

EBT in the Face of 2020's Challenges: State Story - Louisiana



Expected Challenges for Louisiana in 2020:

- SNAP/TANF eligibility system replacement
- DSNAP portal replacement
- EBT vendor conversion



LITE

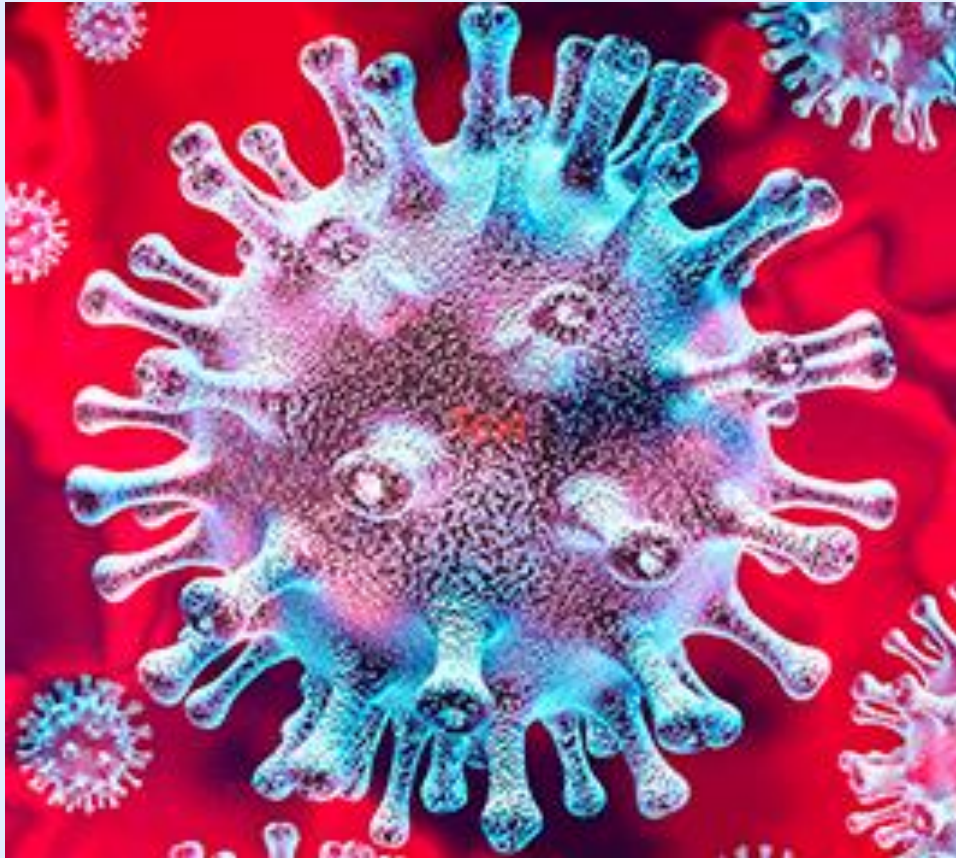
Louisiana Integrated Technology for Eligibility

SNAP • DSNAP • FITAP • KCSP

- Pilot (one region): Nov 2019 – Feb 2020
- DSNAP portal: go-live Feb 2020
- Case conversions: Feb 2020 – May 2020
- EBT conversion June 20, 2020



Unexpected Challenge Number 1



COVID-19 Impacts

- Due to Mardi Gras, Louisiana became an early COVID-19 hotspot
- DCFS staff sent home to work remotely in March
- LITE contractors unable to travel
- DCFS and FNS had to plan for a remote EBT system UAT with Inmar
- P-EBT response needed



P-EBT & EA Challenges

- Had to issue Emergency Allotments (EA) out of 2 eligibility systems
- Louisiana's unique student data sharing laws
- Card production & delivery – approx. 275,000 over a short period
- EBT vendor conversion



Unexpected Challenge Number 2



Hurricane Laura Response

- Due to the pandemic, Louisiana had to revise our face-to-face DSNAP plan
- Required interface/system changes for LITE/DSNAP system contractor, EBT contractor, FISERV, and call center contractor



Virtual DSNAP

DCFS Virtual DSNAP Process



Step 1: Portal Registration



Step 2: Client contacts LAHELPU
Telephonic Signature



Step 3a: Interview



Step 3aa: Approval



Step 4a: Mailed Transactions
EBT Card, Voter Registration and
Letters.



Step 3b: Quality Assurance
Application Review



Step 3ab: Denial



Step 4b: EBT Card Onsite

Virtual DSNAP Software

- **Interaction Connect** - connected and recorded the calls
- **Interaction Connect Business Manager** – allowed supervisors to check status of team members, listen to calls, provide stats on their team
- **HVS Mitel Communicator** – allows calls to be taken on computer
- **VOIP phones**



Virtual DSNAP Teams

- 24 teams
- Each team had a manager, a fraud/QA consultant, and a policy consultant
- Each team was set up as a “site” within our DSNAP system.



