NTT DaTa
Services

Choose From Options to Facilitate and Supplement State Unemployment Benefits Call Centers

NTT DATA Supplemental Unemployment Insurance Services

Why NTT DATA?

- Processes 100 million healthcare claims annually
- Supports more than 4 million end users and over 11 million service desk contacts annually
- Provides daily support of over 20,000 users for the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in 30 countries
- Surged to accommodate a >500% increase in call volume due to the demands of telework
- Supports National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) researchers in the battle against COVID-19 and other infectious diseases
- Invests 3.6 billion in research and development annually, as part of NTT

In light of recent public health recommendations and mandates, state workforce agencies need to empower their staff to handle unprecedented surges in unemployment claims and related inquiries — while working from home. Enabling remote access to mainframe- and client-server-based unemployment insurance (UI) applications and routing customer service calls to remote employees can help agencies expand their work-from-home capabilities to meet this growing need.

These new capabilities must be coupled with a significant capacity to scale service delivery to timely and accurately support initial and continued customer claims, fact-finding, adjudication and case management activities. To handle this workload, many state agencies are considering how to expeditiously augment staff with contract employees and increase their capacity to provide UI customer service. Most first-time UI callers need basic information that can be provided by less experienced staff or via internet chat and other non-voice channels, allowing existing skilled UI agents to address more complex calls.

NTT DATA has a variety of options to help supplement or facilitate state UI call centers during this critical time.

Remote mainframe or client-server access

Remotely accessing mainframe systems or client-server applications requires providing remote access to the state network and either deploying mainframe access software on a remote device or providing remote access to a device that remains on the state network. NTT DATA has extensive experience rapidly deploying these types of solutions.

The most secure way for remote mainframe access is through a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) that provides VPN protection for remote access with full control over the endpoint desktop environment. Unless there is existing VDI capacity, this option will take some time (potentially up to 12 weeks) as it requires setting up cloud-based VDI, creating a VPN between the state network and the cloud, and deploying VDI client software on endpoint devices in remote locations.

Options to Facilitate and Supplement UI Remote Work Services

Problem #1: How to connect remote users to enterprise UI mainframe applications

Best case

① Remote user ② VDI servers ③ Mainframe
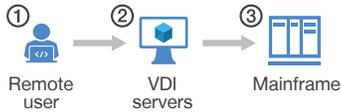
1. Remote user accesses existing VDI via a VPN
2. VDI is configured to establish mainframe session
3. Long term, NTT DATA can set up new cloud-based VDI

Alternate option

① Remote users ② VPN gateway ③ Mainframe
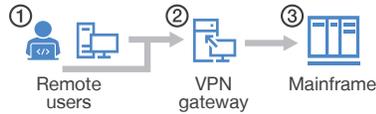
1. Mainframe access software deployed to desktop/ laptop
2. Remote user accesses state network via VPN
3. Software connects to mainframe and establishes session

Minimum viability

① Remote user ② VPN gateway ① Existing desktop ③ Mainframe
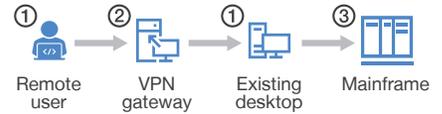
1. Remote access software deployed to existing desktops
2. Remote user accesses state network via software on the existing desktop
3. Remote user uses accesses mainframe applications from the existing desktop

Problem #2: How to enable the use of remote agents to support UI call centers

Recommended option

① Public caller — PSTN* → ② Agency ACD/PBX → ③ NTT DATA ACD/IVR → PSTN → Remote/Office Agents, NTT DATA Agents

1. Caller dials existing state TFN and connects to state ACD/PBX
2. Calls forwarded to NTT DATA ACD/IVR for skill-based routing
3. Agents dial in to NTT DATA ACD from any phone with direct inward dialing

Alternate option

① Public caller → PSTN → Agency ACD/PBX → ② NTT DATA ACD/IVR → ③ Office-based agents, Remote agents

1. Caller dials existing state TFN and connects to state ACD/PBX
2. IVR performs skill-based routing and sends calls to office-based agents or remote agents on NTT DATA ACD/IVR
3. Remote agents dial in to ACD from any phone with direct inward dialing

Problem #3: How to augment state UI call center staff

Initial support

Remote customer service agents handle Tier 1 calls (script-based resolution) using our knowledge base until agents can access state UI systems. Many agents previously serving the hospitality industry are available now.

