives, etc., it applies. Our methodology is to first change participant's beliefs, and then to help them apply the tools that will radically improve their business processes. At the core of everything we teach is the understanding of which system(s) of work we are trying to improve. Once team members and participants believe and identify their systems of work, they are able to measure, manage and improve those systems.

At the heart of our improvement methodology is our intent to engage teams of employees in the work of this improvement. It is our philosophy that people support what they help create. The act of engaging their hearts and minds in making critical decisions and work redesigns puts them in the position of creating solutions, which is a job satisfier. Our approach is also based on supportive and continuous training. Every effort is taught and applied on the spot.

Many states and counties are finding themselves in a bind as a result of the last two years. Systems across the country are full of inconsistencies, poor quality, revolving doors for staff, unhappy customers and very costly errors. Leaders are trying to squeeze more out of the people, and ignoring the actual opportunities, which are in the systems / work processes. One need only look at the fact that two hours of work will result in an eligibility determination, yet many states and counties consistently take 25 – 30 days to make that determination. It is our belief that the client was most likely hungry the day before they decided to walk or call into our offices. Therefore, we believe that we should honor the fact that they are desperate and see what can be done to reduce the 25-30 days down to as close to 2 hours as possible. It is also our belief that this can be done without a ridiculously expensive technological solution. All you need is to engage your line staff in the structured process outlined in this response.

First, we have to understand where we are beginning. The Case Management model is a much-loved model. If you think about it, we tend to carry our caseload on our sleeve as a sort of badge of honor. We complain about surpassing the 700 mark, but we secretly get pleasure out of announcing that we have such a large responsibility. This is natural, as Case Workers are pulled to the business because they have an intrinsic motivation to improve the lives of their clients. Money doesn't pull them to work every day - the opportunity to make a difference pulls them to work every day.

When it works, the case management model has several endearing qualities. First, there is the personal touch involved with case management. The worker knows the client, the client knows and trusts the worker. Everybody's happy. Second is the fact that the client has one point of contact, which is nice when you are dealing with something as critical as food and cash. And last is the sense of ownership of the case. As mentioned above, we are sensitive to owning things, cases included.

These are all wonderful qualities that have served an industry well, so long as we had certain factors in place:

- Predictable case loads
- Stable programs with stable rules and policies
- Stable IT systems
- Stable workforce

Unfortunately, we no longer have the factors listed above in the field of Human Services, and the results are devastating to both clients and staff. There is a limited amount of improvement and increased productivity you can squeeze out of Eligibility Technicians by trying to manage them and incentivize them to work harder. When the focus is changed, however, to managing work processes, the opportunities for improvement become obvious. Process management, in the case of public assistance, is about managing the processes of:

- Intake
- Interviews
- Verification and Eligibility Determinations
- Recertification
- Changes

Clearly understanding these processes allows an office to measure, manage and improve the processes that result in low-income Alaskans moving towards self-sufficiency. These processes become clear when we look at the systems we've created from the view of the customer – their walk through our system. Every effort that Gambell staff were engaged in was an effort with an intense focus on the customer that makes their goals our goals. One example of this is timeliness. Internally, our goal is 30 days, but when we ask clients what their definition of timeliness is, the typical response is "same-day." The amazing thing was that, without missing a beat, Gambell staff stated that their goal was also same-day.

The amount of change required to achieve 30 days is significantly different than the amount of change required to achieve same-day. This report will explain how your staff plans to get to same-day.

The goal of the Gambell event was to free up the capacity of your workforce to better serve customers while resulting in improved quality and happier staff. Said another way, the goal was to free up your staff's capacity to do more good.

THE KAIZEN EVENT

Close to 40 people gathered in Anchorage at the Gambell Street Public Assistance office the week of October 25th, 2009. The week was structured according to the table below:

DAY	ACTIVITIES	Deliverables
1	Better, Faster, Cheaper – proven methods to streamlining government processes	4. a.; 4.b.
2	Process Mapping; Process Analysis; Customer-Centered Government Training; Customer Segmentation	4.a; 4.b.; 4.c.; 4.d.
3	Customer-Input;[1] Begin Voice of the Customer and Idea Generation	4.d.
4 & 5	Managing Ideas – filtering of ideas; building the business case, finalizing recommendations, presenting recommendations	4.d.; 4.e.; 4.f. 5

Figure 1: Kaizen Event Flow

Day 1:

Day 1 was structured to help participants understand that their processes can be radically improved and streamlined. The morning focused on busting the myths that keep government from radically improving: 1) we don't make widgets; 2) we don't have customers; and 3) we're not here to make a profit. By late morning, the Kaizen participants had identified widgets throughout their office. For example, they had identified the fact that the following widgets flow throughout Alaska's Public Assistance offices:

- Case Notes
- Approval Letters
- Denial Letters
- Pending Letters
- Referrals
- Answers
- Quest Cards

[1] In order to conduct customer input on-site we will have to prepare this in advance of the event (invite participants, etc.).

- Case Review Reports
- Determinations
- Registered Applications
- Completed Case Files
- Weekly status reports
- Notices of Action
- Directives
- Desk Guides
- Cheat Sheets
- Coaching Sessions
- Response Letters
- Claim Determinations

Once they determined that they made widgets (above), we helped them to realize that a system of work revolves around each widget. That is, there is a business process that creates that widget for a customer to achieve a desired outcome.

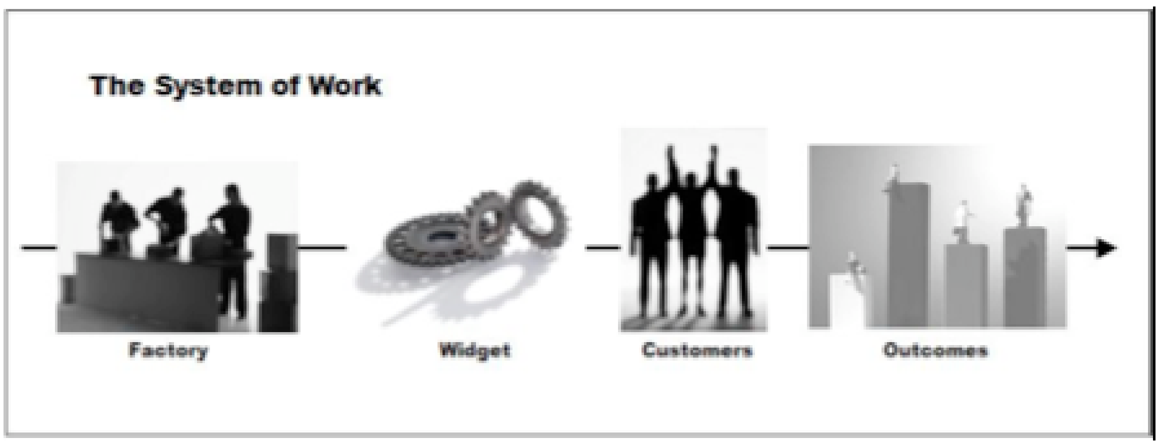


Figure 2: System of Work, taken from We Don't Make Widgets, (Ken Miller, Governing Books 2006)

For example, using the System of Work above, the process of an Interview creates **case notes** for multiple customers in Process Management: Co-workers in Verification and Eligibility; Supervisors and QA staff that will be auditing the case; and Maintenance staff that will be maintaining the case. These customers are all trying to achieve outcomes by using the widget / **case notes**. Supervisors and QA staff want to be able to quickly assess the quality of the case without hassle. Co-workers in Verification and Eligibility want to be able to quickly match verifications to the case file and make a quick and accurate determination. Maintenance staff want to clearly be able to set up and interview clients with all the necessary information for recertification. The overall outcome of everybody involved is to feed vulnerable families.

The identification of these systems allowed participants to already see their work in a different way. And once you can “draw / see” your work systems, the door is open for the measurement, management and improvement of those systems.

Following this, we moved staff into a factory simulation to better understand process improvement. Even though it is a factory simulation, the exercise was modeled after government processes. Participants went through three rounds of a competitive exercise, where the rules and policies went from very strict to very empowering. The beginning time to complete the exercise was up to nine minutes. Over the three rounds, the ending time to complete the same amount of work, with no new resources, was as low as 32 seconds. They key learning point for the group was that true process improvement isn’t about changing the actual work itself (i.e. interviewing, verifying, processing, etc.). It’s about finding and eliminating the space between the work. Said another way, staff realized that it was not their fault, it was not the customers’ fault, and it wasn’t management’s fault that timeliness and accuracy were suffering. The poor outcomes were a product of the Case Management Model.

Throughout the afternoon of Day 1, Gambell participants learned the fancy names to the techniques they intuitively knew how to use throughout the factory simulation. The techniques of process improvement were practices such as:

- Processing in parallel
- Reducing batches and batch sizes
- Eliminating bottlenecks
- Removing backlog
- Reducing inspections
- Reducing work time
- Technology enhancements

Day 1 ended with the participants feeling a sense of excitement for what they now thought may be possible with their own work systems.

Day 2:
During the second day of the Kaizen, participants mapped their own processes. Maps were created for the process of approving a client for benefits and for maintaining client benefits. We used a tool called the FACT Sheet, which stands for Function, Activity and Time. Instead of a map that dives into the minutia with decision routes, etc., the FACT sheet is akin to time-lapse photography. It paints a chronological picture (from left to right) of the process, while capturing the functions performing each activity (top to bottom). Teams recorded two measures of time on each activity: Work time and Elapsed time. Work time is the time it takes, without interruptions, to complete a task. Elapsed time is the time it currently takes to complete that task, including current interruptions and practices. For example, the FACT Sheet showed that it took less than 10 minutes to take an application and set up an appointment (work time). However, the elapsed time from application to appointment is actually two – three weeks.

The FACT Sheet, which covered the process of delivering benefits to a client, showed that the Gambell Street office takes the following times from Application to delivery of benefits:

- Elapsed Time: 14 Days – 65 Days
- Work Time: 3 Hours 25 Minutes

The Maintenance FACT Sheet found the following:

- Elapsed Time: 47 Days – 105 Days
- Work Time: 1 Hour 34 Minutes

These findings created a significant “Aha” for the Gambell participants, as they realized that 99% of the time involved in both delivering and maintaining benefits was beyond actual work. This was significant from both a business process point of view and an emotional point of view. From the angle of business process, a 99% opportunity for improvement is exciting. From the emotional point of view, the Gambell team realized that the less than desirable performance was not their fault. And realizing that, allowed their defensive guard to drop. At that moment, they didn’t see the Kaizen event as a way to fix them. They saw it as a way to fix the process. Focusing on them would only help with 1% of the entire business process.

During the afternoon of day two a series of small groups worked around different pieces of the mapped processes conducting process analysis. The small groups looked for the principles that they learned the previous day. They searched their process segments for backlog, batches, and bottlenecks. They identified those parts of the process where elapsed time was greatest, and they analyzed what was causing the time creep. They looked for unnecessary steps in the process. Some of their findings are below:

- There were 10+ steps prior to a client ever receiving an interview
- It was sometimes up to 3 weeks before a client received an interview
- Verification potentially took up to 2 weeks, some due to client, some due to the ET having time to match verifications
- Registration of cases by clerical staff seemed to cause a delay
- There were 4-6 value-added steps in a 30+ step process
- Batching was prevalent throughout the office

By the end of the day, the breakout groups reported their findings to the large group. We tabled the findings until the afternoon of the next day so that we could focus on the customers.

Day 3:
Being consistent with the System of Work model, each widget has a customer. The participants were challenged to think of “customer” not just as the people walking through their doors and calling their phones, but also as the people using their widgets. The customer depends on which widget you are talking about. Below are some of the customers that were identified:

Case Notes / Canos	Verification and Eligibility Staff Audit / Review Staff Maintenance Staff
Approval, Denial and Pend Letters, Notices of Action	Client
Referrals, Answers, Quest Cards	Client
Case Review Reports	Eligibility Technicians Management
Registered Applications	Interviewer
Desk Guides, Cheat Sheets, Coaching Sessions	Eligibility Technicians

Figure 3: Widgets and Customers

As a large group, we discussed what customers walking in the door wanted. It was determined that their desired outcomes were to feed their families as quickly and accurately as possible. Going further, it was decided that they would like to feed their families the same day they apply for services.