DSNAP Phases (Laura)

1

PHASE ONE

PARISHES: Acadia, Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, Rapides, Vermilion and Vernon

Application period opens on Thursday, Sept. 10, with residents calling to apply according to the following schedule:

- Day 1 (Sept. 10) – Residents with last names beginning with A-C
- Day 2 (Sept. 11) – D-G
- Day 3 (Sept. 12) – H-L
- Day 4 (Sept. 13) – M-R
- Day 5 (Sept. 14) – S-Z
- Days 6 & 7 (Sept. 15-16) – Open for all (letters A-Z) in the Phase 1 parishes

2

PHASE TWO

PARISHES: Grant, Jackson, Lincoln, Natchitoches, Ouachita, Sabine and Winn

Application period opens on Thursday, Sept. 17, with residents calling to apply according to the following schedule:

- Day 1 (Sept. 17) – Residents with last names beginning with A-C
- Day 2 (Sept. 18) – D-G
- Day 3 (Sept. 19) – H-L
- Day 4 (Sept. 20) – M-R
- Day 5 (Sept. 21) – S-Z
- Days 6 & 7 (Sept. 22-23) – Open for all (letters A-Z) in the Phase 2 parishes



Virtual DSNAP Stats – Phase 1

	9/10/2020	9/11/2020	9/12/2020	9/13/2020	9/14/2020	9/15/2020	9/16/2020
Total Calls	7,791	6,495	5,872	5,843	10,438	12,769	8,085
Abandoned	3,107	1,691	538	162	1,159	825	61
Answered	2,742	4,781	5,324	5,679	9,267	11,934	8,020
Max. Wait (hr.min)	2.58	1.33	30	17	32	37	2
Avg Wait time (hr.min)	1.54	25	7	2	5	4	0
Avg Talk (min)	27	28	26	27	23	22	21
Staff Available	214	298	424	573	601	601	593
HH Processed	2,311	3,731	4,314	4,395	6,879	9,990	6,862
# People	6,221	9,591	10,687	11,109	17,059	19,028	12,195
Approved/Certified	1,865	3,023	3,325	3,564	5,422	8,167	5,514
Denied	446	708	989	831	1,457	1,823	1,348
EBT Cards FedEx	1,142	2,016	2,216	2,512	3,896	5,204	4,872
EBT Cards USPS	627	1,103	1,107	1,052	1,523	1,960	1,702



Virtual DSNAP Stats – Phase 2

	9/17/2020	9/18/2020	9/19/2020	9/20/2020	9/21/2020	9/22/2020	9/23/2020
Total Calls	5332	4062	2716	5124	7569	7804	11,130
Abandoned	45	36	14	269	2029	96	187
Answered	5287	4023	2701	4851	5529	7703	10,932
Max. Wait (hr.min)	1 min 26 sec	1 min	1 min 27 sec	48 min	2 hr 47 min	20 min 16 sec	6 min 39 sec
Avg Wait time (hr.min)	15 sec	15 sec	15 sec	2 min 38 sec	11 min 38 sec	29 sec	35 sec
Avg Talk (min)	15 min	17 min	19 min	19 min	17 min	18 min	18 min
Staff Available	597	602	428	467	531	470	
HH Processed	3286	2833	2319	4254	4395	6102	8518
# People	5857	4991	4056	7649	7509	9663	13202
Approved/Certified	2642	2272	1905	3445	3564	4880	6781
Denied	644	561	414	809	831	1222	1737
EBT Cards FedEx	2101	2002	1635	2930	3097	4233	5830
EBT Cards USPS	1431	327	289	530	511	719	1035



What Worked

- Staff adapted to the new call center software quickly
- Staff and applicants both liked being able to complete the process from home
- Recorded interviews
- Telephonic signature



What Didn't Work

- Cards were delivered via FedEx Express or US Mail
- FedEx had extensive damage to their Lake Charles facility
- Heaviest hit areas implemented curfews
- DCFS staff had to assist FedEx respond to “walk-up” customers looking for their delayed DSNAP cards



Unexpected Challenge Number 3



Hurricane Delta DSNAP Response

- Delta hit the same area of Louisiana as Hurricane Laura
- Issued a second month of Laura DSNAP benefits for 5 parishes
- Issued automated replacement benefits for SNAP recipients and DSNAP recipients in these same parishes
- Used Virtual DSNAP processes for cases not previously certified for Laura



