



NEW YORK STATE
**COVID-19 TECHNOLOGY
SWAT TEAM**

Progress Report



INTRODUCTION

In response to the emerging COVID-19 global public health crisis, New York State (NYS) rapidly stood up a COVID-19 Technology “SWAT” Team led by the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) – which is housed within the Executive Chamber’s General Government, Technology & Innovation Portfolio – and with support from the Department of Financial Services. While the technology SWAT Team model had been previously deployed in a national context – for example, in the 2013 revamp of the Healthcare.gov platform and the 2014 White House response to Ebola – no such model existed at the state level. Of course, no such recent crisis had risen to the level of COVID-19. Given unprecedented challenges that required a coordinated and decisive statewide response, rapidly evolving needs that necessitated competent technological solutions, and a flurry of offers of technical support from the private and non-governmental sectors, the [NYS COVID-19 Tech SWAT Team](#) was launched in March 2020.

The Tech SWAT effort recruited private sector experts to work pro bono on critical projects, assist in developing new applications, and help NYS employees build the new technical skills necessary for responding to the crisis. Beyond coordinating and securing pro bono partnerships, ITS also led and supported several other high-priority COVID-19 initiatives to inform, serve, and protect New Yorkers (the complete list of Tech SWAT initiatives can be found in the “Project Deep-Dives” section). In response to inbound from governmental colleagues around the country, the team released a playbook detailing how the SWAT Team model was [developed and deployed](#) in May 2020. Now, the team is sharing a Progress Report on how these efforts have supported Governor Cuomo’s leadership in advancing the critical operational, public health, economic, and other interventions to respond to, manage, and build back better from COVID-19. Finally, it’s essential to acknowledge that the overall Tech SWAT Team initiative and its portfolio of projects has succeeded because of the concentrated, creative, and collaborative effort across state, local, and nongovernmental partners.

OUTCOMES

In nearly 3 months, ITS and its partners have worked tirelessly to deliver for New Yorkers. Because of Governor Cuomo’s leadership and consistent, fact-based, and data-driven communications, the COVID-19 Tech SWAT effort received an unprecedented level of interest from the private sector. In concert with talented and dedicated internal teams and collaborators across the State, the team was able to deliver strong outcomes for New Yorkers during very challenging times.

Interest in the NYS COVID-19 Tech SWAT Team

Submissions of Support - 5,200

Interested Volunteers - 7,300

Interested Organizations - 3,500

Projects Delivered

19

Pro-Bono Partnership Projects

Large projects featuring a significant contribution from a COVID-19 Tech SWAT pro-bono or volunteer partner in collaboration with an internal government team

21

ITS-Led Priority Projects

Large projects managed and led entirely by internal government teams via ITS, the Digital Service Team out of the Office of Digital and Media Services, or the Office of General Services

Overall Impact in New York State

40 Priority Projects



APPROX
49M



Service Interactions with
State Employees or Residents



APPROX
342
MILLION

Webpage
Views

APPROX
60M



Web
Users

APPROX
14M



Donated
Pro-bono



APPROX
25
THOUSAND

Donated
Hours

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to many internal champions, leaders, and dedicated NYS employees for their tireless efforts to ensure New Yorkers are protected and supported during this crisis. We're also grateful for the tremendous collaboration we've enjoyed across state agencies and external partners to make this work possible, including:

- ▶ Executive Chamber Digital Strategy Team
- ▶ New York State Digital Service Team
- ▶ Department of Health
- ▶ Department of Financial Services
- ▶ Office of General Services
- ▶ Office of Digital and Media Services
- ▶ Department of Labor
- ▶ Department of Motor Vehicle Services
- ▶ Department of Agriculture & Markets
- ▶ Apple
- ▶ Accenture
- ▶ Acquia
- ▶ Armanino LLP
- ▶ Castlight
- ▶ Cisco
- ▶ Codecademy
- ▶ Dell
- ▶ Google
- ▶ H2R Product Science
- ▶ HPE
- ▶ LinkedIn
- ▶ Ludia Consulting
- ▶ Mastercard
- ▶ Microsoft
- ▶ Square
- ▶ Tata Consultancy Services
- ▶ Unisys

Methodological Notes

- ▶ All metrics are rough estimates sourced from project owners or Google Analytics traffic so they should be viewed as directional
- ▶ Some “pageview” and “web user” metrics were not included for one project because they are likely captured in another project
- ▶ Estimates of donated pro-bono dollar values and hours are either directly sourced from participating organizations or rough estimates based on existing data
- ▶ Metrics on pageviews and web users cover the 3-month period roughly between March 2020 to June 2020
- ▶ Not all metrics were available or applicable for each project, so some projects only have a specific set of metrics on hand

PROJECT DEEP-DIVES

COVID-19 Screening Application (Pro-Bono Partner: Apple)

Project Overview: ITS and DOH partnered with Apple to make New York the first in the nation to integrate local COVID-19 information on social distancing, testing, and economic reopening into its COVID-19 mobile and website screening application.