Next we discussed what would be the most significant widget internal to the office. Without a doubt, the group said that it would be the Case Note, or Cano. Keeping that in mind, breakout groups took on the roll of a different customer and all worked in a mock focus group setting to provide customer feedback on a satisfying Cano. The customer groups were:

- Verification and Eligibility Staff (if they were to pick up a case that another ET started)
- Quality Assurance
- Maintenance

The findings were similar (and will be explained under Recommendation 7), and they all led to one conclusion: That the Canos must be standardized. A very positive aspect of this exercise was that the leader of a separate Cano committee was present. There were a couple of significant customer desires that had no yet been included in the Cano Committee's recommendations. The representative agreed to take the customer desires back to the Cano Committee to incorporate the recommendations.

Near the end of Day 3, the Gambell Team began to consider how to reconcile the Process Analysis findings with the Customer work. It became clear that the current Case Management model was not going to address either set of findings. The belief in the room was that it was necessary to change to a system of

Process Management, but there was not yet a belief that it could be done with current resources.

To address this, we began to draw the picture of Process Management in an office. With each process, we added Gambell data. For example, we noted that approximately 3,800 people walk into the lobby each month. Looking at the data, we found that 1,200 of those people apply for benefits. Based on the knowledge of the ETs and Clerical staff in the room, we discerned that the other 2,600 people were walking in the ask questions, talk to their caseworker, drop off information or to pick up forms and printouts.

We went further with the math, figuring out how much time would be spent on each process, and how many staff would be needed under the process management model. More detail is found under Recommendation 1. The figure below is an updated version of what the Gambell team created that afternoon.

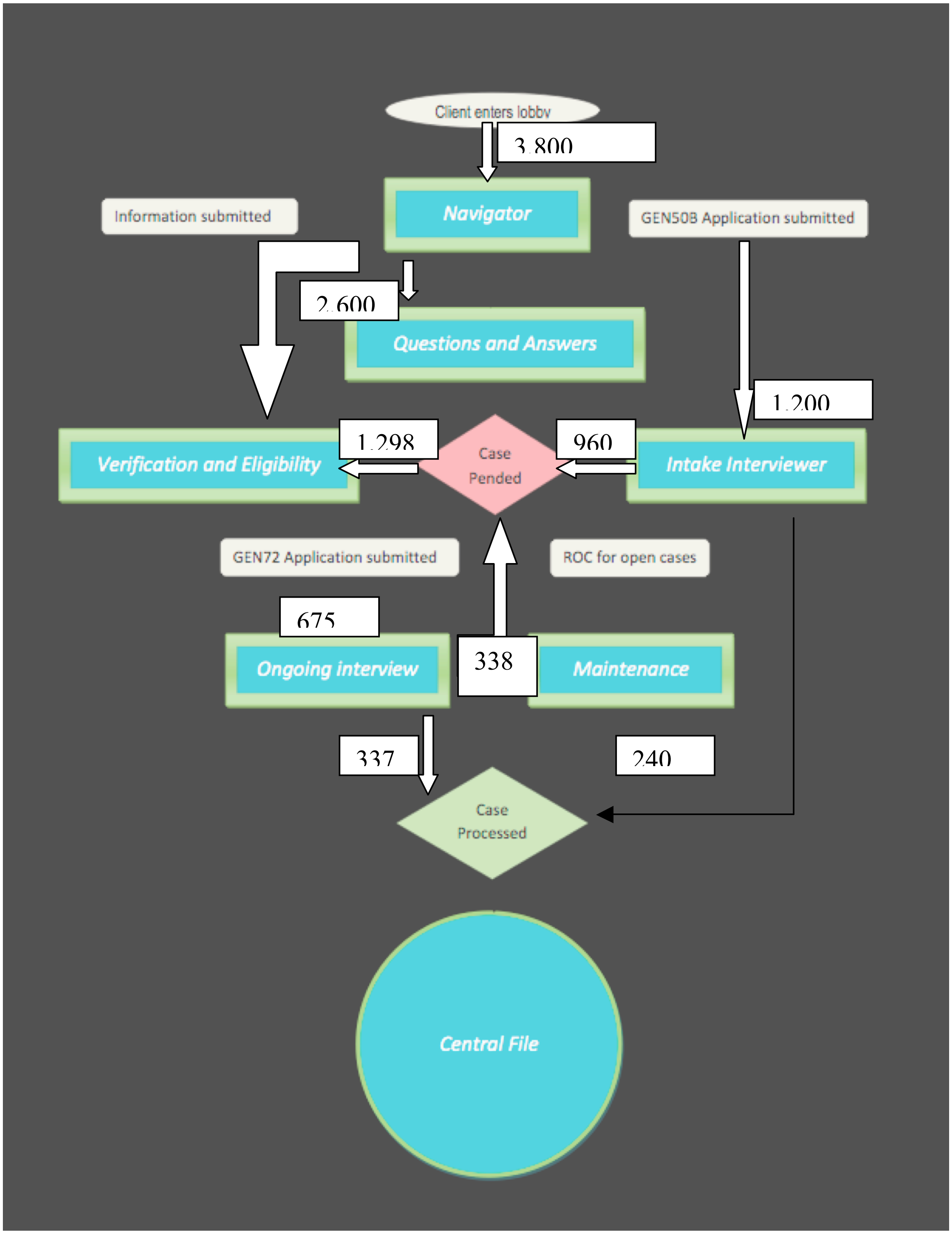


Figure 4: Lobby Flow and Math for Process Management

With the Gambell data above, the staff figured that the following staffing would be needed to move to Process Management, where clients are seen same day.

Process	Projected Staffing
Intake Interviewing	12
Questions and Answers	4
Verification and Eligibility Determinations	4
Maintenance Interviewing	3
Maintenance Reports of Change	5
TOTAL	**28**
Current Eligibility Line Staff Resources	**27 + 2 Vacancies**
Current Administrative Line Staff Resources	**8 + 2 Vacancies**

Figure 5: Process Management Staffing

Once the math was completed, there seemed to be a collective sigh of relief throughout the room. Not only did they have the staff equivalents, but their numbers did not include lead workers and supervisors. The end of Day 3 was met with staff feeling much better than they did that morning. It also ended with the decision that the next two days would be spent figuring out how to move the Gambell Street office from the Case Management model to Process Management.

Days 4&5:

Days 4 and 5 focused on the specific practices that would need to change in order to move towards the Process Management model. Breakout groups worked on specific tasks and reported their progress to the entire group throughout the day. Specific items that were worked on were:

- Lobby Design – one group spent time in the lobby observing and talking to clients. They designed the layout plan that is very similar to Figure 4 to facilitate easy triage and flow of clients.
- Backlog Identification and Reduction – This group identified all of the backlog (discussed under recommendation 2), and determined the level of effort required to eliminate the backlog.
- Support System – The clerical support breakout group determined the best plan to support process management – this included file storage and flow throughout the office to support the value-added steps to deliver

benefits to clients. It was this work that led to the part of Recommendation 1 that discussed centralized ownership of files.

- Verifications – This group looked at verification practices in Alaska, lining up the Federally required verifications next to the Alaska-required verifications. They also studied the inconsistencies of what individual ETs are asking for across the state. This group was going to have ongoing work following the Kaizen event in order to reach their recommendations. Specifically, they were going to follow up on Standard % business deduction for Self-Employment and Shelter. As they were reporting out to the large group, the ETs in the room seemed to think they were on an exciting track.

- Maintenance Interview Team – This group discussed how they would set up for maintenance interviews, how they would assign them, and how they would ensure that the general chaos at the end of the month will be minimized. This group also had further discussions to participate in following the Kaizen event.

- Case Assignment – This group discussed how ET's would be assigned an interview. It was decided that this would flow through the lead workers. The important aspect is that workers are able to conduct interviews uninterrupted by the ringing phone and/or the knowledge of any appointment looming over their heads.

During the early afternoon of October 30th, the team presented their recommendations to DPA leadership. The discussion was exciting, as leadership showed their support for moving forward. In parting, the Gambell team was asked to identify some factors that could "kill" their direction. They answered with the following:

- Too much time between the plan and implementation for us to switch directions.
- If the current backlog increases
- If staff and clients don't trust it will work
- Ongoing consistency and oversight of the model
- The ability and commitment to sustain the change from leadership

The leaders in the room addressed these concerns and gave their commitment to move forward. At the same time, they acknowledged that they understood why staff felt the way they did about some of the factors above. The discussion was rich, and ended on a positive note.

Staff were also asked to identify some of the benefits of moving towards Process Management, based on the planning they had accomplished. They mentioned the following:

- The work will be done at the end of the day

- Same day service for the clients
- There will be no caseloads hanging over our heads
- Process accountability Vs. individual accountability
- The lobby will be served every day

This concluded the weeklong Kaizen event. The Gambell team accomplished an incredible amount of work in a short period of time. It was a week, as some of them said, that will completely change the way of life for DPA service delivery. It is a change of life that will tremendously benefit Staff, Customers, and DPA as a whole.

The recommendations required to move towards Process Management are in the next section.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

As mentioned earlier in the report, we recommend that the Gambell Office (and most likely the entire state of Alaska) move to the Process Management model from the Case Management model. The most powerful piece of our recommendation is that Alaska staff came to this conclusion throughout the weeklong event in October.

As a result of the last two years, Alaska has found itself (just like its partners) in a bind. The combination of increasing caseloads and operational inconsistencies have led to increasing errors, increasing time to benefits and unhappy staff. It was clear to see during the event that the Gambell staff are tired. What we did see by mid-week, however, was a sense of hope.

Throughout the week, the participants began to understand they do make Widgets. For example, they began to see the Public Assistance office as a series of business processes that follow the client. They began to understand that an interview produces very tangible deliverables such as narratives, case files, pend letters, approval letters, etc. They also began to understand that those deliverables all go to specific customers within and outside of the office (co-workers, clients, audit staff). And most importantly, they understood that all of those deliverables, when developed in a standardized, correct manner, lead to achieving the outcomes of the office – to feed the most vulnerable families in the community.

The weight really seemed to lift off of the participants' shoulders when they realized that they do have the capacity to keep up with today's demands. Through a series of math exercises using the Gambell office customer data, the participants found that they could keep up with the interview load of 1,200 per month, and actually handle them in-house. At the same time they began to realize that Gambell can become a self-sustaining office, they realized that business-as-usual had to change.

The 13 recommendations that follow will explain what has to change at the Gambell Office in order to achieve the outcomes of this project:

Recommendations

1. Change to Process Management from Case Management
2. Reduce backlog
3. Establish the Navigator function in the lobby
4. Triage customers as they flow into the lobby
5. Move to Same-Day service, eliminating timeslot management unless an appointment is requested
6. Move Eligibility Technicians to the Front of the Office
7. Develop standardized narratives
8. Eligibility Technicians will register their own cases
9. Conduct verifications by phone first
10. Provide TV loops on verifications in the lobby
11. Provide multi-lingual information
12. Develop verification partnerships with local employers
13. Develop a new way to evaluate employee performance

1. Change from Process Management to Case Management

The model has to change. Eligibility Technicians can no longer manage the number of new applications and provide timely, quality service. Eligibility Technicians can no longer maintain growing caseloads, which leads into the vicious cycle of more new applications.

The Kaizen event produced the recommendation to specialize by function, not by program. For example, under Process Management, we need the well-rounded knowledge of the Eligibility Technicians, but it is more efficient to have process teams managing the different statuses of a case. The Gambell design will have teams managing the following processes with clerical staff supporting the overall flow:

- **Lobby Flow**
- **Interviews**
- **Verification and Eligibility**
- **Maintenance & Changes**

The process teams are set up to allow a case to flow through the system without interruption. That is, people conducting interviews will not be interrupted by constant phone calls – somebody else will be handling case related questions. Workers in Verification and Eligibility will not be dealing with interruptions that pull them away from making great determinations.

Lobby Flow:

An estimated 3,800 people walk through the doors of the Gambell Street Office each month. The interesting thing about this is the fact that just over 30% of those people actually applies for services. This fact leads to the question: Why are the other 70% coming into the lobby at all? The team discovered that they were treating all 3,800 clients the same. They all checked in. They all waited for somebody to call them. They all went through the same "pipe," regardless of whether they were there for a one-hour interview or a 10-minute question.

