

## ***PRESIDENTIAL E-GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND LINES OF BUSINESS***

### **USDA’S PARTICIPATION IN THE PRESIDENTIAL E-GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND LINES OF BUSINESS:**

USDA participates in 14 Presidential E-Government Initiatives and Lines of Business (LoB); however, this document describes only nine Presidential E-Government Initiatives and LoB, that are funded through USDA distributed funding. By participating in the E-Government Initiatives and LoBs, USDA has improved its business processes and program delivery to its customers, employees, and partners. Through these efforts, USDA has been able to work with other Federal agencies to streamline common areas of business delivery (e.g. rulemaking, payroll, and grants management) and learn from best practices throughout the government. The Department will continue to implement these Initiatives and LoBs to achieve further benefits for its customers.

#### **Budget Line of Business (BLoB):**

The BLoB provides benefits to partner agencies by encouraging best practices crossing all aspects of Federal budgeting – from budget formulation and execution to collaboration, human capital needs, and providing tools and resources. USDA has more than 1,000 users registered for the MAX Federal Community site. The Community site can be used for sharing information, collaboratively drafting documents (including the direct-editing of documents posted on the site), supporting workgroups, submitting central reports, and more. In addition, USDA has used MAX Collect exercises and associated publishing capabilities to collect, store, process and publish information.

#### **Benefits.gov:**

Launched in 2002, Benefits.gov is one of the earliest E-Government initiatives and was established as the official benefits website of the U.S. government. Prior to Benefits.gov, citizens looking for government benefit information had to search through a complicated maze of web pages, often unsuccessfully. Today, millions of citizens have online access to information and can keep up with the latest benefit-related information by subscribing to the quarterly eNewsletter, as well as by following Benefits.gov on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. USDA currently has 312 programs (Forms of Assistance) listed on Benefits.gov, including food and nutrition programs administered by State agencies. In FY21, USDA programs generated 5,161,551 Forms of Assistance page views on Benefits.gov; 1,222,216 transfers from Benefits.gov to USDA and State agency websites; and over 6,800 transfers from USDA websites to Benefits.gov.

Through Benefits.gov, USDA provides information on over 300 programs related to food assistance, business and farm loans, crop insurance, disaster assistance and more. Participation in Benefits.gov supports USDA's goal to provide all Americans access to a safe, nutritious, and secure food supply, by helping increase public awareness of USDA benefit programs on food and nutrition. In addition, Benefits.gov provides information on many other USDA programs including farm loans, rural housing and business loans, and agricultural programs.

#### **Disaster Assistance Improvement Plan (DAIP):**

The mission of DAIP is to provide disaster survivors with information, support, and services, to apply for disaster assistance through data-sharing efforts between Federal, tribal, State, local, and private partners. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, under the Department of Homeland Security, acts as the managing partner. The website DisasterAssistance.gov reduces the time needed by disaster survivors to apply for aid and check the status of claims, while decreasing redundancy in application forms and processes. Disaster survivors complete a mini survey online from their computer or mobile device and receive a personalized list of assistance of over 75 benefit and assistance programs available from the 17 participating federal agencies. In addition, participants can check on the status of applications and get updates via mobile alert or email. In 2021, USDA had 16 programs (Forms of Assistance) listed on DisasterAssistance.gov that generated over 253,400 Forms of Assistance page views; over 84,000 transfers from DisasterAssistance.gov to USDA and State agency websites; and 3,091 transfers from USDA websites to DisasterAssistance.gov.

#### **E-Rulemaking:**

USDA uses the Federal-wide Regulations.gov website and the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) as the primary repository for promoting public participation and input into the development and issuance of USDA rulemaking. All USDA Federal Register rules, proposed rules, and notices are made available for public comment on E-Rulemaking’s Regulations.gov. In 2021, FDMS launched a new Multi-Factor Authentication to protect critical information while simplifying user experience. In 2021, USDA

agencies also posted 874 rules, proposed rules, and notice documents to Regulations.gov and 39,019 comments from the public in response.