Deliverables: <https://www.apple.com/covid19/>

Google.Org COVID-19 Fellowship (Pro-Bono Partner: Google)

Project Overview: ITS partnered with a highly-skilled team of 10 Google.org fellows on a 6-month engagement to drive improved digital service delivery in New York, especially across for services most impacted by COVID-19. In partnership with the Digital Service Team, ITS, and agency partners, the team is reimagining a user-friendly experience for service access focused on helping any user find exactly all of the services they may qualify for in less time. The new platform will also serve as a hub to collect and analyze user feedback on how to improve social services and will be flexible enough for adding emergency social services as COVID-19 or other challenges evolve.

Deliverables: In Progress

COVID-19 Screening, Scheduling, and Testing Platform (Pro-Bono Partners: Microsoft, Ludia Consulting, Armanino LLP)

Project Overview: ITS, and DOH partnered with Microsoft to launch a statewide COVID-19 screening platform that enabled residents to screen for symptoms, request and schedule a COVID-19 test, and receive results from one of New York’s state-run testing sites.

Deliverables: <https://covid19screening.health.ny.gov>

COVID-19 Antibody Testing Platform (Pro-Bono Partners: Microsoft, Ludia Consulting, Armanino LLP)

Project Overview: ITS, and DOH partnered with Microsoft to stand up a statewide COVID-19 antibody testing platform to enable residents to evaluate whether they previously had COVID-19 and developed associated antibodies after the fact.

Deliverables: <https://c19antibodytesting.health.ny.gov/>

Remote Workforce Enablement (Pro-Bono Partner: Dell)

Project Overview: ITS embedded full-time volunteers from Dell into its end user services team to support expanding the State's virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) capacity. As many state employees work from home and field teams continue to support COVID-19 testing sites, VDI optimization activities are helping to maximize system efficiency and performance for remote workers. Volunteers also supported enabling bring-your-own (BYO) connectivity options within the existing Workspace One management system.

Deliverables: Internal

Remote Workforce Enablement (Pro-Bono Partner: HPE)

Project Overview: ITS embedded full-time volunteers from HPE into its end user services team to support expanding the State's virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) capacity. As many state employees work from home and field teams continue to support COVID-19 testing sites, VDI optimization activities are helping to maximize system efficiency and performance for remote workers. Volunteers also supported enabling bring-your-own (BYO) connectivity options within the existing Workspace One management system.

Deliverables: Internal

Retail Location Insights Dashboard (Pro-Bono Partner: Mastercard)

Project Overview: The DFS Research & Innovation team gained access to Mastercard's Retail Location Insights dashboard and database. The dashboard surfaces, by census tract and business type, key trends related to average consumer spend and transactions. This has helped inform policy and planning in response to COVID-19.

Deliverables: Internal

Economic Dashboarding & Forecasting (Pro-Bono Partner: Mastercard)

Project Overview: The DFS Research & Innovation team is hosting a full-time technical volunteer from Mastercard to support overall economic dashboarding to support decisionmaking and recovery.

Deliverables: In Progress

CORE Platform Development Assistance (Pro-Bono Partner: Acquia)

Project Overview: The Digital Service Team worked with Acquia to build an improved shared platform

for content management across all State websites. This included gathering requirements, developing a feature to upload and replace documents, and scaling the way multiple website updates can be pushed to production.

Deliverables: Internal

Expanded Processing Capacity (Pro-Bono Partner: Unisys)

Project Overview: ITS partnered with Unisys to deploy additional Dorado systems processing capacity for critical benefits and service administration. This deployment has been helpful in managing spikes in processing demand on critical State services and social safety net programs.

Deliverables: Internal

Recruiting New Medical Volunteers & Workers (Pro-Bono Partner: LinkedIn)

Project Overview: New York State collaborated with LinkedIn by referring its Recruiting for Good team to the New York State Hospital Association to help fill critical frontline jobs at high-need hospitals.

Deliverables: Internal

Ad Grants for COVID-19 Digital Messaging (Pro-Bono Partner: Google)

Project Overview: In partnership with Google, the Executive Chamber's Social Media and Digital Communications team has been deploying Google digital advertising grants. The grants allowed NYS to drive messaging around awareness and prevention, directing New Yorkers to the State's COVID-19 website. Messaging was expanded to include campaigns educating residents on mental health resources, expanded unemployment insurance benefits, and the Governor's temporary moratorium on evictions. The partnership also removed barriers to using specific keywords, including ones around "masks" and "face coverings", which was enormously helpful in driving home the importance of mask-wearing as the state's economy reopened.

