

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

Fiscal Year 2020, Quarter 3

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

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
1. Overview.....	3
165. Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS).	3
2. Accomplishments	4
2.1 Releases	4
Release 106	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Release 107	4
2.2 Release 106.0.0 and 106.1.0 Major Accomplishments.....	4
3. Project Status	7
3.1 Release 106	7
Explanation of Variance between Last Reported and Current Start and Finish Dates	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Estimated Percentage of Project Complete	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Description of Method Used to Track Progress	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2 Release 107	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Explanation of Variance between Last Reported and Current Start and Finish Dates	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Estimated Percentage of Project Complete	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Description of Method Used to Track Progress	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4. Project Plan	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5. Schedule of Expenditures.....	12
6. Actual Expenditures	13
6.1 New Development Expenditures.....	13
6.2 Operational Expenditures	13
7. Cost Savings	14
7.1 Strategies	14
7.2 Estimated Savings	14
8. Governance.....	15

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 (LBB) and the Office of the Governor, as required by the 2020-21 General Appropriations Act, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019 (Article II, HHSC, Rider 165).

165. Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS)

Included in the amounts appropriated above 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 Releases

Release 107

- Cycle 2 – Discovery/User Story development completed on February 5, 2020; demo completed on March 20, 2020; deployed April 4, 2020.
- Cycle 3 – Discovery/User Story development completed on March 11, 2020; demo completed April 24, 2020; deployed May 2, 2020.
- Cycle 4 - Discovery/User Story development completed on April 15, 2020; demo completed May 29, 2020; scheduled to deploy June 6, 2020.

Release 108

- Cycle 1 – Discovery/User Story development completed May 27, 2020.

2.2 Release 106.2, 106.3, and COVID-19 Activity

Major Accomplishments

Improvements to the Relationship TIERS Page

A new relationship grid allows caseworkers and customers to scroll across four independent tables to ensure that households with eleven or more members are correctly recorded.

Data improvements for the Medicare claim interface

Accurate storage and reporting of Medicare Part A and Part B claim information prevents overlapping Part A and Part B coverage dates from displaying on the page.

Notification to Texas Medicaid & Healthcare Partnership (TMHP) on Fair Hearings outcomes for External Medical Review (EMR)

When Fair Hearings enters an outcome on the Hearings and Appeal TIERS pages, TIERS creates an alert and generates an email notifying Texas Medicaid & Healthcare Partnership (TMHP).

YourTexasBenefits Website Client Mailing Updates

Users can remove or update their mailing address when reporting a change.

Mobile Application File Uploads

Mobile App users can select and upload PDF files to YourTexasBenefits.com.

Improved Validity of Best Phone Number in Task List Manager (TLM) tasks

If the Cell or Daytime Number, or Home Number from the application is unavailable when an application is received through YourTexasBenefits.com, TLM will use the phone number from the existing case to populate the Phone Number field in the associated task.

Alignment of Children's Medical Assistance (CMA) and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Certification Periods

TIERS aligns the certification period for CMA and CHIP for children in the same household when they are certified for the same CMA and submit a request for coverage on the same application. TIERS will also align the certification period if a child is added to the household in Change Action case mode or moves to another Type of Assistance (TOA).

Pandemic EBT (COVID-19 Related)

In response to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, children who are eligible for the reduced-price/free lunch program may receive supplemental food benefits under the Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) program. HHSC implemented a new simplified process for eligible families to apply for P-EBT benefits via YourTexasBenefits.com. In addition, a direct benefit issuance process was implemented for the families who received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits during the month of March 2020 (at the time of closure of schools) and had children in the 5-18-year age range.

House Bill 1218 – Send Distribution schedule of SNAP Benefits to EBT (early implementation due to COVID-19)

In accordance with House Bill 1218 (86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019), the benefit issuance schedule was modified to span 28 days for new SNAP applicants.

COVID-19 Activities

- Issued April and May SNAP supplements.
- Extended SNAP certifications 6 months for households with certifications ending in March, April, May 2020.
- Extended Medicaid certifications for households with certifications ending in March, April, May, June, July, or August 2020.
- Strengthened existing infrastructure to ensure system stability under increased caseload.

