



# New Hampshire Employment Security Appeals Smart Scheduler

## Service

Schedule unemployment compensation appeal hearings timely.

## The Problem

In May 2012, as part of continuous process improvement, New Hampshire Employment Security (NHES) Appeal Tribunal Unit held a Lean Event to simplify steps required to schedule an unemployment compensation appeal hearing in preparation of automating the process. The results would be used to develop a "Smart Scheduler" software program.

## The Goal

Implement an automated system to assist the hearing scheduler to maintain and improve performance on federal time lapse requirements.

## The Lean Process

From May 30, 2012 through June 1, 2012, four NHES Appeal Tribunal Unit employees participated in a Lean Event facilitated by the Unit's administrator.

The group identified the process to be improved, which began with identifying the issue(s) appealed and ended with the hearing scheduled. The group mapped the current process and identified its customers, bottlenecks, and duplicate steps.

During the Lean Event, the "**Bright Idea**" of an Electronic File emerged. This was exciting, as it became apparent to the team that an electronic file would eliminate the need to create, mail, copy, store or otherwise handle paper files!

## The Results

The new process eliminated handoffs, reduced redundant steps and created the requirements for the development of the Smart Scheduler.

While the automated Smart Scheduler has not been implemented, it has provided a roadmap for improving the current state's manual process.

More importantly, employees have realized professional change regarding how they view their work and how new technology can apply to their jobs.

"It was interesting to see how other employees thought things were done, and how things are actually done," observed Laura Hamilton, Claims and Hearing Clerk II.

Lis Santiago, scheduler for the Unit, initially felt Smart Scheduling was not a good idea. "When I first heard about it, Smart Scheduling for me meant the system will do my job. It was scary."

When the envisioned future state was defined, it became clear to Ms. Santiago that automating most of the "little steps" would free her to work on complex hearings that required more attention.

Having the computer system analyze each appeal based on location, method, and length will allow the scheduler to be more efficient in serving all of her customers including claimants, employers, attorneys, and hearing officers.

More than a year later, Ms. Santiago is still confident in the Smart Scheduler. "This would be a great tool to improve all areas of my work and personal development."

**"Lean - Not just a process, but a catalyst for change!"**

- Heshla Ash-Tessier



## Summary

NHES Appeal Tribunal Unit, using Lean principles, improved a process prior to the application of new technology.

## Accomplishments

Project implementation is currently pending funding.

The Lean Event provided an opportunity for employee development and continuous process improvement.

## Team

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