In terms of process flow, this is very inefficient. Looking at the highway system gives a good example of traffic flow. In order to ease congestion, highway departments have added lanes, created detours and developed express lanes. Gambell's recommendations will, in a sense, be creating detours and express lanes. For example, if people know before they get into line that they are in the wrong office, or that they can conduct their business via phone, they will have the option of detouring the route they were about to take. If a client walks in and just has a case-related question or needs to drop of verification paperwork, they will take express routes directly to the workers that can help them. Lobby flow will be managed to reduce all wait times, as well as general lobby chaos.

Interviews:
Under the Case Management Model, Eligibility Technicians spend more time managing casework than they do working with clients. They spend more time answering questions (Where's my stuff? Did you get it? Why don't you answer my calls?) than they do performing the value-added processes that result in benefits for a client. The Interview Team will be established to allow Eligibility Technicians on the team the ability to focus only on Interviews. By the time a client gets to ETs on the Interview Team (in person or via phone), it will be for an interview. Clients will be seen within an hour of application Vs. waiting for up to three weeks for their interview.

Volume *multiplied by* Projected time in minutes per transaction *divided by* 60 = Hours of work required *divided by* 106 FTE hours = Projected Staffing for function
Figure 6: Staff Projection Formula

1,200 of the 3,800 people walking into the door of the Gambell Street office actually apply for benefits. 74% of these applicants are applying for Safety Net programs, while 26% are applying for Temporary Assistance and Adult Public Assistance (13% and 13% respectively). Gambell Street staff projected conservatively that these interviews would take an average of one hour each. Based on this, the participants decided to allot 11-12 staff to the function of Interviews (see Figure 6).

Eligibility Technicians on the Interview Team will be creating the following widgets:

- Completed Case Files
- Incompleted Case Files
- Documentation / Standardized Narratives
- Pend Letters
- Approval Letters
- Eligibility Determinations

Each deliverable can have multiple customers. The team discovered that while the key widget to the client is the Eligibility Determination, which allows them to feed their family, the key widget throughout the office is the Narrative. Under Process Management, if an Interviewer must Pend a case, the Eligibility Technician in Pending / Processing is the customer of that narrative, as they have to use that narrative to match the verifications and process the case.

Managing the process of Interviews will allow Gambell Street leadership to know the following:

- # of Interviews completed each day / month
- # of minutes per interview
- % of interviews that were completed at time of interview Vs. Pended
- % of interviews correct the first time
- % of interviews following the standardized narrative

- Customer Satisfaction with the widgets

Measurement will allow for analysis of the process. Analysis of the process will enable the leadership team to make sound, data-based decisions. The Interview team is projected to produce the following benefits:

- Uninterrupted Interview Times
- Clear, standardized documentation
- Clients get immediate service
- Lower risk of error
- Client needs being met quickly; benefits authorized same day when possible
- Decreased lobby traffic
- Decreased complaints
- Tasks are done at the end of the day
- No backlog to catch up on

Pending / Processing:

The next natural step in the walk of the client through the process is Pending / Processing. If the Interviewer is unable to complete the case at the time of interview, the client must provide further documentation / verification Under the Case Management model, the ability to match and process verifications relies on the availability of the Eligibility Technician to do the work. The current demand has forced Eligibility Technicians to let verifications sit on their desk for days until they have a few moments to process. And then some of the time they find the client has provided the wrong information, leading to at least another 5 days to send a letter to the client and have them respond.

Managing a Pending caseload should be akin to playing a game of hot potato. Process Management allows for a team of Eligibility Technicians to focus on nothing but Pending cases. Their mission is to move the case out of a pending status as soon as humanly possible. To accomplish this, part of this team will be stationed at the front counters of the lobby. When it is established that a client is in the lobby to drop off verifications, they will be sent down the "express lane" to the Pending / Processing team. The Eligibility Technician will be able to look at the verification, match it against the Standardized narrative, and either a) process it on the spot, or b) explain to the client that they provided the wrong information and clearly explain what is still needed, providing them with a new Pend Letter.

Another mission of the Pending / Processing team will be to monitor the verifications coming in via mail, fax, and phone. Their actions will be the same as above.

The Pending / Processing team will take much of the lost time out of the process. They will be staffed in a way that allows almost immediate action to be taken on each case as documentation flows into the office. Staff projected that the average transaction time in Pending would be 20 minutes, and that approximately 80% (960) of new interviews would be pended. Approximately 50% of Recertification interviews are pended, so an additional 338 cases would be added to Pending, totaling 1,298 interviewed cases pending verification. Following the formula in Figure 1, this would result in a workload effort of 432.6 hours and a projected staffing need of 4 FTE.

Eligibility Technicians on the Verification / Eligibility Team will be producing the following Widgets:

- Completed Case Files
- Approval Letters
- Updated Narratives
- Approval Letters
- Pend Letters
- Denial Letters

Managing the process of Verification and Eligibility will allow Gambell Street leadership to know the following:

- Avg. # of days a case is pending
- Avg. # of minutes a case is pending once the client has provided the information
- # of minutes per transaction
- % of determinations correct the first time
- Customer Satisfaction with the widgets

The benefits of the Verification and Eligibility Determination Team are:

- Quicker time to benefits
- Ability for client to receive expert advice
- Timely response to clients if they provide the wrong verification
- Decreased errors due to decreased time a case is pending

Maintenance Interviews and Changes Team:
The Maintenance Interview and Changes team will provide service to clients reviewing, recertifying or reapplying for benefits within 30 days of case closure. This team will also process reports of change and returned mail. The Case Management Model of Maintenance typically results in a high percentage of clients not being recertified. This happens as a result of missed appointments, worker overload, and the fact that many clients wait until the last few days to take action. Research shows that when clients fail to recertify, 80% of the time they come back through the door within three months to reapply. This is unnecessary rework that clogs the lobby and the phone lines.

Process Management makes it one team's responsibility to ensure as many maintenance interviews take place as possible. Many tactics can be used to make sure this happens, such as phasing "deadlines" for clients into thirds, cold calling clients to conduct the interviews, and change the recertifications from application style to change style. Because interruptions are removed from the team, they have the freedom to be proactive. They also have the freedom to be aggressive.

The participants projected that there would be 675 transactions taking place each month between recertifications and changes. At approximately one hour per transaction, the team recommended 6-7 staff.

The Maintenance Interviews and Changes Team will produce the following widgets:

- Completed Case Files
- Incompleted Case Files
- Documentation / Standardized Narratives
- Pend Letters
- Approval Letters
- Eligibility Determinations

As with the Initial Interview team, the customer of the narratives is the Verification and Eligibility team.

Managing the process of Interviews will allow Gambell Street leadership to know the following:

- # of Interviews completed each day / month
- # of minutes per interview
- % of interviews that were completed at time of interview Vs. Pended
- % of interviews correct the first time
- % of interviews following the standardized narrative
- % of recertifications due that are completed each month
- Customer Satisfaction with the widgets

The benefits of the Maintenance Interviews and Changes team are:

- Clients get immediate service
- Clients needs are met very quickly; benefits authorized same day when possible
- Reduced lobby traffic
- Decrease in complaints
- Decrease in client phone calls
- Tasks are done at the end of the day
- No backlog to catch up on
- Caseworkers relieved of individual caseloads
- Decreased risk of error

Administrative Support and File Control – Functional Area
Process Management in a paper-based system requires a robust support system – one that allows files to be ready and delivered on demand. The entire set-up of files needs to make logical sense to the overall flow of the client / case through the system. **This requires that files be pulled from Elgibility Technicians' offices and placed in a central place, based on the status of the case.** For example, interviews that end up being Pended should be kept together in close proximity to the Verification and Eligibility team. Cases that are processed, should be in close proximity to the Recertification group, as this is where they will be working cases from each month.

The team projects that this team will require nine clerical staff, and will produce the following benefits:

- Clients get immediate service
- Immediate response for ET's file, verification, and information requests
- Decrease in phone calls
- Decrease in complaints
- Decrease in lost or misplaced files

2. **Reduce Backlog**

Case Management offices typically have a backlog of work. The problem is that the backlog is difficult to see and / or measure, due to the fact that it is spread across 25-30 Eligibility Technicians. In Process Management, we define backlog as any of the following:

- Applications needing registration
- Applications needing interviews
- Applications pending verifications
- Applications pending eligibility determinations
- Changes needing actions
- File requests
- Archiving

To say it another way, if there is any action where the customer has done their part and they are merely waiting on the office to take action, consider it backlog. Prior to switching your operational model, efforts should be made to eliminate / or minimize the amount of backlog in the system. The reason for this is that the current work in the system is not consistent or standardized. An additional reason is that changing your model is hard enough – a pile of backlog only complicates the transition. It doesn't make transition impossible, but it does cause it to take longer.

The Gambell team identified the following backlog and Level of effort to recover:

Backlog Type	**# of Items**	**Level of Effort (FTE over 1 month)**
Apps needing registration	110	1
Apps needing interview	400	4
Apps pending verifications	153	1
Apps pending determination	153	1
Changes needing actions	1,000	3
File Requests	30	1
Archiving	150 hours	1

The very act of identifying the size of the backlog is a first step towards eliminating it. Without understanding the size, you can't possibly give staff a goal…a light at the end of the tunnel. We recommend that you make the backlog, as well as the progress to elimination of the backlog, very visible to the staff. "United Way" type posters work well. As the Supervisors update the daily progress, staff become increasingly invested in the efforts to succeed.

The soft-sided benefit of backlog elimination is that it feels as though a weight has been lifted from its shoulders. The hard-sided benefit of backlog elimination is that rework drastically reduces. It is the backlog that is driving the chaos in our lobbies and on our phone lines. The people with cases in the table above are the ones calling and visiting, saying, "Where's my stuff? Did you get it? Why won't you answer my calls?"

The benefits of backlog elimination are:

- Reduced phone calls
- Reduced lobby visits
- Reduced rework
- Quicker delivery of benefits
- Reduced errors
- Happier customers
- Happier staff

3. **Establish the Navigator Function in the Lobby**

Most process problems can be traced back to the first few steps of the process. This is no different in public assistance offices. The Navigator concept is seen in many environments: Alaska Airlines' Seattle Terminal; Apple Computer retail stores – Navigator functions in these environments turn a potentially confusing and frustrating experience into a quick and pleasant experience.

The Gambell Team wishes for its customers in the future to have a quick and pleasant experience, beginning with an interaction with the Navigator. According to the team's desired lobby design (shown on the next page), the Navigator will be located between the stairs and the elevator with a work station. The Navigator will quickly find out why the client is in the office and route them to the appropriate queue. In cases where questions are quick, the Navigator will be able to answer them and send clients on their way without the client having to go any further. In addition, the Navigator will divert a number of clients who are in the wrong building all together.

An additional important duty that the Navigator plays is defense. The Navigator is to keep clients from interrupting Eligibility Technicians that are in the middle of conducting interviews, processing verifications or answering questions. While the Navigator is protecting the other Eligibility Technicians, he/she also should keep track of the clients in the lobby. He/she should monitor wait times, and ensure that clients are kept informed of where they are on their list. As wait times seem to exceed acceptable (15 – 30 minutes), the Navigator should maintain communication with the appropriate team lead, so that the client can be informed.

Key measures for the lobby should be:

- Avg. # of min wait time by reason for visit
- # of people through the doors by reason

The projected benefits that the Navigator will add are:

- Clients receive immediate service
- Decreased lobby traffic
- Decreased complaints
- Less chaos in the lobby
- Informed and happy clients

4. **Triage Customer as they flow into the lobby**

Triage is the Navigator's main duty. It is built on the fact that not all customers should be treated the same. They are visiting for different reasons. According to the Gambell data, 3,800 customers walk through the doors each month. 1,200 of them apply for benefits. 312 of those 1,200 are there to apply for something beyond the Safety Net. The remaining 2,600 are their to a) ask questions; b) speak with their case worker; c) drop off information /

verifications; d) pick up forms and printouts. Each of these reasons has a different level of complexity, and therefore, a different average transaction time.

Traditional lobbies require all 3,800 customers to get in line and wait their turn. To make matters worse, traditional lobbies in the case management model require reasons a, b, and sometimes d (from above) to wait until their specific worker is available. The future Gambell office will ensure that clients flow nicely through the lobby, waiting only if the Eligibility Technicians allotted to handle their "reason" are working with other clients in the same line. The future will see some people waiting longer than others, but everyone waiting less.