- Extended Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and CHIP Pregnancy certifications for households with certifications ending in April or May 2020.
- Ensured that Medicaid Managed Care and Dental Managed Care clients who received coverage termination notices from HHSC prior to COVID-19 continuous eligibility guidance did not lose coverage if they were enrolled on March 18, 2020.
- Modified TIERS to exempt certain SNAP and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) households from work requirements.
- Modified TIERS to prevent Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) months from counting based on COVID-19 federal guidance.
- Exempted Medicaid Buy-In for Children (MBIC) and Medicaid Buy-In (MBI) premiums based on COVID-19 federal guidance.
- Issued various broadcasts and staff instructions to assist field staff in properly handling new COVID-19 actions.
- Developed changes to TIERS to allow for continuous eligibility for Medicaid households. Changes for Texas Works were implemented May 9, 2020 and changes for Medicaid for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities were implemented June 6, 2020.
- Reinstated Foster Care/Adoption Assistance/Permanency Care Assistance to children based on COVID-19 federal guidance.
- Moved individuals from Healthy Texas Women to Pregnant Women’s Medicaid per COVID-19 federal guidance.

3. Project Status

3.1 Release 107 Cycle Set

Table 1 Release 107

Project Item	Report to Date	Baseline Date
Initial Planned Project Start and Finish Dates	12/16/2019 – 06/06/2020	12/16/2019
Last Reported Project Start and Finish Dates	12/16/2019 – 06/06/2020	12/16/2019
Current Estimated Project Start and Finish Dates	12/16/2019 – 06/06/2020	12/16/2019

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

Release 106.2 was deployed one week late to accommodate the COVID19 - Pandemic-EBT Program Specific Report (PSR) run. Deployment was originally scheduled on March 28, but the Release was actually deployed on April 4.

Estimated Percentage of Project Complete

Release 107 – 99%

Description of Method Used to Track Progress

HP Project and Portfolio Management Centre; Microsoft Office Project

Table 2 Release 106.3.1 – COVID 19 - Pandemic-EBT & COVID19 - Continuous Medicaid Coverage

Project Item	Report to Date	Baseline Date
Initial Planned Project Start and Finish Dates	03/23/20 – 05/09/2020	03/23/2020

Project Item	Report to Date	Baseline Date
Last Reported Project Start and Finish Dates	03/23/20 – 05/09/2020	03/23/2020
Current Estimated Project Start and Finish Dates	03/23/20 – 05/09/2020	03/23/2020

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

No variance in project dates.

Estimated Percentage of Project Complete

Release 106.3.1 – 100%

Description of Method Used to Track Progress

HP 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 6/6/20		98%
Release 107 Cycle Set	Mon 12/16/19	Sat 6/6/20		99%
Cycle 2 - R106.2	Thu 1/23/20	Fri 3/20/20	Fri 3/20/20	100%
Cycle 3 - R106.3	Thu 2/27/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Discovery	Thu 2/27/20	Fri 3/13/20	Fri 3/13/20	100%
Team 1 - IT - Modifications to make TIERS suite of applications browser agnostic & COVID19 - Pandemic-EBT	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 2 - AES - HB 1218- Distribution of SNAP Benefits & AES - HB 1218- Send Distribution schedule of SNAP Benefits to EBT	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 3 - IT - TIERS modifications to remove Adobe Flex - ED & IT - Modifications to make TIERS suite of applications browser agnostic	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 4 - IT - TIERS modifications to remove Adobe Flex - ED	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 5 - MCS - TPT for Dental & AES-YTB Mobile App Face and Fingerprint Recognition	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 6 - Managed Care Updates & - MCS - Dental Name Change & COVID19 - Continuous Medicaid Coverage	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 7 - TIERS modifications to remove Adobe Flex - MS & COVID19 - Continuous Medicaid Coverage & AES - SB2132 Implementation - Updates to HTW Notices	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 8 - RR Support	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 9 - Managed Care Modernization & COVID19 - Continuous Medicaid Coverage & ASK IT Replacement (Revert Code) & AES-YTB Mobile App Face and Fingerprint Recognition	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 10 - Oracle 19C & RR Support	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%

