

**Quarterly Texas Integrated
Eligibility Redesign System
and Eligibility Supporting
Technologies Project
Report**

Fiscal Year 2021, Quarter 1

As Required by

**2020-21 General Appropriations
Act, House Bill 1, 86th
Legislature, Regular Session,
2019 (Article II, Health and
Human Services Commission,
Rider 165)**

Health and Human Services

Commission

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TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

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1. Overview

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is submitting this report regarding the Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) to the Legislative Budget Board and the Office of the Governor, as required by the 2020-21 General Appropriations Act, House Bill (HB) 1, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019 (Article II, HHSC, Rider 165).

Rider 165. Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS)

Included in the amounts appropriated by the Legislature in Strategy I.3.2, TIERS Capital Projects, is \$54,028,655 in All Funds (\$19,893,263 in General Revenue) in fiscal year 2020 and \$54,094,304 in All Funds (\$20,475,003 in General Revenue) in fiscal year 2021 for capital enhancements and maintenance of TIERS. The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) shall submit quarterly reports to the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor reflecting actual expenditures, cost savings, and accomplishments implementing the TIERS project. The report shall include a detailed plan for the project, a proposed schedule of expenditures, and the status of capital enhancement and maintenance activities for the TIERS project. Additionally, the report shall include detailed strategies developed and implemented by HHSC to restrict the TIERS project to those items presented and approved by the Eighty-sixth Legislature, 2019.

Notwithstanding transfer authority in Article IX, §14.03, Transfers - Capital Budget, HHSC may not expend funds in excess of the amounts identified in this section on the TIERS capital project without written approval from the Legislative Budget Board and Governor. A request to exceed the amounts identified in this section shall be considered approved unless the Legislative Budget Board issues a written disapproval within 30 business days after the date the Legislative Budget Board staff concludes its review of the proposal to expend the funds and forward its review to the Chair of the House Appropriations Committee, Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, Speaker of the House, and Lieutenant Governor. Any request for additional information from the Legislative Budget Board shall interrupt the counting of the 30 business days.

2. Accomplishments

HHSC shall submit quarterly reports reflecting accomplishments implementing the TIERS project.

2.1 Texas Works Path to Success (TWPS) Program

The purpose of this initiative is to develop and implement a program to reduce the impact of situational and generational poverty on up to 100 people, by increasing economic self-reliance, housing stability, educational advancement, and/or improved quality of life. This pilot will use education, training, employment opportunities, case management supports and social interventions to achieve these outcomes. The team developed and implemented TWPS training environment as scheduled on September 30, 2020.

2.2 Releases

Release 108

- Cycle 3 –The sprint¹ activities for Cycle 3 were completed on September 11, 2020. Release 107.3 was deployed on September 19, 2020.
- Cycle 4 – Sprint planning for Cycle 4 was completed on September 18, 2020. The sprint began on September 21, 2020 and completed on October 16, 2020. Release 108.0 was deployed on October 24, 2020.

Release 109

- Cycle 1 – Discovery (defining scope of work) for Cycle 1 of Release 109 was completed on October 14, 2020. Planning for this Cycle completed on October 23, 2020. Sprint activities for this Release Cycle began October 26, 2020 and has been completed on November 20, 2020.

¹ A sprint produces a visible, usable, deliverable product that implements one or more user interactions with the system.

- Cycle 2 – Discovery (defining scope of work) will be completed on November 11, 2020. Planning for Cycle 2 scheduled has been completed November 25, 2020 and the sprint activities will begin on November 30, 2020.

2.3 Release 107.3 and 108.0 Activity Major Accomplishments

Children's Health Insurance Program-Perinatal (CHIP-P) Updates

A CHIP-P indicator is now sent to Texas Medicaid and Healthcare Partnership (TMHP) on a CHIP-P client's Emergency Medicaid eligibility, allowing TMHP to pay Labor and Delivery claims and the CHIP-P Managed Care Organization to pay facility and doctor claims.

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Eligibility Testing

Enhancements were deployed when Eligibility Determination runs on a CHIP or CHIP-P Eligibility Determination Group (EDG). TIERS retests for Medicaid eligibility and, if eligible, TIERS denies the CHIP (or CHIP-P) EDG and certifies the individual for Medicaid without requiring a new application from the client.

Healthy Texas Women (HTW) Program

Due to the Public Health Emergency (PHE), TIERS closes the HTW program for clients who are active and receiving continuous benefits on a higher Medicaid Type of Assistance.

Fraud and Fair Hearing Decisions

When processing appeals, Fraud and Fair Hearings staff can now electronically sign, batch, and mail out TIERS decisions daily.

Case Data Search and Image Research Redesign

As part of migrating the State Portal technology and underlying platform, portal page enhancements were made to provide a better user experience.

YourTexasBenefits Account Access Enhancements

YourTexasBenefits.com was updated to eliminate the use of limited access accounts. The system now guides users through the process of creating full access accounts, the online authentication flow, and how to link a user's account to their TIERS information.