**Financial Management Line of Business (FMLoB):**

In 2022, USDA OCFO's continued focus is on evolving its financial management systems to a next generation Intelligent Enterprise Suite (S4/HANA) that will streamline the business processes and to integrate financial management activities across USDA agencies. Key objectives include improved user experience and compliance with financial reporting and regulatory standards. The proposed transformation uses artificial intelligence, augmented and predictive analytics and planning capabilities to deliver consistent, accurate and standardized data for financial planning and reporting (both at the strategic and operational levels) throughout the department.

**Geospatial LoB:**

USDA's Enterprise Geospatial Management Office (EGMO) works to enhance and empower the USDA enterprise to meet mission requirements by providing strategic leadership; encouraging innovation; modernizing the geospatial portfolio; facilitating communication and collaboration on geospatial activities and initiatives within the Department; coordinating across Federal Agencies; engagement with USDA customers and with public and private stakeholders. Consistent with its FY21 Enterprise Geospatial Strategic Plan USDA has advanced a deployment plan that includes new department regulations and data standards. Updated geospatial policies and guidance are expected to be published in FY22. As part of USDA's active support for the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) it reported on the updated National Geospatial Data Assets and made them available to the public through GeoPlatform.gov. A full report on USDA's alignment with Geospatial Data Act requirements was published at FGDC.gov in February 2022. As part of its efforts to ensure efficiencies, EGMO established enterprise level agreements for the purchase of geographic information systems software that resulted in significant cost avoidance in FY21. Additionally, in FY22 it launched modernization efforts to reduce storage costs associated with geospatial imagery by advancing initiatives to establish agency-wide shared geospatial platforms.

**Grants.gov:**

Grants.gov, which houses information on over 1,000 grant programs awarding more than \$500 billion annually and vets grant applications for Federal grant-making agencies, provides a common website and centralized location for federal agencies to post discretionary funding opportunities and for grant seekers to find and apply for them. In FY 2021, USDA posted 229 funding opportunities and received 8,692 applications.

Using the Grants.gov system makes it faster, easier and more cost effective for grant applicants to electronically interact with federal grant-making agencies. It also provides the following key benefits, among many others, to the grant community. (1) Helping the grant community learn more about available opportunities by centralizing and standardizing grant information, application packages and processes for finding and applying for federal grants. (2) Facilitating interaction with the federal government by streamlining the federal grants process. (3) Simplifying the grant application process to save applicants costs, time and hassle. (4) Making it easier to research and find federal grant opportunities through improved search capabilities – from a simple key word search to advanced searches over numerous grant opportunity categories – and having grant opportunities sent directly to grant applicant desktops through custom search profiles. (5) Making electronic grant application processing easier by increasing the ease-of-use through enhanced features common to the Web, such as downloaded and fillable forms, auto-populated data, error checks and email notifications. (6) Providing a secure and reliable source to apply for federal grants by validating grant applicants via a five-step registration process and ensuring website stability and security through Secure Socket Layer (SSL) technology to encrypt transactional data and communications over the Internet.