Benefits of Triage are:

- Smooth office flow
- Decreased wait times
- Decreased level of Chaos
- Decrease in unnecessary visits

5. **Move to Same-Day service, eliminating timeslot management unless an appointment is requested**

Appointments almost double the number of required interactions with a customer. When a customer applies, they either drop off the application or mail it into the Gambell Street office. Either way, Gambell Street staff are currently scheduling the client for an appointment up to three weeks out. By the time the client arrives or is called for the appointment, we have had two interactions with them. When you consider the fact that there is typically a 50% no-show rate for appointments, the problem compounds itself, as staff spend time rescheduling the appointment.

Missed appointments also force us to consider the true cost. Each time a client misses an appointment, the Eligibility does not just recover an hour to catch up on unfinished business. They first have to wait until they are sure the client is a no-show. Then they have to reschedule the client. After that, they may have just 15-30 minutes until their next appointment may or may not show up. Recent studies on the inefficiencies of multi-tasking have shown that interruptions from the daily schedule usually result in the worker spending at least 15 minutes getting back to the task at hand. Sometimes, it takes up to two hours. This tells us that workers in scheduling systems have the ability to lose hours per day in productivity.

Moving to same-day service will allow the Gambell Street Office to resolve issues at first contact, eliminating unnecessary visits into the office. The benefits will be:

- Same-day resolution for clients
- Drastically reduced wait times from 3 weeks down to less than 1 hour
- Reduced Lobby Traffic

- Increased capacity to handle value-added work
- Happier customers
- Happier staff
- Less time spent scheduling and rescheduling

6. Move Eligibility Technicians to the Front of the Office

It seems counterintuitive to have your experts up front until you consider the cost of keeping them behind the walls. Case Management systems that keep clerical staff up front are doing nothing more than leaving a layer between customers and resolution. Systems do not empower clerical staff to answer case related questions or provide referrals for services outside of the office. As a result, they get burned out very quickly because they are often yelled at from both sides. The clients get angry with them because they can't provide a satisfying answer, and the ETs get angry with them because they sometimes try to provide answers to the clients. Clerical staff up front are put in a very bad position.

Process Management allows us to put the expertise where it belongs…as close to the customer as possible. Projects in other states have shown that by reducing the layers between customers and experts, revisits and rework are avoided. Unnecessary waits in the lobby are avoided because a customer is told they are in the wrong place. Incorrect verifications are identified face-to-face so that we don't lose the mail time involved when we have to send a new letter to the client. In short, clients feel supported. The combination of moving Eligibility Technicians to the front, Triage, and the Navigator function will change the entire look and feel of the customer interaction. Anxiety comes from not knowing. When we support customers on the front end, giving them every bit of knowledge that we have, their anxiety will decrease and their satisfaction will increase. At the same time, increasing the satisfaction of your customers on the front-end will also increase the satisfaction of your employees. It is much easier to be happy when your customers are happy.

7. Develop Standardized Narratives

As the participants at the Gambell event began looking at their work as a series of systems, they realized that a crucial widget to the system was the narrative. The narrative is known as the Cano in Alaska. The Cano is especially critical in the Process Management model because cases are potentially worked by multiple Eligibility Technicians. For Process Management to be successful, the Canos must be standardized. In a system where they are not standardized, trust that the work coming to you is accurate runs low. When trust runs low, ETs in Verification and Eligibility will have the tendency to rework cases. If rework is a natural part of the new system, then it will not be more efficient.

Instead, standardization of the narratives that meet customer requirements will allow staff in verification and eligibility to work the cases without reworking them.

During the Gambell event, informal focus groups were conducted for three customer groups: ETs in Verification and Eligibility; ETs in Audit Functions; and ETs in Maintenance. These groups noted that a “satisfying” Cano would be **Complete, Informative and Useful**. As we explored what these attributes mean, we found the following information:

- Has the information that I need to complete my job (determine eligibility; determine quality; set up for recertification)
- Doesn’t require us to flip through multiple pages to find what we need
- Doesn’t allow people to write a “book”

The customers also expressed the following requirements:

- Bring the Action section back
- Template
- Allows us to update progress

The best thing about the focus group was that all customers stated that a “satisfying” Cano would result in Accurate and Timely benefits. This is the most fundamental point of the entire week – The only way to create better outcomes is to create better widgets. In this case, the standardized Cano is the most crucial widget running through Alaska Public Assistance offices.

While there has recently been work to update the Cano, the Gambell team gave important input that should be incorporated into the final version of the Cano.

Benefits of a standardized Cano will be:

- Ability to work a case across processes
- Increased accuracy of cases
- Increased timeliness of benefits distribution
- Less rework of cases

8. Eligibility Technicians will register their own cases

Registration of cases is something that can be done in a matter of minutes. During the mapping of the Eligibility process, the Gambell participants found that they were creating an unnecessary handoff, as well as using non-value-added time.

The decision was made to have Eligibility Technicians register their own cases for walk-in clients. This recommendation accommodates going to same-day service, as well.

Benefits will be:

- Direct line from application to the Eligibility Technician
- One less hand-off
- Registration completed the way the Eligibility Technician needs / wants it

9. **Conduct Initial Verifications by Phone**

The Gambell Team determined that as cases go into Pending status, the risk of error increases. The current practice for gathering verifications is inconsistent. Some Eligibility Technicians gather verifications by phone, while others send a Pend letter home with the client and leave it up to them to gather the proper information. Many times, under a Case Management model, the decision to pursue the verifications or not **depends on the time crunch** that the Eligibility Technician feels that he / she is under. If they have another appointment waiting, they are more likely to Pend the case and move on to the next interview. Process Management allows them to spend the time they need to spend with the clients in front of them / on the other line without the pressure of a next appointment. Freeing the Eligibility Technicians up will allow them to pursue verifications via phone, reducing the percentage of cases that go to Pending status.

Projected benefits will be:

- Increased percentages of cases that are completed at the time of interview
- Decreased errors
- Quicker time to benefits for families

10. **Provide TV loops on verifications in the lobby**

One argument of going to same-day interviews was that clients would not bring all of their paperwork / verifications to the interview. Once the Gambell group began digging into that argument, they found that most clients currently don't show up at an interview with all of their verifications anyway.

One way to help educate clients on the proper verifications was to create a video and play it continuously in the lobby. This will allow clients to learn about proper verifications, as well as making the Eligibility Worker's review of the needed verifications more fruitful.

Projected benefits are:

- Increased accuracy of the verifications returned by clients
- Quicker time to benefits for families
- Less time needed for ETs to describe the needed verifications

11. Provide Multi-Lingual Information to Clients

The Gambell team decided that this recommendation was good customer service, as well as a good business decision. The more that customers are enabled to do things in their own language, the less support they need from staff in doing their business.

12. Develop Verification Partnerships with Local Employers

Employers have trouble handling phone calls just like our offices have trouble in high-volume times. The contact person at an employer, following a round of layoffs, is typically inundated with calls from multiple Eligibility Technicians regarding the same layoffs. These employers have moments where they just stop answering the phone, which delays the time for the Public Assistance office to verify crucial information that will lead to timely benefits.

The Gambell participants decided to pursue partnerships with the local employers that would allow fewer contacts with information about multiple clients.

Benefits will be:

- Happier employers
- Less time in Pending
- Consistent requests and responses for verifications
- Less staff time spent trying to gather verifications

13. Develop a new way to evaluate employee performance

A major concern of staff and supervisors when pondering a shift to Process Management from Case Management is who will get the blame when something goes wrong. The fact that they are measured individually on case performance drives a fear into them when they realize that other people will be sometimes finishing their work in the Process Management model.

Process Management calls for evaluations to be evaluations of the processes, not the individuals. Emphasis should be put on Team performance. For example, how many Interviews did the Interview Team complete today? What percentage of them were completed at the time of interview? What is the average number of days that cases are in Pending status? How long is it taking to feed vulnerable families? What is the timeliness and accuracy of our office, our region, and our state?

When evaluating and managing the processes, the question becomes, “where did the system fail us?” not “Who failed us?” It turns improvement conversations into objective conversations.

Does this mean that you shouldn't monitor individual performance? Of course not. It merely means that you should emphasize team and office performance. When there is a problem, then you should drill down and see what is happening at an individual level. History has proven that staff are typically giving their all. They are just constrained by a process problem. When process problems are removed, staff will perform at a desirable level.

Projected benefits of shifting evaluations will be:

- Objective emphasis on process problems, not people
- Staff willing and excited to engage in a new way of business
- Staff being open about performance
- Ability for staff and managers to discuss and solve performance issues

CONCLUSION:
Moving to Process Management is both proven and effective. If you were to compare the amount of planning work that the Gambell Team completed the week of October 25th to any other planning session, they moved mountains. They not only invested their time and energy into the event, but they invested their hearts into it by mid-week. This fact alone is a significant job satisfier. An additional job satisfier is the ability to make a difference. By moving to Process Management, your staff will be more closely connected to making a difference in the lives of their clients. They may not always see a client face-to-face, but by monitoring and managing processes, they will have knowledge that the most vulnerable citizens of Alaska are feeding their families faster and more accurately.

Process Management will allow the Gambell Street office to keep up and improve accuracy. Staff will be removed out from under increasing caseloads that keep them from taking more than a couple of days off without a sense of guilt that they are letting a needy family down.

It will be more responsive – Customers will no longer be dependent on one Eligibility Technician's availability to get much needed answers and business taken care of. They will now rely on a team, where anybody can review the standardized Cano and respond.

It will be more accountable – The very act of drawing the systems of work through the Public Assistance Offices, allows us to measure, manage and improve them. As one participant said, "It's not about trying to figure out WHO failed us. It's about figuring out where the PROCESS failed and making the correction." Process management allows for quick identification and correction of problems, leading to better overall control and management.

It will be fluid – The process teams have different peak times throughout the month for a reason. If recertifications are completed by the end of the month, Maintenance staff can be pulled to help with Interviews at the beginning of the month. If another process has a struggle for an hour, a day, a week, there is the ability to spread the capacity out without waiting for a new FTE or forcing overtime.

It will be faster – Again, 3 hours Vs. 25+ days. Process Management and the Gambell Team's plan eliminates most of the 25 days by eliminating the interruption factor.

It will be successful – with a robust implementation plan and support of the Gambell Office moving into the new model, DPA will realize the many benefits mentioned above. Most of all, DPA will realize an environment that both the Staff and Customers deserve.

IMPLEMENTATION

As Vaclav Havel said, “It is not enough to stare up the steps, we must also step up the stairs.”

Moving to Process Management is something that must be managed very tightly. Alaska is switching its entire business model, and in doing so, leadership needs to be supporting a communicating throughout the entire process. We recommend moving quickly, as you have been doing already. There are items that can be implemented in a “Blitz” style, while other items need to follow traditional implementation protocol.

“Blitz” style implementation involves recommendations that require the development of deliverables. In the case of DPA, the following items can and have already been blitzed:

- Procedural manuals
- Measurement system
- New Forms
- New applications (if appropriate)
- Development of training

This means that you bring together 2-4 people around a deliverable and give them 1-2 days of uninterrupted time to complete the deliverable. Traditional implementations would have each item assigned to an individual who would take up to two months to complete, due to the business of everyday life. The blitz sessions takes the interruption factor out of play.

During implementation and the time leading up to going live, we recommend weekly status checks via meetings or phone calls with the people responsible for the different pieces of implementation. These can be 15 minutes to two hours. The point is that everybody is on the same page, and if there is a problem, management is able to take care of it quickly.

DPA has been doing a very impressive job so far with its implementation activity. The leadership commitment and involvement has been exactly as it should be. Moving towards the actual “Go-Live” date for Gambell, DPA should consider the following:

- Communicate Regularly – staff know things are going to change, and the more frequently the “right” message is communicated to staff, the less harmful the rumors will be. You have been doing a fantastic job of communicating to Gambell and throughout the regions. This needs to continue into implementation and beyond.

- Pick Process Managers – if you have not already done so, the Supervisors at Gambell should be assigned to oversee one of the key processes. This will give them time to get used to the fact that they are about to make a change, as well as give them time to prepare not only themselves, but also their staff.

- Pick which staff will begin in which processes – Staff should be assigned to a process, as well. Again, for the same reasons above, it is good that they know this at least one month in advance of going live. We encourage that management use a mixture of staff desire and staff competence to pick who begins where.

- Decide if and how staff will rotate through the processes – You should determine if staff will rotate through the system or if they will be stable in a process. If you choose to rotate, we encourage you to keep the processes stable for at least the first three months. The model is going to need the opportunity to stabilize. Rotations within processes can be created, however, to provide a change of pace. For example, Interviewers can switch between the front counter and phones.

