



2020 Biennial Performance Report

Texas.gov

This report addresses sections 2054.055(b)(6)-(7) and 2054.260 of the Government Code which require the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) to report on the status, progress, benefits, and efficiency gains of the state electronic Internet portal, Texas.gov.

Background

Texas.gov is the state's official website and a resource for Texans to access government information and services. The Texas.gov program enables state agencies, local government, and institutes of higher education to provide simple, accessible, and secure online digital government services to Texans including:

- payment processing services,
- application services, advertising, and operations support,
- infrastructure hosting services through DIR's Shared Technology Services, and
- a help desk for people using the services.

Online services available to Texans include driver license renewal and replacement, print-on-demand driver records, vehicle registration renewal, vital records orders such as birth certificates, and a wide range of professional and occupational licenses and permits.

Texas.gov provides a cost-effective and service-oriented web solution that meets or exceeds state mandated requirements regarding accessibility, security, privacy, and integration with the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

Status

For the past 20 years, Texas.gov has been the official web site for the State of Texas providing an online portal with payment services for Texas governmental organizations to conduct business with their customers. It was originally operated through a self-funded, public-private partnership and designed to be used on a desktop computer or laptop. As technology transitions to more mobile-friendly, integrated solutions, Texas.gov has evolved the program's operating model and the vision for how Texans use the website portal.

In September 2018, the Texas.gov program transitioned from a public-private partnership to a program that is funded and managed by the state. Control of the revenue, expenses, and services became the state's sole responsibility, and the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) appropriated to DIR an operations budget out of the transaction fee revenue. Through a competitive procurement process, DIR contracted with Deloitte for application development and maintenance services and separately with Texas NIC for payment services that are now available through the Texas.gov program.

Texans have substantially increased visits to the Texas.gov website and their use of Texas.gov hosted applications to conduct government business, but they are increasingly doing so using mobile devices. Currently, state agencies are building separate mobile applications to meet this demand. This creates challenges for Texans who must visit different sites, set up separate accounts with different login



requirements, and often enter the same information (name, address, email, payment information) multiple times. They also must prove identity and transact with each government service separately.

During the past biennium, DIR launched a new mobile digital assistant called Texas by Texas (TxT) to provide Texans with a secure, centralized application to conduct business with Texas government. Currently, TxT offers users the ability to create an account, verify their identity once, and establish a profile with their name, address, and payment information. TxT offers a mobile-first experience that is designed and optimized specifically for mobile users. By the end of fiscal year 2021, TxT will also include a native mobile app allowing Texans to complete their government business from their mobile device. It is critical for Texans to be able to access Texas government services anytime, anywhere, and on any device easily and securely without having to maintain multiple accounts and applications.

Progress

Between September 2018 and June 2020, the Texas.gov website welcomed more than 11 million visitors. The five most popular services on the Texas.gov website were:

1. Vehicle Registration Renewal
2. Driver License/ID Renewal and Replacement
3. License to Carry a Handgun
4. Driver License Reinstatement and Status
5. Driver Records

Between January and June 2020, the Texas.gov website averaged more than 1 million visits per month. This was a 93% increase in visits over the previous 15 months. This increase was primarily due to Texans turning to Texas.gov for information and resources during the COVID-19 pandemic. On April 27, 2020, Texas.gov received 93,379 visits, the most daily visits in the history of the website. This spike in visits coincided with Governor Abbott's press conference announcing the "Phase 1 Reopening Texas" initiative.

Between January 2019 and June 2020, Texas.gov-hosted applications processed more than 14.3 million transactions. The five highest volume transaction services were:

1. Texas Department of Public Safety's (DPS) in-office card payment application
2. DPS Driver License Renewal
3. DPS Licensee Driver Records
4. DPS License to Carry
5. Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Death Certificate Ordering Application

Between March and June 2020, the Driver License Renewal application processed over 1.02 million transactions. This was a 55% increase over the same period the previous year. Because DPS field offices were closed during this time due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is reasonable to assume that some of this increase can be attributed to Texans being eligible and able to complete their transaction online.

Benefits and Efficiencies Gained

Texas.gov is a nationally recognized program that provides a trusted website portal for Texans to take care of their government business in many easy, secure, and user-friendly ways. For all its challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digital transformation of government and showcased important resources like the Texas.gov program.