✓ Up to 1 week of agent training
✓ Implement in 1 to 2 weeks

Interim support

Former UI staff from across the U.S. remotely take Tier 2 calls (administrative support). Provides interim access to UI systems during state-specific training period.

✓ 1 to 2 weeks of agent training
✓ Implement in 2 to 4 weeks

Sustained support

Initial support staff rotation through additional training to expand skill sets for Tier 2 calls. Training completion increases agent take-home pay.

✓ 4 to 12 weeks of agent training
✓ Timetable based on training duration

*PSTN: public switch telephone network

A simpler but slightly less secure method would be to install a VPN (or use an existing VPN) and mainframe access software, such as Reflection, on agency desktop and laptop devices that employees take home and/or on NTT DATA-provided devices. This option maintains control over the desktop environment including the configuration connection that establishes the mainframe or client-server session. Key tasks of this approach include creating and installing the software package to configure the VPN software; installing and/or configuring the mainframe or other application client; and if needed, installing VPN servers on the state network for receiving new VPN connections. We can work closely with state network staff and security teams to install VPN servers in about two weeks. This option can also be used as a stop-gap approach until new VDI capability or capacity is installed.

> We can work closely with state network staff and security teams to install VPN servers in about two weeks.

If necessary, a less secure option is to distribute and install VPN software on employee personal devices. Employees would remotely access their desktops, which would remain powered-on at their current locations on the state network, and use existing mainframe access software (or application clients) to create sessions with the enterprise UI application(s). Existing desktop computers would retain their current security configurations.

Remote telephone routing

Calls can be routed to remote agents, even with existing toll-free numbers (TFNs) using PBX-based legacy automated call distributors (ACDs) or interactive voice response systems (IVRs). The simplest way to do this is to forward existing TFNs to an NTT DATA cloud-based ACD/IVR triage system that will rebuild the existing IVR call tree and allow remote employees to log in to the ACD from anywhere. If existing staff are supplemented with new, lower-skilled staff, the call tree can be adjusted to better identify calls that can be routed to these newer agents.

Another option for remote telephone routing would be to continue sending inbound TFN calls to the state ACD/IVR and, when a caller selects a menu option that could be serviced by remote workers, forward only those calls to the NTT DATA ACD/IVR. This option would keep the remaining calls routed to office locations on the existing ACD, but would also require reprogramming of the legacy IVR.

Either option can be coupled with real-time chatbot capabilities to further ease the load on agents and increase call center capacity and efficiency while maintaining quality service delivery.

Staff augmentation

NTT DATA and its partners have a strong pool of agents with customer care and technical skills as well as experience staffing and training agents for all levels of call complexity.

The most immediate option for staff augmentation is to deploy customer service agents from fields other than UI and train them for approximately five to eight days on UI fundamentals. This will equip them to handle Tier I inquiries such as navigation, account access, password and script-based responses. It would take about a week to build an approved NTT DATA knowledge base for agents to use. These calls could be limited to those with no personally identifiable information (PII) or expanded to include password reset, which only requires an account identifier and authentication fields. Agents could submit suitability paperwork in accordance with state policies during the training process to allow for an interim agency review prior to taking any calls. A second staff augmentation option is to assemble a cadre of former UI staff from other states to remotely take UI calls requiring administrative support. While these agents would

not understand the nuances of a state's particular UI laws, regulations and practices, they would have a fundamental understanding of the principles and underpinnings of UI and, with approximately one to two weeks of training, would be capable of handling a broad range of calls. Agents would submit suitability paperwork at the start of the training period to allow states to perform interim reviews prior to providing any access to state UI systems.

A longer-term option is to employ more in-depth training for agents initially brought on to handle Tier I calls and enhance their proficiency in handling a broader set of calls. By rotating staff through training during non-peak hours, training could be accomplished in about four to 12 weeks (depending on the desired amount of training). The training period should provide the necessary time to determine whether agents are suitable to handle PII and UI program data.

In these times of extraordinary stress on the state workforce system, one of society's and the economy's most critical safety nets, NTT DATA is here to help. We're committed to providing support and steadying the delivery of these indispensable services.