Issuance by Storm

Hurricane Laura (prior to 2nd month of issuance):

- 56,301 HH; 126,704 people; \$21,684,636

Hurricane Laura (after 2nd month of issuance):

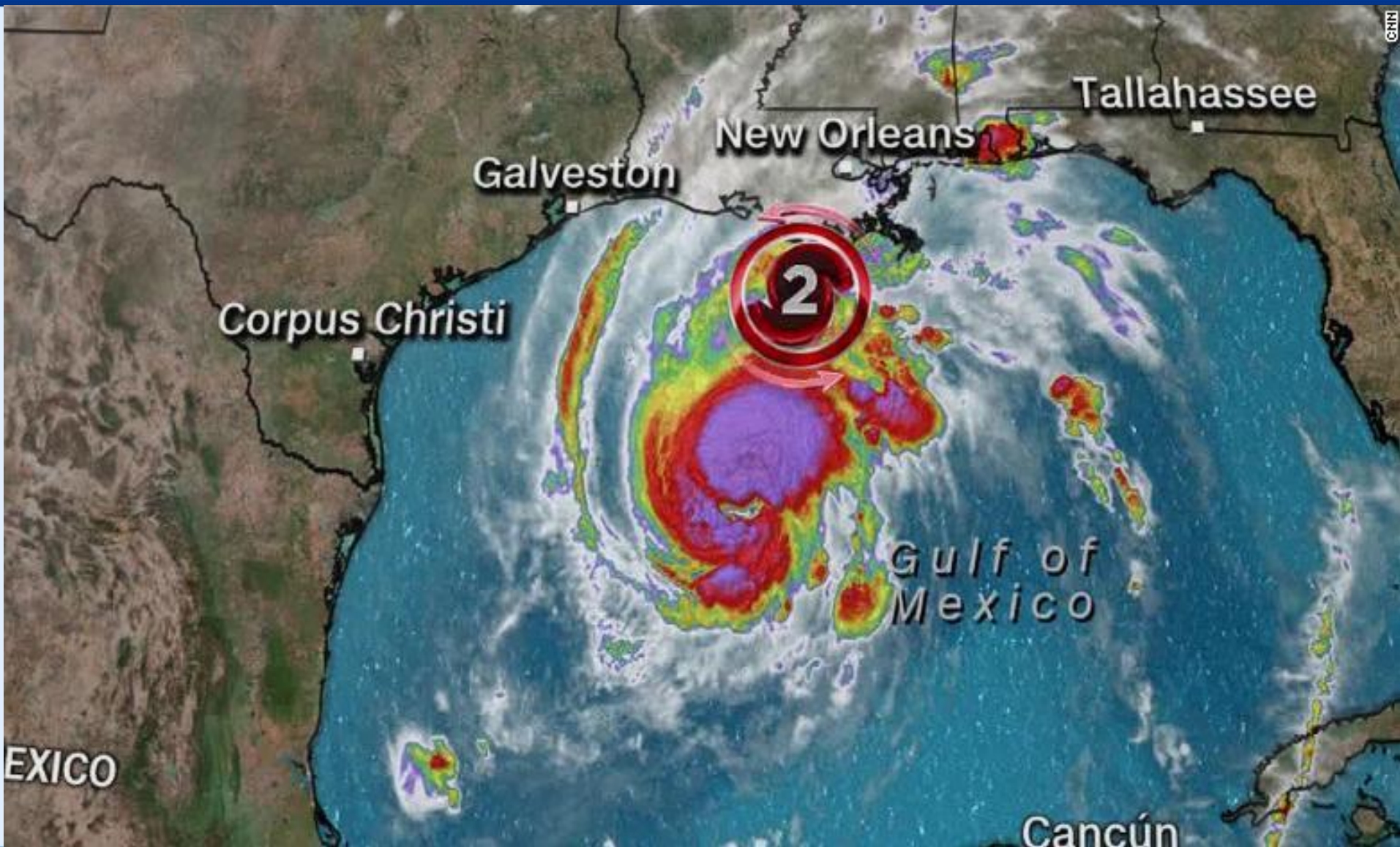
- 56,331 HH; 126,802 people; \$41,074,821.21

Hurricane Delta:

- 2,134 HH; 4,450 people; \$809,042.00



Unexpected Challenge Number 4



Hurricane Zeta

- Replacement SNAP benefits issued
- This response is still ongoing
- Any DSNAP will follow the Virtual DSNAP model used for Laura and Delta



Conclusion

- The biggest issue that Louisiana had with all of 2020's challenges had to do with card production, delivery, and activation
- Louisiana is interested in working with vendors and FNS to pilot phone-based transactions to eliminate the need for magnetic stripe cards



Contact Information

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