- Physical Changes – If physical changes will be part of your plan, these should be underway as soon as possible so that when the model goes live, staff and clients can be assured that this is the last major change they will encounter for some time.

- Cano changes made and shared – The changes to the Cano should be made, and staff should have the opportunity to use the new tool and train on it prior to going live.

- Supporting Technology – If anything will be changing – rolling phone lines for interviewers, etc. – these should be made prior to going live, and staff should receive training on them.

- Make the Go-Live an Event – The fact that moving to Process Management is such a significant change calls for a significant rollout effort. The following scenario has worked well for roll-outs that we've been a part of:

    - Monday Afternoon – Leadership / Supervisor meeting to discuss processes, measures, and the next day of staff training
    - Tuesday – All Staff Training to cover:
        - Process Management Refresher
        - New phone systems
        - Office Flow
        - Process Tutorials
        - Process breakouts (intense tutorials for each process and its staff)

    - Wednesday – Go live with the new model
        - Supervisors meet twice daily to review data and operations

- Thursday – Monitor Processes,
    - Supervisors meet twice daily to review data and operations

Staff and supervisors will feel supported in this type of rollout.

Following this section is some of the great work that has already been created by your implementation teams. This work, as I said, has been progressing with the sense of urgency and attention needed.

BACKLOG PLANNING

<u>Backlog planning</u>

<u>Maintenance</u>

<u>Gambell Maintenance Staff would be broke out into 4 functional areas for transition starting 12/17/09.</u>

Functional Areas – 12 maintenance staff members

2 staff – phones (all day) take phone calls, work reported change (if it does not backlog incoming phone calls). Staff would forward phones to daily call individuals.

3 staff – assigned to new paperwork process (current report of changes, alerts from 12/1 – current date; non interview review/recerts)

2 staff assigned to interviews - recert/review/add-ons (cold calls and scheduled appointments)

5 staff assigned to backlog work – working alerts, reports of change, reviews/recerts (this number may be reduced by 1 if staff from another functional call in as unavailable)

<u>Gambell Staff Timeline</u>

12/15/09 – Gambell Leadership will identify staff that will be assigned to each functional area – identifying staff strengths for matching.

12/17/09 – staff will be matching all information together, all reports of changes and recerts/review for same client together and then combining all items into a common pend rack by date by alpha.

12/17/09 – all caseloads will be reconciled. All lost or missing files will need to be located, and if unable to find put out cards in the file cabinets. Closed files sent to closed.

12/17, 18 and if necessary 19 - All open/pended files will be put in alpha order and will be allocated into individual ET offices. (We will look at moving all cases into a common work area, instead of offices, if bldg management will tells us the building structure can accommodate the weight load.) At this time we will have each office assigned a certain alpha caseload, and staff will be moving in and out of each other's offices to get files to complete the workload. Group discussion around why the dates around adverse action time was picked versus waiting until later, and the impacts if we had waited on dates. Most staff once the discussion occurred understood the dates and the need. Discussed overtime and ensuring voice mail messages were being returned, and impacts for other team members if all members are on board.

12/21/09 – Gambell Backlog/Transition plan will be put in place.

<u>External backlog support from Mat-Su starting 12/14/09</u>

12/14/09 – Theresa Hicks, Dawna Paukstys and Kim Dooley will be assigned full time to working Gambell backlog – any type. Stacey will help with backlog support as time allows, she is currently working TA backlogged work from cases transferred into Mat-Su. 30 items of backlogged work will be sent to Mat-Su effective Friday for starting work on Monday, 12/14/09.

Other staff that would like to work OT from Anchorage, we will work on bringing them together at Gambell to knock out as much as we can.

<u>INTAKE</u>

1/4/09 – Gambell will stop fact finding. 2 fact finders, Dwynda, Kenji and Beth will be assigned full time as walk-in interviews. This will be our attempt to stop the scheduling of interviews. We may be able to add resources depending on where we are at on backlog and other Support Teams in the Division.

1/4/09 – Lisa M and Mike H will start doing cold calls working the schedule backwards.

PROCESS DESCRIPTIONS

November 5, 2009

Workgroup meeting – over view
Jeff Robnolte, Lisa Gibbs, Ed Leach, Tammie Walker

Navigator – Functional Area

Purpose: To provide immediate service to the clients by assessing their needs and directing them to the appropriate station

Projected Staffing

- Up to three navigators – clerical staff

Projected Resources and Location

- Located between the stairs and the elevator with a desk, podium or some fashion of a work station
- Equipment needed:
    - Clipboards
    - Pens
    - Applications
    - Community Resource lists
    - Phone
    - Computer

Benefits

- Clients get immediate service
- No more full lobbies
- Decrease in complaints
- Tasks are done at the end of the day

November 5, 2009

Workgroup meeting – over view
Jeff Robnolte, Lisa Gibbs, Ed Leach, Tammie Walker

Administrative Support and File Control – Functional Area

Files

Purpose : To centrally locate files designated by stage of processing (files will not be located in ET offices)

Projected organization and file management

- Administrative Support Team - OWNS THE FILES
- All open files in one area
- All pended files in one area
- All closed files in one area
- No files in ET offices or work areas
- OA staff will be continually picking up files
- OA staff will be delivering files upon request
- At the end of the day one last sweep will be done to ensure all files are returned to centralized filing area.

OA Support

Purpose: To ensure all critical areas are covered with OA support; effectively and accurately moving files, information and verification through the process

Projected Staffing

- Verification OA support– 1
- Verification OA support – floater - 1
- Interviewing OA support – 1
- Interviewing OA support – floater - 1
- Navigator – 1 OA's
- Navigator OA support – floater - 1
- File Room – 2 OA's

- Misc. – 1 OA
    - Switchboard
    - Mail
    - Building files

Benefits

- Clients get immediate service
- Immediate response for ETs file, verification, information requests
- Decrease in phone calls
- Decrease in complaints
- Decrease in lost or misplaced files
- No back log to catch up on
- Tasks are done at the end of the day

November 5, 2009

Workgroup meeting – over view
Duane Morfield and Modesta Henriquez

Intake Interviewing

Purpose: To provide immediate service to clients applying for benefits. To gather relevant information to determine eligibility of Public Assistance programs.

Projected Staffing

- 11-12 Eligibility Technicians

Projected Resources , Requirements, and Location

- Identification of applicant needs and programs available
- Application registration and Work Services Referral, if applicable
- Ensure complete, concise documentation of information gathered; all staff must use the standard case note format (revision recommendations for CANO will be discussed shortly)
- Collateral contacts will be made gathering any information needed to complete the case determination. At least, one attempt per item.
- Case processing through approval or denial is expected; whenever possible.
- If a case determination cannot be made the case will be pended, notices sent and forwarded to the verification and eligibility team
- Information is updated in the Eligibility Information System (EIS)
- All application information/verification will be clasped together and forwarded to Central Files; once approved, denied, or pended.
- Located close to the lobby providing efficient access for applicants and staff
- Equipment needed:
    - Computer
    - Forms
    - Application packets
    - Standard CANO format (hc)
    - Hand Sanitizer
    - Bleach wipes
    - File baskets
    - Pens, paper clips, clasps, etc…
    - Community Resource lists
    - Phone
    - Copier; easy access

Benefits

- Clients get immediate service
- Lower risk of error
- Clients needs are met very quickly; benefits authorized same day when possible
- No more full lobbies
- Decrease in complaints
- Tasks are done at the end of the day
- No back log to catch up on
- Done at the end of the day

November 5, 2009

Workgroup meeting – over view
Melanie Moats, Jana Atonio, Blanche Driscoll, Tom Bybee

Maintenance Interviewing

Purpose: To provide immediate service to clients reviewing, recertifying, or reapplying for benefits within 30 days of case closure. To gather relevant information to determine on-going eligibility of Public Assistance programs.

Projected Staffing

- 5-6 Eligibility Technicians

Projected Resources , Requirements, and Location

- Registration of review and/or recertification and Work Services Referral, if applicable
- If client is in the office complete face-to-face interview; if client is not in office contact client by phone for an interview immediately; schedule interview if unable to complete interview via phone or in person. If client calls before scheduled interview time; complete interview immediately.
- Ensure complete, concise documentation of information gathered; all staff must use the standard case note format (revision recommendations for CANO will be discussed shortly)
- Collateral contacts will be made to gather any information needed to complete the case determination. At least, one attempt per item needed.
- Case processing through approval or denial is expected; whenever possible.
- If a case determination cannot be made the case will be pended, notices sent and forwarded to the verification and eligibility team
- Information is updated in the Eligibility Information System (EIS)
- All information/verification will be filed in the case file and forwarded to Central Files; once approved, denied, or pended.
- Located close to the lobby providing efficient access for applicants and staff
- Equipment needed:
    - Computer
    - Forms
    - Standard CANO format (hc)
    - Hand Sanitizer
    - Bleach wipes
    - File baskets
    - Pens, paper clips, clasps, etc…
    - Community Resource lists
    - Phone
    - Copier; easy access

Benefits

- Clients get immediate service

- Clients needs are met very quickly; benefits authorized same day when possible
- No more full lobbies
- Decrease in complaints
- Decrease client phone calls
- Tasks are done at the end of the day
- No back log to catch up on
- Case workers relieved of individual caseloads
- Lower risk of error

November 5, 2009

Workgroup meeting – over view
Blanche Driscoll, Tom Bybee

Maintenance Reports of Change

Purpose: To provide immediate service to clients reporting changes, returned mail, client calls and clients recertifying, or reapplying for benefits and do not require an interview within one day. Gather relevant information to determine on-going eligibility of Public Assistance programs.

Projected Staffing

- 5-6 Eligibility Technicians

Projected Resources , Requirements, and Location

- Registration of review and/or recertification and Work Services Referral, if applicable
- Ensure complete, concise documentation of information gathered; all staff must use the standard case note format (revision recommendations for CANO will be discussed shortly)
- Collateral contacts will be made to gathering any information needed to complete the case determination. At least, one attempt per item needed.
- Case processing through approval or denial is expected; whenever possible.
- If a case determination cannot be made the case will be pended, notices sent and forwarded to the verification and eligibility team
- Information is updated in the Eligibility Information System (EIS)
- All information/verification will be filed in the case file and forwarded to Central Files; once approved, denied, or pended.
- Equipment needed:
  - Computer
  - Forms
  - Standard CANO format (hc)
  - Hand Sanitizer
  - Bleach wipes
  - File baskets
  - Pens, paper clips, clasps, etc…
  - Community Resource lists

    - Phone
    - Copier; easy access
- Location undetermined

Benefits

- Clients get immediate service
- Clients needs are met very quickly; benefits authorized same day when possible
- No more full lobbies
- Decrease in complaints
- Decrease client phone calls
- Tasks are done at the end of the day
- No back log to catch up on
- Case workers relieved of individual caseloads
- Lower risk of error

PROCEDURAL MANUAL

Central Region: Process Management

2009-2010

Process Management Guide providing Roles, Responsibilities, Procedures, Quality Measurement, and Process Measurements to ensure adequate staffing, resources, and quality work.

I

Central Region Process Management – Process and Procedure Manual

Central Region Draft 12/7/09

Practices, Procedures, Roles, and Responsibilities of Process Management

TABLE OF CONTENTS: TO BE COMPLETED AFTER FINAL DRAFT IS APPROVED

Standard Operating Procedure: **Navigator / Triage**

1. Greet all customers entering the lobby area; ask how you can help them?
2. Direct customer to appropriate resource (i.e. resource wall for application, ET for questions or verification, drop box if client can't stay to see ET to review verification, etc…)
3. If client is applying for benefits; Navigator instructs client to complete and application.
   a. Navigator informs client to contact them once they are done with the application and an ET will see them right away for an interview.
      i. Navigator enters client name and information into appointment plus for Intake Interview Team. Navigator notifies the client the ET will be out shortly.
   b. If the client cannot stay for an interview; send to Q and A for appointment scheduling.
4. Daily: Navigator ensures lobby is stalked with all commonly used forms, brochures, etc…assist clients in the lobby as needed. Navigator station should also be stocked with forms daily.
5. Navigator constantly monitors lobby traffic and notifies appropriate staff when a bottleneck is occurring; or a client has been waiting longer than 10 minutes.