New Benefits Issuance Reconciliation Report

A new monthly DataMart report displays a summary of the daily Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) transactions and benefit amounts that are sent to the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) vendor for the prior month.

Transformed Medicaid Statistical Information System (TMSIS) for HTW Program Changes

TIERS now sends HTW eligibility certification periods to TMSIS so that TMSIS can accurately report federally-funded eligibility segments to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Automation of Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (DSNAP)

Disaster SNAP is activated in response to a major disaster, like a hurricane. HHSC has created the functionality to allow people to apply for Disaster SNAP online. A corresponding task is created so that state staff can process the application via the Task List Manager (TLM) system. Additionally, the necessary interface files to transmit DSNAP information to the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) vendor are now in place.

Federally Required Blood Lead Surveillance Screen Expansion (BLSSE)

Federally required fields were added to enhance matching data between TIERS interfaces and BLSSE. The fields added are: Ethnicity, Race, Country of Origin, Deceased, and Managed Care Plan.

Call Center Inquiry (CCI) Updates

An updated version of the CCI tool improves the quality of call management and accuracy of data provided to callers. Improving the accuracy of call records allows for research into the types of calls received, how the call was managed, and for enhanced analysis and trending of call data.

COVID-19 Activities

- Pandemic Electronic Data Sources (PELDS) - Continuous Medicaid Eligibility
HHSC was able to conduct eligibility redeterminations for individuals whose Medicaid eligibility was extended due to the PHE using a modified administrative renewal process (PELDS), in August, and every month since.
- Processes to identify individuals who are no longer eligible for their current type of Medicaid assistance are being created for deployment once the PHE ends.
- The September, October, and November SNAP supplements were issued to eligible individuals.
- Extended Medicaid certifications for households with certifications ending in September, October, and November 2020.
- Extended CHIP and CHIP-P certifications for households with certifications ending in September, October, and November 2020.

3. Project Status

3.1 Release 108 Cycle Set

Table 1 Release 108

Project Item	Report to Date	Baseline Date
Initial Planned Project Start and Finish Dates	5/7/2020 – 10/24/2020	5/7/2020
Last Reported Project Start and Finish Dates	5/7/2020 – 10/24/2020	5/7/2020
Current Estimated Project Start and Finish Dates	5/7/2020 – 10/24/2020	5/7/2020

Explanation of Variance between Last Reported and Current Start and Finish Dates

N/A

Estimated Percentage of Project Complete

Release 108 – 100%

Description of Method Used to Track Progress

Micro Focus Project and Portfolio Management Centre; Microsoft Office Project

3.2 Release 109 Cycle Set

Table 1 Release 109

Project Item	Report to Date	Baseline Date
Initial Planned Project Start and Finish Dates	9/24/2020 – 3/13/2021	9/24/2020
Last Reported Project	9/24/2020 – 3/13/2021	9/24/2020

Project Item	Report to Date	Baseline Date
Start and Finish Dates		
Current Estimated Project Start and Finish Dates	9/24/2020 – 3/13/2021	9/24/2020

Explanation of Variance between Last Reported and Current Start and Finish Dates

N/A

Estimated Percentage of Project Complete

Release 109 – 34%

Description of Method Used to Track Progress

Micro Focus Project and Portfolio Management Centre; Microsoft Office Project

4. Project Plan

Event	Start Date	Target Finish	Actual Finish	% Complete
Eligibility & Enrollment Systems Modernization	Fri 6/15/12	Sat 3/13/21		98%
Release 108 Cycle Set	Thu 5/7/20	Fri 10/16/20	Fri 10/16/20	100%
Release 109 Cycle Set	Thu 9/24/20	Fri 3/5/21		34%
Cycle 1 - R108.1	Thu 9/24/20	Fri 11/20/20	Fri 11/20/20	100%
Cycle 2 - R108.2	Thu 10/29/20	Fri 12/25/20		3%
Discovery	Thu 10/29/20	Wed 11/11/20	Wed 11/11/20	100%
Team 1 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Modification to application and renewal forms (YTB and HTW websites)	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 2 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Modification to application and renewal forms (YTB and HTW websites)	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 3 - MCS - Report Merges & Separates to TMSIS	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 4 - MCS - Report Merges & Separates to TMSIS	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 5 - MCS - HB72 Additional Requirements	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 6 - MCS - HB72 Additional Requirements	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 7 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Application/Renewal processing and Administrative renewals	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 8 - AES - HTW 1115 Waiver - Application/Renewal processing and Administrative renewals	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 9 - MCS - Managed Care Modernization (RR)	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 12 - RR Support - MCS - HB72 Additional Requirements	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 13 - DLT Maintenance 1	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 14 - DLT Maintenance 2	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 17 - EST Maintenance	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 18 - DataMart Maintenance	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 19 - ATI Test Automation	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 20 - CALMS	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 25 - CCI Tool Enhancements	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 26 - IT-State Portal - LEAP Migration	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%

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Team 30 - IT - Disaster Recovery Efforts	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Team 34 - Kofax Efforts	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Release Readiness	Mon 11/30/20	Fri 12/25/20		1%
Release Deployment		NA		
R107.3	Sat 9/19/20	Sat 9/19/20	Sat 9/19/20	100%
R107.3.1	Sat 10/10/20	Sat 10/10/20	Sat 10/10/20	100%
R108.0	Sat 10/24/20	Sat 10/24/20	Sat 10/24/20	100%

5. Schedule of Expenditures

The report shall include a proposed schedule of expenditures for the TIERS project.