**Human Resources Line of Business (HRLoB):**

The Human Resources Line of Business (HRLoB) improves USDA’s internal efficiency and effectiveness by streamlining and automating the exchange of employee human resource information. USDA has released v4.1 of the HCIM (March 2021) which included: Refined coverage of A5.1 (Compensation Management) and A5.2 (Work Schedule and Leave Management) of the Business Reference Model as well as introduced data standards for A2.6 (New Hire In-processing and Onboarding). Also in 2021, USDA released v4.2 of the HCIM (September 2021). This second version included Registry: Added new data elements for A3 (Talent Development), A5.1 (Compensation Management), Domain Values (DVs): Added new domain values for A3.3 (Learning Administration) and updated domain values from OneDatafeed, and Forms Mapping: Updated Forms Mapping for SF1150 (Record of Leave Data), SF182 (Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training), EHRI Training Data Feed. The initiative also finalized Governmentwide Human Capital Federal Integrated Business Framework (HC-FIBF) Service Profiles for: Workforce Planning (A1.1), Human Capital Strategy (A1.2), Position Classification and Position Management (A1.3), Employee Engagement (A1.5) and Human Capital Programmatic Evaluation (A10.1) HRLoB has led Design Thinking sessions with over 100 MAESC members and agency SMEs to better understand users and their needs, challenge assumptions, redefine problems, and brainstorm innovative solutions to further develop the Guide to Processing Personnel Actions (GPPA), Human Capital Information Model (HCIM), and Human Capital Federal Integrated Business Framework (HC-FIBF). Also in 2021, HRLoB led working groups with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) from across the Federal government to develop HC-FIBF Service Profiles for: Diversity and Inclusion (A1.4), Reasonable Accommodations (A7.4), Continuous Vetting (A7.5) -merged into A2.4 Applicant Screening, Reciprocity, Investigation Request/A2.5 Vetting Adjudication and being pulled from HCBRM, Employee Records Recordkeeping (A9.5), and Employee Records Disclosure (A9.6) -relevant A9.6 service activities/business capabilities folded into A9.5. The metrics include Quality of Hiring vs. Time to Hire, Satisfaction with Training vs. Skill Level Improvement, Attrition Rates & Projections (for Mission Critical Occupations) and Retirement Projections (for Mission Critical Occupations). Also in FY 20, USDA Published Governmentwide Human Capital Federal Integrated Business Framework (HC[1]FIBF) Service Profiles for sub-functions. These FIBF Service Profiles contain a baseline set of services and standards to help inform agencies meet and advance their organization’s strategic Human Capital objectives. USDA continued to make waves by leading working groups with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) from across the Federal government to develop FIBF Service Profiles for programs that include Employee Inquiry Processing, Employee Research, Workforce Planning, Human Capital Strategy, Position Classification and Position Management, Diversity and Inclusion and Employee Engagement.

**Integrated Award Environment (IAE):**

IAE uses innovative processes and technologies to improve systems and operations for those who award, administer, or receive federal financial assistance, contracts, and intergovernmental transactions. In 2021, USDA continued with Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA Act) implementation. In the fourth quarter, USDA had 100 percent accuracy in File A, over 99 percent on File B, and 85 percent on File C. These files transmit financial data to the US Department of Treasury as required by the DATA Act. USDA continues to improve and refine the DATA Act repository with additional automation and record validation. EzFedGrants reporting is now automated and reporting DATA Act records. USDA published a DATA Act Data Quality Plan in 2019 and a DATA Act Data Quality Framework to assist agencies in reporting and evaluation their data with the goal of improving data quality. In 2021 the IAE continued to integrate the SAM.gov website and issued initial guidance on a new Unique Entity Identifier which will supplant the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS). This will result in savings over time from the expense of DUNS contracts and met all DATA Act UEI needs when it was implemented in the first quarter of 2022.

The following table reflects estimated USDA contributions and funding amounts for 2020 through 2023 to the E-Government Initiatives and Lines of Business.

E-Government Initiative <sup>1</sup> (Dollars in Thousands)	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Estimate	2023 Estimate
1. Budget Line of Business	\$109,997	120,000	120,000	120,000
2. Benefits.gov	462,501	452,186	439,485	439,485
3. Disaster Assistance Improvement Plan	106,070	106,070	106,070	106,070
4. Hiring Assessment	---	---	217,000	217,000

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5. E-Rulemaking	553,132	610,195	750,211	750,211
6. Financial Management Line of Business	167,510	167,510	167,510	167,510
7. Geospatial Line of Business	225,000	225,000	225,000	225,000
8. Grants.gov	484,000	496,000	510,000	510,000
9. Human Resources Line of Business	273,913	273,913	273,913	273,913
10. Integrated Award Environment <sup>4</sup>	2,731,401	2,731,401	2,731,401	2,731,401
<b>USDA TOTAL</b>	<b>5,113,524</b>	<b>5,182,275</b>	<b>5,540,590</b>	<b>5,540,590</b>