Team 11 - TIERS modifications to remove Adobe Flex - MS & IT - Modifications to make TIERS suite of applications browser agnostic	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 12 - TIERS modifications to remove Adobe Flex - MS	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 13 - DLT Maintenance 1	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 14 - DLT Maintenance 2	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 17 - EST Maintenance	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 19 - ATI Test Automation	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 20 - CALMS	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 23 - FFH - SB1207 Medical Review - Backlog	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 24 - FFH - Fair Hearings Decisions Accessibility	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 25 - AES - CCI Tool Enhancements	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 26 - IT - State Portal - LEAP Migration	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 27 - AES - H1746A Application Routing Updates & AES - MAO All Tasks	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 29 - Oracle 19C for ECM & TLM Databases	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Team 34 - Kofax Efforts	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Release Readiness	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 4/24/20	Fri 4/24/20	100%
Release 106.3.1 - COVID 19	Mon 3/23/20	Fri 5/8/20	Fri 5/8/20	100%
Discovery	Mon 3/23/20	Fri 4/3/20	Fri 4/3/20	100%
Development & Test - COVID19 - Pandemic-EBT & COVID19 - Continuous Medicaid Coverage	Mon 3/30/20	Fri 5/8/20	Fri 5/8/20	100%
Cycle 4 - R107.0	Thu 4/2/20	Thu 4/2/20		99%
Discovery	Thu 4/2/20	Thu 4/2/20	Thu 4/2/20	100%
Team 1 - AES - Updates for Alimony	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 2 - AES - HB 1218- Distribution of SNAP Benefits & COVID19 - Appellant Email Address & COVID19 - Notice of Fair Hearing Modification	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 3 - COVID19 - Continuous Medicaid Coverage & COVID19 - TIERS Generated Decisions, Electronic Signatures and Batching (FH)	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 4 - COVID19 - Continuous Medicaid Coverage & COVID19 - TIERS Generated Decisions, Electronic Signatures and Batching (FH)	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%

Team 5 - MCS - HB 72 - Medicaid Benefits for Certain Children Formerly in Foster Care	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 6 - MCS - HB 72 - Medicaid Benefits for Certain Children Formerly in Foster Care	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 7 - MCS - HB 72 - Medicaid Benefits for Certain Children Formerly in Foster Care	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 8 - MCS - HB 72 - Medicaid Benefits for Certain Children Formerly in Foster Care & MCS - CMCHP Plan Closure	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 9 - Managed Care Modernization & RR Support	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 10 - Modifications to make TIERS suite of applications browser agnostic & Oracle 19C	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 11 - Modifications to make TIERS suite of applications browser agnostic	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 12 - RR Support	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 13 - DLT Maintenance 1	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 14 - DLT Maintenance 2	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 17 - EST Maintenance	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 18 - DataMart Maintenance	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 19 - ATI Test Automation	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 20 - CALMS	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 23 - FVNET Enhancements	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 24 - FFH - Fair Hearings Decisions Accessibility	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 25 - AES - CCI Tool Enhancements	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 26 - IT - State Portal - LEAP Migration	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 29 - Oracle 19C	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Team 34 - Kofax Efforts	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Release Readiness	Mon 5/4/20	Fri 5/29/20	Fri 5/29/20	100%
Release Deployment				
R106.2	Sat 3/28/20	Sat 3/28/20	Sat 4/4/2020	100%
R106.3	Sat 5/2/20	Sat 5/2/20	Sat 5/2/20	100%
R106.3.1 - COVID19	Sat 5/9/20	Sat 5/9/20	Sat 5/9/20	100%
R107.0	Sat 6/6/20	Sat 6/6/20		0%

5. Schedule of Expenditures

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

Type of Expenditure	FY 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 02/29/2020
Project Cost to Date (Fiscal)	\$4,970,097
Project Cost to Date (Total)	\$162,173,086

6.2 Operational Expenditures

Project Item	Expenditures through 02/29/2020
Project Cost to Date (Fiscal)	\$32,449,338
Project Cost to Date (Total)	\$339,979,454

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, the TIERS project team 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.

TIERS 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	Q3 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 manages the changes to TIERS and its supporting technologies such as 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 development 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.

Changes to the charter can be requested by the Medical and Social Services (MSS) division and Social Services Applications section of Information Technology and are vetted by systems that would be impacted before their submission to the governance workgroup. The TIERS governance 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 HHS Executive Commissioner;
- 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.