Standard Operating Procedure: **Switchboard**

1. Switchboard Programming:

Automated Answering requesting callers choose from the following options:

1. To apply for benefits press #1 (route to intake interviewing team)
2. Questions about your case press #2 (route to Q and A)

If you have an open case and need to report a change in your situation press #3 (route to maintenance ROC)

3. To verify information for a client; employers, landlords, etc… press #4 (route to verif/elig. Determination team)
4. To get information or report information for a pending case press#5 (route to pend/verif/elig team
5. For all other questions or information please press 0 (route to clerical)

Clerical Switchboard Responsibilities:

1. Clerical staff will answer all calls routed to the "other questions and information" 0.
2. Clerical will assist all callers and route call appropriately if unable to resolve client's request.

<u>Standard Operating Procedure</u>: Drop Box; Office Mail, Applications. Pouches, Faxes

1. Pick up mail from drop box, mail, and faxes throughout office at TBD time and TBD time each day
   a. Open and, date stamp
   b. Attach CLPM and forward to appropriate unit

2. Pouched mail; sort and route immediately to appropriate unit

3. Date stamp and sort recertification and reviews
   a. Forward to Maintenance Interview Unit immediately
4. Date stamp and sort drop off applications
   a. Forward to Intake Interview Unit Immediately

<u>Standard Operating Procedure</u>: Out-Going Mail

1. Prepare outgoing mail; ensure postage
2. Sort mail
3. Prepare mail pouches for couriers

<u>Standard Operating Procedure</u>: **File Control**

<u>Monitoring File Requests: Appointment Plus</u>

1. ETs will enter into appointment plus (file request section TBD) file request information
2. Clerical will monitor appointment plus and respond immediately to the ETs request for a file. Clerical will complete "ET File Location" log (appt plus??) and delivers file to requesting ET.
3. ETs ensure all case files are returned to Central Files at the end of the day.

<u>File Requests</u>:

1. File request received <u>within</u> region
2. Pull File **immediately**(check for duplicate or case management file)
3. CARC to requesting uniti/office
4. Deliver file to requesting ET within 5 minutes

1. File requested <u>outside</u> region
2. Pull file; check for case management file; deliver to Lead Worker for review

3. Lead Worker makes appropriate corrections, etc…
4. Return to control clerk within 1 day
5. Control clerk transfers file to requesting region

Filing Protocols

1. All files are returned to Central Files at the end of each day. Clerical will make regular sweeps of the office to pick up files.
2. ETs are not to have files in their office unless they are working on that specific case. All case files will be returned to clerical at the end of the day.
3. ETs are responsible for purging any file within their control when needed. Files at application and recertification are required to be purged.
4. ETs will identify files needing a volume created; these files will be given to clerical to create a new file and send the old volume to the control clerk.
5. New files will be created by clerical at the request of the ET. ETs are responsible to clasp all necessary documents together for clerical. Clerical will follow the Administrative Procedures for file organization.

Pulling closed cases from open file cabinets

1. _Utilize EIS caseload to identify closed files monthly
2. Pull closed files and move to closed file area; file in closed files, by month

Making Files

1. Tear down 6-part files; place in manila file with all data noted on label
2. Utilize recycled files (order new folders if recycled files are not available)
3. Create new case files utilizing Administrative Procedures XXXXX

Achieving Files

1. _Pull files that have been closed for 1 year
2. Prepare files in boxes and inventory
3. Complete data entry and paperwork requirements
4. Schedule pick-up

Standard Operating Procedure **Birth Verifications and Requests**

1. ETs will email their request to the appropriate site contact.
2. Clerical will return on-line verifications to the requesting unit within 1 work day
3. Out-of-state birth requests will be submitted to the Regional Office for processing

Standard Operating Procedure **Filing**

1. Identify paperwork ready to be filed; file paperwork daily
2. File open files in Central Files daily
3. File closed files in Closed Files daily
4. File pended files in Pended Files daily

Standard Operating Procedure **Supplies, Jas, Misc**

Supplies

1. Identify office supply needs, at least weekly
2. Send supply requests to the Regional office, weekly

Jas

1. Identify and pay supportive services timely

Stock Fax Machines, Equip. etc…

1. Stock all building machines daily

Standard Operating Procedure **Eligibility Questions and Answers**

The Navigator will direct clients with questions to the Q&A Desk; clients will be asked to pull a number. Q&A staff will utilize the number system to ensure fair and efficient service to customers. ***Route all verifications, reviews, recerts, etc…carc'd to Muldoon and MatSu directly to those sites. Q&A's primary focus is to assist Gambell clients; please direct Muldoon/MatSu clients to the lobby phone for assistance.***

1. Answer client questions; refer to community resources if necessary
2. Direct client to appropriate application for services, and next steps of process
3. Research and identify client questions regarding their case; identify next steps for the client; or resolve issue.
4. Clients with Gen 72 or Applications determine if an interview is needed; if yes, and can be seen immediately
   a. If yes, contact appropriate interview team
   b. If no, schedule a telephone appointment and identify programs client is applying for. Register application if time permits. Obtain cerified copy of ID, attach to recert or application.
5. Clients returning verification; review case information and identify if documents provided meet requirements. Process case if all information is available and time permits. Forward to appropriate unit if unable to process.
6. Provide print outs of client information as requested by clients
7. Reauthorize deauthorized benefits when client has inquired and the benefit was deauthorized in error. Case notes entry required.
8. Register and issue DE-25 ME coupon when necessary; review EIS to determine if eligible foe DE-25 coupon (IA interview conducted
9. Issue quest cards and answer questions
10. Verify original documents for citizenship requirements; view original documents and stamp copies as "copy made from original" date and initial.
11. Hand out and explain necessary forms and importance of returning information right away.

12. Document changes reported; take appropriate action if time allows; send pend notice. If unable to process change, set appropriate alert for pend/verification unit.

<u>Standard Operating Procedure</u> **Intake Interviewing**

The Navigator will complete the clients name in Appointment Plus for the Intake Interview Team once the client has completed their application. The Intake Interview Team is responsible for monitoring Appointment Plus to ensure clients are interviewed immediately.

1. **Appointment Plus:**
2. One team calendar named “Intake Interview Team”
3. Individual ET calendars
4. Names of clients are to be entered in sequential order (first come, first served)
5. Navigator enters client’s information and programs requesting on <u>team calendar</u> when waiting in lobby w/ completed application – color orange
6. Designated interviewing ET answering phone (1/2 day rotation) enters client’s information and programs requesting on <u>team calendar</u> when client is waiting for telephonic interview – color yellow
    a. Tell client that someone will be calling them within a designated amount of time
    b. Get good contact phone number where client can be reach
    c. If client just wants to schedule appointment – enter on team calendar starting at 8:00am on designated day for appointment – color yellow
7. Interviewing ET reviews application and programs with client
8. Interviewing enters file request into appointment plus, if a file exists
9. Interviewing ET registers application
10. Interviewing ET enters client’s information and programs on <u>individual calendar</u> when they make contact and do the interview from cold call for a mail in/drop off application – color blue
11. Interviewing ET enters client’s information and programs requested on <u>team calendar</u> when they make contact from a cold call for a mail in/drop off application and client does not want to do interview, but wants to schedule appointment – color yellow
    a. Enter on <u>team calendar</u> starting at 8:00am on designated day for appointment
12. Once application is taken to complete interview:
13. Interviewing ET moves client’s name from the team calendar to the their own individual calendar at the time they took the interview – color blue
14.)
15. **Interview:**
16. Client in Lobby or on Phone:
17. Interviewing ET will get application from navigator basket (client in lobby) or x-rack (client on phone)
    a. Take next application w/ programs requested that ET is trained in whenever possible
    b. If application with programs that ET is not trained is only option – inform lead/supervisor

    i. Lead/Supervisor will request from another unit to swap ETs for the time of the interview, or
    ii. ET and Lead/Supervisor will perform interview and complete case together

18. Review application and program w/ client
19. Register application
20. Request file from clerical using Appointment Plus
21. Review interfaces for applicants
22. Complete interview
23. Complete standard CANO and EIS entry
24. Verification needed:
    a. Make at least 1 attempt to verify any missing information
    b. Leave voicemail if possible, with pend/verification units contact number
25. Process case
    a. All programs will be worked, including already existing programs that are currently on-going. Align certification dates where appropriate. Do early recertifications/reviews whenever appropriate.
    b. Authorize
        i. If have file: all paperwork fastened in file – purge file if necessary
        ii. If no file: all paperwork grouped together and clipped
        iii. Place file / paperwork in “Pended/Open” basket in designated area
    c. Pended
        i. All pended notices have pend/verification unit’s phone number as contact number
        ii. If have file: all paperwork fastened in file – purge file if necessary
        iii. If no file: all paperwork grouped together and clipped
        iv. All pend notices are printed for case (stapled together)
        v. ETAL set for case
        vi. Hard pend case when possible
        vii. Place file/paperwork in “Pended/Open” basket in designated area
        viii. Place pend notice(s) in “Pend Letter” basket in designated area
    d. Denied
        i. If have file: all paperwork fastened in file – purge file if necessary
        ii. If no file: all paperwork grouped together and clipped
        iii. Place file / paperwork in “Denied” basket in designated area
26. Scheduled Appointments:
27. Interviewing ETs will take all scheduled interviews for the day at 8:00am and follow all steps listed above regarding interviews.
28. If client no-show - send F000 and deny other programs – place in x-rack labeled “no-show, 30/60 day denials” in designated area

29. **Mail In/Drop Offs:**
30. Mail in/drop offs will be screened and registered by ETs whose schedule starts at 7:00am and/or the phone ET and placed in x-rack in designated area
31. ETs whose schedule starts at 7:00am will screen/register till 8:00am
32. Phone ET will screen/register throughout the day

33. A.M. phone ET will pull prior day's mail in/drop off applications and send notice for interview needed / scheduling on Appointment Plus if Food Stamps requested – This is for those that the Q&A unit did not already schedule when the client was in the office.

34. Interviewing ETs will make cold call attempts to contact clients for interviews, when there are no clients in lobby or waiting for telephonic interview
35. If client wants to schedule appointment follow steps listed above under Appointment Plus

36. **30/60 Day Denials:**
37. ETs whose schedule starts at 7:00am will be responsible for pulling and denying these cases
    a. Pull un-acted report on Monday to ensure all applications have been denied
    b. Check daily to ensure denials are done timely
38. All denials that are not completed by 8:00am will be shared amongst the team daily
39. This is monitored by the Lead Worker to ensure it is completed

40. **ET Schedules:**
41. Interviewing ETs schedules will be staggered to ensure coverage of interviews during office hours. Some schedules will start at 7:00am and some schedules will end at 6:00pm. This allows for coverage of all necessary functions for the unit.

42. **Interviewing Standards:**
43. There will be many ways to determine equitability. There will be many circumstances where the number of interviews will be more or less on any given day. The standards set here are for a measurement bar average to give a guideline:
44. ET I (trained in at least FS/ME)
45. 4 Safety Net cases
46. ET II
47. 5 cash program cases
48. 6 Safety Net cases

<u>Standard Operating Procedure</u> Maintenance Interviewing

1. Register recert/review if not already completed; determine if interview is needed.
2. If no interview required – send to Reports of Change Unit for processing
3. If an interview is required -
    a. Client in office; complete interview
        i. ET requests file from clerical through Appointment Plus
        ii. Pull all intefaces
        iii. Complete interview ensure the ET has made at least 1 attempt to gather any information needed to process the case.
        iv. Case is processed, pended, or denied.
        v. If pended, send to pend/verif. unit

b. Client not in office; call and attempt cold call interview; if unsuccessful, schedule appointment, keep recert/review and paperwork in a pend rack/file cabinet filed by date/alpha send scheduled appointment notice.

c. Send file to Central Files
    i. Client contacts office for an interview; attempt to complete interview the date the client first calls.
    ii. Schedule telephone appointment if necessary
    iii. ET requests file from clerical through Appointment Plus
    iv. Pull all intefaces
    v. Complete interview ensure the ET has made at least 1 attempt to gather any information needed to process the case.
    vi. Case is processed, pended, or denied.
    vii. If pended, send to pend/verif. Unit

4. 30/60 Day Denials
    a. ETs whose schedule starts at 7:00am will be responsible for pulling and denying these cases
    b. Pull un-acted report on Monday to ensure all applications have been denied
    c. Check daily to ensure denials are done timely
    d. All denials that are not completed by 8:00am will be shared amongst the team daily
    e. This is monitored by the Lead Worker to ensure it is completed
    f.