Type of Expenditure	Fiscal Year 2020 Schedule of Expenditures
Contracted Services	\$6,417,026
Hardware	\$14,627,370
Software	\$32,015,155
Total	\$53,059,551

6. Actual Expenditures

HHSC shall submit quarterly reports reflecting actual expenditures implementing the TIERS project.

6.1 New Development Expenditures

Project Item	Expenditures through 11/30/2020
Project Cost to Date (Fiscal)	\$1,716,433
Project Cost to Date (Total)	\$165,121,472

6.2 Operational Expenditures

Project Item	Expenditures through 11/30/2020
Project Cost to Date (Fiscal)	\$30,155,874
Project Cost to Date (Total)	\$376,237,115

7. Cost Savings

HHSC shall submit quarterly reports on cost savings for the TIERS project.

7.1 Strategies

In alignment with the State Strategic Plan for Information Resources Management published by the Department of Information Resources, HHSC is committed to maturing our information technology-resource management principles and implementing strategies to maximize business value while reducing costs. HHSC has already fully implemented Agile development methodologies which reduce the time to deployment and the need for expensive rework while improving quality and value delivered.

The agency's TIERS project team is actively recruiting talent by offering prospective employees the opportunity to work with new technologies while contributing to health and human services. Additionally, TIERS project leadership aggressively negotiates new contracts for information technology services and leverage shared services, cooperative contracts, and bulk purchasing.

7.2 Estimated Savings

Cost Savings/Avoidance Effort	Q1 Savings
Elimination of Staff Augmentation Contract Positions	\$210,553
Reduction in Rates Negotiated on New Contract	\$44,579
Reduction in Rates Negotiated on New Kofax Services Contract	\$9,152
Reduction in Scope of Application Support	\$475,584
Total	\$739,868

8. Governance

Additionally, the report shall include detailed strategies developed and implemented by HHSC to restrict the TIERS project to those items presented and approved by the Eighty-fifth Legislature, 2017.

The Social Services Applications group within HHSC's Information Technology division manages changes to TIERS and its supporting technologies, including YourTexasBenefits.com, State Portal, and Task List Manager. The TIERS Information Technology governance process manages changes to all applications supported by Social Services Applications.

Since the transition to Agile software development² in 2016, software releases typically occur monthly.

To develop the release charter, business areas within HHSC as well as external trading partners, submit their strategic business roadmaps for system changes in both the fiscal year and the next release cycle. Areas prioritize these roadmaps, which then are combined and reprioritized based on capacity within each release cycle and the number of Agile sprints required.

Initiatives are prioritized based on the Agile "MoSCoW" method of must, should, could, and won't; meaning the initiative is a must have, good to have, nice to have, or will not be done. The TIERS governance workgroup approves the final release charter.

Before they are submitted to the governance workgroup, changes to the charter are vetted by teams that would be impacted. The workgroup meets monthly to update the roadmap and adjust the content or sprint schedule of the release in progress.

Additions to the release charter must:

- Be mandated by the federal government, state leadership, or the Executive Commissioner;

² Agile software development refers to a group of software development methodologies based on iterative development.

- Result in clients not receiving accurate/timely benefits if they are not implemented;
- Result in financial penalties to the state or HHSC if they not implemented; or
- Meet other criteria approved by the TIERS governance workgroup.

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Name
AES	Access and Eligibility Services
ATI	Automated Testing Initiative
BLSSE	Blood Lead Surveillance System Efficiency
CALMS	Collaboration, Automation, Lean, Measurement and Sharing
CCI	Call Center Inquiry
CHIP	Children’s Health Insurance Program
CHIP-P	Children’s Health Insurance Program-Perinatal
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DLT	Deloitte
EBT	Electronic Benefits Transfer
EDG	Eligibility Determination Group
EMR	External Medical Review
EST	Eligibility Support Technologies
HB	House Bill
HHSC	Health and Human Services Commission
HTW	Healthy Texas Women
IT	Information Technology

LEAP	Lightweight Extensible Authentication Protocol
MCS	Medicaid & CHIP Services
P-ELDS	Pandemic Electronic Data Sources
PHE	Public Health Emergency
RR	Release Readiness
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TIERS	Texas Integrated Eligibility and Redesign System
TMHP	Texas Medicaid and Healthcare Partnership
TMSIS	Transformed Medicaid Statistical Information System