Pandemic Response

During the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas.gov program was able to quickly mobilize resources and leverage available technology, infrastructure, and expertise to make vital information available to Texans and support numerous agencies with mission-critical projects, including:

- **Texas.gov/COVID19 Website.** In collaboration with DIR, the Governor's strike force team, and key agencies like the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) and DSHS, the Texas.gov team launched www.texas.gov/covid19. This site has played an important role in Texas' response to COVID-19 by delivering timely and essential information to Texans throughout the pandemic. Since its launch in April 2020, the site has received more than 490,000 visits.
- **Digital PSA Campaign.** The Texas.gov team also developed digital public service announcements (PSA) with COVID-19 tips and delivered the messages via social media. The PSA campaign generated more than 43 million impressions and nearly 75,000 visits to the site.
- **Texas Volunteer Request for Staffing Support.** To prepare for a surge in demand for health care providers due to COVID-19, DSHS needed a way for healthcare facilities to request volunteers. The Texas.gov team collaborated with DSHS to design an online application that enabled the agency to gather requests for medical and non-medical volunteer staffing support from hospitals, long-term care facilities, clinics, and other health care providers. The application was developed and launched in just ten days. As of September 2020, nearly 90 forms have been completed with requests for over 1,100 volunteers.
- **Texas Health Trace.** To support the Governor's plan to reopen businesses statewide, Texas needed a solution that enabled public health workers to conduct wide-scale contact tracing to monitor the spread of COVID-19. The Texas.gov team quickly developed Texas Health Trace – a case management and self-service system that captures key information about COVID-19 exposures and investigations. This application was built and deployed within 96 hours of the team's initial conversation with DSHS. Since launch, more than 100,000 self-assessments have been completed with over 400,000 visits to the Texas Health Trace self-service portal.
- **Governor's Open Texas Website.** During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor held numerous press conferences to deliver updates and he directed Texans to visit his website for more information; however, the website was often unable to support the significant influx of traffic resulting in slow load times and site unavailability for many users. A team of Texas.gov resources diagnosed the performance issues with the website and recommended migrating the Governor's Open Texas website to the cloud, leveraging the same technology and infrastructure as the Texas.gov website. This migration was completed in five days and successfully alleviated the performance and stability issues.

Reduced Costs and Customer Satisfaction

As more Texans are seeking ways to conduct government business online during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas.gov program is becoming a more important as a way for government to reduce costs and risks associated with serving individuals in person. Not only were state agencies, local government, and institutes of higher education able to continue doing business with Texans after their physical offices closed in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but they also have the opportunity to increase their online transactions with Texans in the future, reducing the need to provide as much physical, in person services while increase customer satisfaction.



A key element of the Texas.gov program is measuring and evaluating satisfaction with online services. Between September 2018 and June 2020, more than 66,500 respondents completed a voluntary survey after completing a Texas.gov online transaction.

- 91% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they would recommend this online service to someone else.
- 89% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that overall, they were satisfied with the experience.

Texas by Texas (TxT)

TxT provides a mobile-first digital government experience, making it an easier and more secure way for Texans to quickly take care of their government business. TxT offers two solutions for Texas agencies:

- Texas government agencies can integrate customer-facing services with the **TxT Digital Assistant** enabling Texans to complete services quickly and securely. With the digital assistant, Texans can create a single user account and profile, access a personalized dashboard with stored payment information and transaction history, establish notification preferences for alerts and reminders, and ultimately complete government transactions in just a few clicks anytime, anywhere, and from any device.
- Texas government agencies can use the **TxT Digital Identity** solution to enable multi-factor authentication (MFA) and single sign-on (SSO) capabilities for their employees to securely access agency systems with a TxT account.

Financial Summary

Texas.gov continues to provide general revenue funds to the state as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Texas.gov State Revenue Share, Fiscal Years 2019-2020¹		
	FY 2019 (Actual)	FY 2020 (Estimated)
Gross Program Revenue	\$104,323,886	\$108,267,844
Less: Payment Services (NIC)	\$28,760,685	\$32,104,120
Texas.gov Revenue	\$75,563,200	\$76,163,725
Less: DIR Expenditures		
Cost of Services	\$34,119,312	\$42,156,375
Direct Operating Expenses	\$1,382,676	\$1,285,859
Other Direct Expenses	-	-
Indirect Administration	-	\$524,226
Total DIR Expenditures	\$35,501,989	\$43,966,461
NET REVENUE OR (EXPENDITURES)	\$40,061,212	\$32,197,264
Excess (Deficit) Fund Balance	\$40,061,212	\$32,197,264
DIR Retained Amount	\$3,022,528	-
Contribution to General Revenue	\$37,038,684	\$32,197,264
Transactions	\$20,921,347	\$26,091,045

¹Note: 2020 numbers are estimated, pending end-of-year closeout. Transactions are consistent with ABEST reporting to the Legislative Budget Board.