Standard Operating Procedures **Reports of Change**

Paper – Report of Change

1. Routed to central unit mail basket; clpm attached
2. ET IV, ET III or designated ET will sort in date order. ETs will pull work for completion each day.
3. If case file is needed, ET will request file from clerical through Appointment Plus
4. ETs will make at least one attempt to gather necessary information to process change to completion.
5. ETs will match report of changes together for each case to be worked; if other changes have been received.
6. If unable to complete a change, ET will pend for necessary information and forward case to the pend/verif unit.
7. Approved cases will be sent to Central Files and CARC to Gambell Open.
8. Paperwork processed without the case file; after completing the change the ET will place a check mark in the lower right corner of each verification; this will signify to adminstrative support staff the paper work has been completed and needs to be filed in the case file.

Phone – Report of Change

1. Recommended staffing – at least 2 ETs per day on phones
2. Process change, cano and update EIS as appropriate.

3. At least, one attempt to gather necessary information to process case will be made.
4. Process case, pend or deny
5. Forward to pend/verif if necessary

Alerts and Emails

1. Designated ET sorts and distributes alerts daily
2. ETs will process alerts and make at least one attempt to gather all necessary information to complete the case action..
3. If unable to complete case action, pend, send notices and forward to pend/verif. Unit.

Gen 72 / Recertificationss/Reviews

1. Register Gen 72 for all programs (to include RF, etc…requests)
2. Send N000 instruct client to print application for services on-line or contact us if they need one mailed, schedule appointment, if new program has been requested on the Gen 72
3. Copy first page of Gen 72, and send to intake with a copy of N000 notice.
4. When ready to process case; request file on appointment plus from clerical
5. Process Gen 72, make at least one contact for all information still needed to make a decision. Process case if all information is received, if not, pend and send to pend/verif. Unit.
6. Unit work will be filed in date order. Designated ET will distribute work daily, maintain pend rack, and gather work at the end of the day.

Standard Operating Procedure **Pend, Verfication, and Eligibility**

1. Process verification as received; ideally, verification will be processed on the date received. If unable to complete this, leadership will be notified and potential resource support will be considered

2. All paperwork/verification processed without the case file; ET will make a check mark in the lower right corner of each verification. This will indicate to clerical the paperwork just needs to be filed in the case file.

3. Once processed, carc file to Gambell Open or Gambell closed and send to Central Files.

4. Long-term IA pends with other open programs will be sent to Gambell Open for monitoring; once IA information is received is will be sent to pend/verif. For processing.

5. IA pends with no attached programs will remain in the pend/verification unit until IA information is received.

1. .

Alerts

1. Checked daily by Supervisor, Lead Worker or designated ET; prioritized and distributed
2. Work all alerts on same day; action must include, case note, eis entry, authorization, pend or deny.
3. Alerts will be cleared as worked each day

Mail/Drop off Verification

1. Clerical will screen mail attach a clpm and route to the appropriate unit
2. ETs will cano, gather necessary information to process the information received; if still pending for information that will be noted in the title cano …"still pending".
3. When available, file will be attached with mail. (transfer in files, etc…)

Phones

2. Employers, landlords, etc…will be provided a direct line to contact this unit. Switchboard choices will also route those providing verification to your dedicated line.
3. ETs will take phone calls and document verification and additional information provided. ETs will CANO, update EIS and determine if a case decision can be made. If additional information is still pending; this will be noted in the case note title.
4. This units direct phone line will be covered at all times; under extreme circumstances calls may go to voice mail. These calls must be returned as quickly as possible.
5.

Email/Faxes

1. Lead or Supervisor or designated ET will check and distribute incoming emails to ETs for action.
2. ETs will process case to the fullest extent, contacting collateral contacts in an attempt to verify necessary information. If case action is complete; send to Central Files. If pended, send to pend/verif. Team.

Denied Cases for Failure to Provide – Information provided within 30/60 days

1. CANO information received
2. Process case as required
3. Send notices
4. Carc and send to Central Files

LEADERSHIP ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Central Region Leadership Roles and Responsibilities: Process Management

2009-2010

Process Management Guide for Leadership

I

TABLE OF CONTENTS: TO BE COMPLETED AFTER FINAL DRAFT IS APPROVED

Central Region Process Management – Process and Procedure Manual

1 Check in with each supervisor (this includes clerical) individually in-person to check on staffing for the day. Need to know who has called in sick and possible where to reassign staff.

2 Go over each teams' timeframes to assess where the immediate need is for that day i.e. pend/verification is farther behind then maintenance, possibly re-allocate a person for the day or week.

3 Constant monitoring of where the work/immediate need is an appropriately in coordination with leadership staff re-assign ET's and or clerical staff to where the greatest need is at that time. Functional area supervisors will need to be checking the lobby area on a regular basis to determine if more navigators are needed or more people need to assist the Q&A people or intake is backed up, etc...

4 Coordinate with leadership staff to assess work schedules, determine if someone working on the up-front/intake team is working a 7-3:30 schedule. If so then possibly assign to pend/verification and or maintenance for the first hour of their shift to process paperwork.

5 Ensure that staff are aware of the need throughout the day and that they need to be flexible and possibly moved to the area of greatest need i.e. the lobby is packed and there is a back up on interviews. Move ET's from pending/verification to interviewing and vice versa.

6 End of the day checking workloads/timeframes to get a plan for workload distribution in the a.m.

Special Considerations: This person will need to be able to make determinations on where the greatest need is at any time throughout the day. However they also must use caution and not panic, before deciding to re-assign people to interviewing they need to check and see how many people are in the lobby, how long they've been waiting and when an open slot will be available before crying "wolf"

Leadership Responsibilities: **Administrative Support**

1. Support unit team
    a. In-depth training of unit process
    b. Individualized training for struggling staff
    c. Quality assurance reviews of work or other spot checking way of determining performance
        i. Desk audits: review of work and organization
        ii. Customer complaints: internal and external
        iii. Consistency
2. Support direct reports

a. In-depth training / Communication with unit supervisor
b. Regular supervisory duties

3. Coordination of work for section
    a. Adjust daily works schedules to meet the need of unit
    b. Annual leave schedule
    c. Absences
    d. Monitoring of reports
    e. Monitoring / collecting measurement tool for unit (weekly report) from all unit team members
    f. Request of assistance from other units through the Daily Process Monitor (DPM)
4. Clear communication with other supervisors
    a. Timely
    b. Good and Bad
    c. Complete documentation regarding situations involving staff; provide to appropriate supervisor, ife not your direct reports
        i. Date issue occurred
        ii. Details of issue
        iii. What efforts have been made to remedy the situation
    d. E-mail, Telephone, Face-to-Face
    e. Inform of any scheduling issues of team members – quarterly conferences, meetings (training, team, etc…)
5. Support Supervisors who are supervising your direct reports under a different unit
    a. Follow through with requests
    b. Assist with training needs of direct report
    c. Handle performance issues in a timely manner
6. Daily contact with Daily Process Monitor (DPM)
7. Cooperate and support DPM's requests for support
8. Monitor Appointment Plus to ensure appropriate file requests and scheduling
9. Ensures a clear expectation of staff responsibilities; and holds staff accountable for meeting daily expectations.
10. Monitors incoming and outgoing baskets for unit; ensures work is completed daily; identifies bottlenecks or delays; discusses with Daily Process Monitor if support is needed
11. Monitor phone calls and client wait times; adjust resources within the unit; seek additional support from Daily Process Monitor, if needed.
12. Observes staff performance, provides coaching and feedback, identifies and recognizes staff for a job well done.
13. Reviews lobby survey forms to improve services to clients

<u>Leadership Responsibilities:</u>

Navigator / Triage

6. Ensure adequate staffing resources; ensure coverage for lunch and breaks
7. Monitor lobby area hourly; ensure lobby is clean, forms are stocked, and Navigator is assisting clients quickly and ensuring clients are not waiting for extended periods (more than 10-15 minutes)

8. If wait times are excessive; identify bottleneck and discuss coverage options with the Daily Process Monitor.

Leadership Responsibilities: **Switchboard**

2. Ensure adequate staffing resources; ensure coverage for lunch and breaks
3. Monitor switchboard operator(s) hourly. Ensure call wait times are reasonable.
4. Mail processing; ensure timely processing or identify additional resources if needed.
5. Is switchboard area stocked with necessary and up-to-date phone lists, resources, etc…(check weekly)

Leadership Responsibilities: Drop Box; Office Mail, Applications. Pouches, Faxes

5. Ensure adequate staffing resources; ensure coverage for lunch and breaks
6. Monitor assigned staff for timely pick up of mail, faxes, and drop boxes.
7. Mail processing; ensure timely processing or identify additional resources if needed.
8. Monitor to ensure pouched mail is being processed timely and prepared for courier pick-up timely.
9. Monitor to ensure recertification and reviews are date stamped and sent to Maintenance Interviewing immediately for screening.
10. Monitor to ensure applications are date stamp and sent to intake interviewing immediately for screening.

Leadership Responsibilities: **File Control**

4. Ensure adequate staffing resources; ensure coverage for lunch and breaks
5. Monitor appointment plus – file requests. Ensure timely response to file requests
6. Monitor central file area to ensure files are filed and put away daily.
7. Monitor closed file area to ensure files are filed and put away daily.
8. Ensure monthly archiving of closed case files.
9. Monitor control clerks logs for timely action and follow-up of files requests from support units and other regions
10. Monitor to ensure all case files are returned to central files at the end of each day.
11. Ensure monthly/quarterly reconciliation of central active files
12. Ensure new files are created timely and accurately

<u>Leadership Responsibilities:</u> **Birth Verifications and Requests**

4. Monitor BVS to ensure timely response to ETs

<u>Leadership Responsibilities:</u> **Supplies, Jas, Misc**

<u>Supplies</u>

3. Monitor supply closets and check the Regional Office to ensure supplies are adequately stocked and ordered timely

<u>Jas</u>

2. Monitor to ensure supportive services are paid timely

<u>Stock Fax Machines, Equip. etc…</u>

2. Monitor to ensure adequately stocked

<u>Leadership Responsibilities</u> **Eligibility Questions and Answers**

1. Support unit team
    a. In-depth training of unit process
    b. Individualized training for struggling ETs
    c. Case Reviews or other spot checking way of determining performance
        i. Desk audits: review of work and interviewing
        ii. Customer complaints: internal and external
        iii. Consistency
    d. Fair Hearings
2. Support direct reports
    a. In-depth training / Communication with unit supervisor
    b. Regular supervisory duties
3. Coordination of work for section
    a. Adjust daily works schedules to meet the need of unit
    b. Annual leave schedule
    c. Absences
    d. Monitoring of reports
    e. Monitoring / collecting measurement tool for unit (weekly report) from all unit team members
    f. Request of assistance from other units through the Daily Process Monitor (DPM)
4. Clear communication with other supervisors
    a. Timely
    b. Good and Bad
    c. Complete documentation regarding situations involving staff; provide to appropriate supervisor, ife not your direct reports
        i. Date issue occurred
        ii. Details of issue
        iii. What efforts have been made to remedy the situation

    d. E-mail, Telephone, Face-to-Face
    e. Inform of any scheduling issues of team members – quarterly conferences, meetings (training, team, etc…)

5. Support Supervisors who are supervising your direct reports under a different unit
    a. Follow through with requests
    b. Assist with training needs of direct report
    c. Handle performance issues in a timely manner
6. Daily contact with Daily Process Monitor (DPM)
7. Cooperate and support DPM's requests for support
8. Monitor Appointment Plus to ensure appropriate file requests
9. Ensures a clear expectation of staff responsibilities; and holds staff accountable for meeting daily expectations.
10. Monitors incoming and outgoing baskets for unit; ensures work is completed daily; identifies bottlenecks or delays; discusses with Daily Process Monitor if support is needed
11. Monitor phone calls and client wait times; adjust resources within the unit; seek additional support from Daily Process Monitor, if needed.
12. Observes staff performance, provides coaching and feedback, identifies and recognizes staff for a job well done.
13. Reviews lobby survey forms to improve services to clients

<u>Standard Operating Procedure</u> **Intake Interviewing**

The Navigator will complete the clients name in Appointment Plus for the Intake Interview Team once the client has completed their application. The Intake Interview Team is responsible for monitoring Appointment Plus to ensure clients are interviewed immediately.

1. Support unit team
    a. In-depth training of unit process
    b. Individualized training for struggling ETs
    c. Case Reviews or other spot checking way of determining performance
        i. Desk audits: review of work and interviewing
        ii. Customer complaints: internal and external
        iii. Consistency
    d. Fair Hearings
2. Support direct reports
    a. In-depth training / Communication with unit supervisor
    b. Regular supervisory duties
3. Coordination of work for section
    a. Adjust daily works schedules to meet the need of unit
    b. Annual leave schedule
    c. Absences

    d. Monitoring of reports
    e. Monitoring / collecting measurement tool for unit (weekly report) from all unit team members
    f. Request of assistance from other units through the Daily Process Monitor (DPM)
4. Clear communication with other supervisors
    a. Timely
    b. Good and Bad
    c. Complete documentation regarding situations involving staff; provide to appropriate supervisor, ife not your direct reports
        i. Date issue occurred
        ii. Details of issue
        iii. What efforts have been made to remedy the situation
    d. E-mail, Telephone, Face-to-Face
    e. Inform of any scheduling issues of team members – quarterly conferences, meetings (training, team, etc…)
5. Support Supervisors who are supervising your direct reports under a different unit
    a. Follow through with requests
    b. Assist with training needs of direct report
    c. Handle performance issues in a timely manner
6. Daily contact with Daily Process Monitor (DPM)
    a. Cooperate and support DPM's requests for support
7. Ensures a clear expectation of staff responsibilities; and holds staff accountable for meeting daily expectations.
8. Monitors incoming and outgoing baskets for unit; ensures work is completed daily; identifies bottlenecks or delays; discusses with Daily Process Monitor if support is needed
9. Monitor phone calls and client wait times; adjust resources within the unit; seek additional support from Daily Process Monitor, if needed.
10. Observes staff performance, provides coaching and feedback, identifies and recognizes staff for a job well done.
11. Reviews lobby survey forms to improve services to clients

<u>Standard Operating Procedure</u> **Maintenance Interviewing**

1. Support unit team
    a. In-depth training of unit process
    b. Individualized training for struggling ETs
    c. Case Reviews or other spot checking way of determining performance
        i. Desk audits: review of work and interviewing
        ii. Customer complaints: internal and external
        iii. Consistency
    d. 5 random case reviews per week will be conducted on files leaving the unit to ensure accuracy
    e. Completed cases will be entered in the case review tool

f. Pended cases will be discussed with the ET if necessary

g. Fair Hearings

2. Support direct reports
   a. In-depth training / Communication with unit supervisor
   b. Regular supervisory duties
3. Coordination of work for section
   a. Adjust daily works schedules to meet the need of unit
   b. Annual leave schedule
   c. Absences - Communicate with other supervisors and Daily Process Manager regarding absences
   d. Monitoring of reports

   e. Monitoring / collecting measurement tool for unit (weekly report) from all unit team members
   f. Request of assistance from other units through the Daily Process Monitor (DPM)
4. Clear communication with other supervisors
   a. Timely
   b. Good and Bad
   c. Complete documentation regarding situations involving staff; provide to appropriate supervisor, if not your direct reports
      i. Date issue occurred
      ii. Details of issue
      iii. What efforts have been made to remedy the situation
   d. E-mail, Telephone, Face-to-Face
   e. Inform of any scheduling issues of team members – quarterly conferences, meetings (training, team, etc…)
5. Support Supervisors who are supervising your direct reports under a different unit
   a. Follow through with requests
   b. Assist with training needs of direct report
   c. Handle performance issues in a timely manner
6. Daily contact with Daily Process Monitor (DPM)
   a. Cooperate and support DPM's requests for support
7. Meet weekly on Tuesdays to assign rotating tasks in the following areas
   a. Gather Gen 72's received at 3:00 daily; register and screen for interview; route to appropriate unit/site
   b. Organize work by matching paperwork to Gen 72's and maintaining in date order in pend rack
   c. Conduct scheduled interviews
   d. Cold call clients and conduct interviews
8. Monitor Appointment Plus : walk in interviews will end at 4:30
   a. Determine if a client is in office for an interview
   b. Assign to next available ET
   c. Contact Daily Process Manager if client will wait more than 10 minutes
9. Ensures a clear expectation of staff responsibilities; and holds staff accountable for meeting daily expectations.

10. Monitors incoming and outgoing baskets for unit; ensures work is completed daily; identifies bottlenecks or delays; discusses with Daily Process Monitor if support is needed
11. Review timeliness of current work ; if more than 2 days have accumulated, request assistance from other units through the Daily Process Manager
12. Monitor phone calls and client wait times; adjust resources within the unit; seek additional support from Daily Process Monitor, if needed.
13. Observes staff performance, provides coaching and feedback, identifies and recognizes staff for a job well done.

<u>Standard Operating Procedures</u> **Reports of Change**

1. Support unit team
    a. In-depth training of unit process
    b. Individualized training for struggling ETs
    c. Case Reviews or other spot checking way of determining performance
        i. Desk audits: review of work and interviewing
        ii. Customer complaints: internal and external
        iii. Consistency
    d. Fair Hearings
2. Support direct reports
    a. In-depth training / Communication with unit supervisor
    b. Regular supervisory duties
3. Coordination of work for section
    a. Adjust daily works schedules to meet the need of unit
    b. Annual leave schedule
    c. Absences
    d. Monitoring of reports
    e. Monitoring / collecting measurement tool for unit (weekly report) from all unit team members
    f. Request of assistance from other units through the Daily Process Monitor (DPM)
4. Clear communication with other supervisors
    a. Timely
    b. Good and Bad
    c. Complete documentation regarding situations involving staff; provide to appropriate supervisor, if not your direct reports
        i. Date issue occurred
        ii. Details of issue
        iii. What efforts have been made to remedy the situation
    d. E-mail, Telephone, Face-to-Face
    e. Inform of any scheduling issues of team members – quarterly conferences, meetings (training, team, etc…)
5. Support Supervisors who are supervising your direct reports under a different unit
    a. Follow through with requests
    b. Assist with training needs of direct report

c. Handle performance issues in a timely manner

6. Daily contact with Daily Process Monitor (DPM)
    a. Cooperate and support DPM's requests for support
7. Ensures a clear expectation of staff responsibilities; and holds staff accountable for meeting daily expectations.
8. Monitors incoming and outgoing baskets for unit; ensures work is completed daily; identifies bottlenecks or delays; discusses with Daily Process Monitor if support is needed
9. Monitor phone calls and client wait times; adjust resources within the unit; seek additional support from Daily Process Monitor, if needed.
10. Observes staff performance, provides coaching and feedback, identifies and recognizes staff for a job well done.
11. Respond to client complaints relating to work completed by ROC staff; or your direct reports or other complaints as needed.
12. Monitor unit alerts to ensure timely and accurate action
13. Monitor Appointment Plus to ensure appropriate file requests
14. Monitors and ensures organization of unit workload daily; monitors progress at least once daily.
15. Monitors to ensure all work not completed daily is returned to the "to be worked" area at the end of the day.
16. Ensure all case files are returned to Central files at the end of the day.
17. Weekly check-ins with team; what's working what'

Standard Operating Procedure **Pend, Verification, and Eligibility**

1. Ensure adequate staffing resources: ensure lunch and break coverage
2. Coordinate staffing resources with Q & A; rotate front counter and daily processing
3. Establish daily routine within team; i.e. 1 ET checks Alerts, I ET checks voice mail and returns calls, etc…
4. Weekly check-ins with team; what's working what'
5. Assigns daily work assignments; phones, employer/verification line(s), Alerts, penalty requests, client emails, identify and monitor ready to work cases; ensure timely action, etc…
6. Answer staff questions
7. Respond to client complaints relating to work completed by pend/verification/eligibility staff; or your direct reports or other complaints as needed.
8. Observes staff performance, provides coaching and feedback, identifies and recognizes staff for a job well done.
9. Monitor Appointment Plus to ensure appropriate file requests and timely response
10. Randomly review work of staff assigned to pend./verif./elig staff for accuracy and completeness; observe phone and in person client interactions.
11. Ensures a clear expectation of staff responsibilities; and holds staff accountable for meeting daily expectations.
12. Monitors incoming and outgoing baskets for unit; ensures work is completed daily; identifies bottlenecks or delays; discusses with Process Monitor Supervisor if support is needed

13. Monitors and ensures organization of unit workload daily; monitors progress at least once daily.
14. Ensures client paperwork is matched together; if more than 1 report of change is received and filed in date order.
15. Monitors to ensure all work not completed daily is returned to the "to be worked" area at the end of the day. (completes random desk audits)
16. Ensure all case files are returned to Central files at the end of the day.
17. Monitor phone calls and client wait times; adjust resources within the unit; seek additional support if needed.
18. Provide feedback to other team supervisors on employee performance of their direct reports.
19. Partner with agencies that provide verification; develop efficient and effective exchange of information.

Lead Worker:
Role/Tasks/Responsibilities –

1. Support Supervisor
    a. Cover supervisor during supervisor leave or absence
2. Support unit team
    a. In-depth training of unit process / Communication with unit supervisor
    b. Individualized training for struggling ETs
    c. Policy Resource
    d. Case Reviews or other spot checking way of determining performance
        i. Desk audits: review of work and interviewing
        ii. Customer complaints: internal and external
        iii. Consistency
    e. Fair Hearings
    f. Assist with coverage of work if necessary
    g. Assist with case processing / interviews with ETs not trained in specific programs
3. Support direct team
    a. In-depth training / Communication with unit supervisor
    b. Process Resource
4. Coordination of work for section
    a. Delegation of daily work
    b. Monitor of 30/60 day denials (intake and maintenance interviewing)
    c. Monitor Mail In/Drop Off applications and cold calls (intake and maintenance interviewing)
    d. Assist Supervisor to monitor verifications, pends, alerts, etc… for timely and accurate action
    e. Assist supervisor with internal and external client complaints
5. Clear communication with supervisor
    a. Timely
    b. Good and Bad
    c. Complete documentation regarding situations involving unit ETs
        i. Date issue occurred
        ii. Details of issue
        iii. What efforts have been made to remedy the situation

6. E-mail, Telephone, Face-to-Face
7. CRT
    a. Monthly ET training
    b. Skills Development Training

<u>Leadership (Supv and Lead) Responsibilities</u>: **Communication**

What	To Who	When	Purpose
Leave	All Supervisors	Prior to approval	Ensure Coverage
Absent team members	All Supervisors	ASAP	Coverage
Performance Issues	Direct Supervisor	When necessary Updates regularly	Training & Eval
Workload Needs	Daily Process Monitor	ASAP/throughout day	Ensure workflow
Meetings (qrtly conf, training)	All Supervisors	Prior to scheduling	coverage
Personnel Issues (continuous customer complaints, Attitude, late to work/breaks, etc…)	Direct Supervisor	Continuous	training
Kudos	Direct Supervisor	Continuous	training, morale, Eval

Training for Supervisor/leads:
Consistency of documentation and communication
All processes to ensure consistency
Registration and Case Numbering
Schedule Leads to attend DOP Performance Coaching
Cross train all leads and supervisors in all programs (identify regional training schedule)

<u>Supplies/Resources:</u>
Pend/verification – 4 pend racks + standard work equipment and work station supplies
Intake Interviewing- Baskets labeled “Pended/Open”, “Denied”, and “Pend Letters”
X-racks for: mail in/drop offs (alphabetical order), scheduled appointments (appt date order), and no-show, 30/60 day denials (alphabetical order)
Maintenance Interviewing: - Baskets labeled “Pended/Open”, “Denied”, and “Pend Letters”
X-racks for: mail in/drop offs (alphabetical order), scheduled appointments (appt date order), and no-show, 30/60 day denials (alphabetical order)

Reports of change: - Baskets labeled “Pended/Open”, “Denied”, and “Pend Letters”
X-racks for: mail in/drop offs (alphabetical order), scheduled appointments (appt date order), and no-show, 30/60 day denials (alphabetical order)

Questions and Answers: - Baskets labeled “Pended/Open”, “Denied”, and “Pend Letters”

Pend./Verif./Elig. 5 files cabinets or pend racks, - Baskets labeled “Pended/Open”, “Denied”, and “Pend