Deliverables: In progress

DOL Website Content Revamp (Pro-Bono Partner: Accenture)

Project Overview: The Digital Service Team and DOL partnered with Accenture to audit the existing DOL website's content strategy. Accenture interviewed key stakeholders and provided an updated information architecture for a redesigned website that is streamlined and organized by key user groups.

Deliverables: Internal

Networking Equipment Deployment (Pro-Bono Partner: Cisco)

Project Overview: ITS worked with Cisco to deploy networking systems and access point devices to support critical field operations across COVID-19 testing sites. Because of the speed required and the

uncertainty of device deployment locations and size, the donation of the equipment proved critical in the state's ability to respond in a timely manner and with appropriate technology as new emergency and COVID-19 testing sites were launched and serviced.

Statewide COVID-19 Testing Lookup Tool (Pro-Bono Partners: Google, Castlight)

Project Overview: ITS and DOH partnered with Google and Castlight to publish and update a comprehensive map and list of 750+ COVID-19 and antibody testing sites across the state.

Deliverables: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/>

Troubleshoot Incomplete Unemployment Insurance Applications (Pro-Bono Partner: Tata Consultancy Services)

Project Overview: DOL partnered with Tata Consultancy Services to receive 23 volunteers to support operational efficiencies at DOL. The volunteers supported troubleshooting and completing of pending employment insurance applications. In total, volunteers provided hundreds of hours of skilled service and feedback.

Deliverables: Internal

NYS Digital Training Initiative (Pro-Bono Partner: Microsoft, Mastercard, Square, H2R Product Science)

Project Overview: ITS partnered with Microsoft, Mastercard, Square, and H2R Product Science to develop a series of workshops and training opportunities for state workers across ITS, the Digital Service Team, and other internal agencies to increase engagement during remote work, hone digital skills, and deliver best-in-class digital services as residents continue to access services remotely. Microsoft delivered a 4-part training series for ITS technologists, CIOs, and Public Information Officers across the state. Mastercard is delivering a 4-part series focusing on: Creating a Digital Culture, Understanding Your Digital Stakeholders, Removing Friction in Digital Products, and Using Data to Support Decision-Making. Square is delivering a series of trainings on Leading Distributed Teams. H2R Product Science is delivering a 2-part series on product design and development.

Deliverables: Internal

NYS Technical Training Program (Pro-Bono Partner: Codecademy)

Project Overview: ITS partnered with Codecademy to receive and begin deploying hundreds of training licenses to technologists and developers across the ITS looking to sharpen and expand their priority technical skillsets, including in Angular, Java, and .Net.

Deliverables: Internal

DOL Unemployment Insurance (UI) Application

Project Overview: ITS launched an updated and redesigned UI Application experience for DOL. This included: developing a mobile-responsive upfront interface to collect user info and upload it to the

DOL website during downtimes to reduce timeouts and call center volumes; overhauling the design and steps associated with the unemployment insurance process to eliminate bugs and wrong doors; allowing residents to save progress and complete an application later; and integrating the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance process into a single application.

Deliverables: <https://unemployment.labor.ny.gov/>

Statewide COVID-19 Data Dashboard

Project Overview: ITS in partnership with DOH launched a dashboard to publicly report on COVID cases, locations, recoveries, and other data points segmented by region, race, and other key factors.

Deliverables: <https://covid19tracker.health.ny.gov/>

COVID-19 Medical Volunteer Placement Platform

Project Overview: ITS developed a system to take vetted medical volunteers and match them to hospitals who needed staff support.

Deliverables: Internal

DOL Operations & Success Metrics Dashboard

Project Overview: ITS published a holistic internal dashboard to support DOL's COVID-19 unemployment insurance efforts, featuring granular data on claims (traditional, pandemic unemployment assistance), payments, and application status. This supported critical decisionmaking on a real-time basis to ensure New Yorkers received a quality experience as they accessed unemployment benefits.

Deliverables: Internal

DOL Website Homepage Redesign

Project Overview: The Digital Service Team revamped DOL's homepage and key supporting webpages to make it easier to review and elevate the most important info for New Yorkers. The team created a new Drupal instance to migrate new DOL content to the new platform, designed a new homepage, and curated content for a series of 2nd-level pages with a focus on unemployment insurance. Finally, the team trained DOL staff on how to manage the new pages.

Deliverables: <https://dol.ny.gov/>

ITS Open Data Handbook

Project Overview: ITS released a new version of its Open Data Handbook, a nationally recognized publication for promoting governmental transparency. Version 2.0 included new guidance for state entities concerning the alteration of data sets and introduced a process to help ensure significant changes are properly authorized. The Handbook was a useful tool for localities collecting and publishing COVID-19 data throughout the public health crisis.

Deliverables: <https://its.ny.gov/press-release/new-york-state-releases-enhanced>

New York Forward Economic Reopening Website

Project Overview: ITS and the Digital Service Team collaborated to build the New York Forward website, a one-stop shop to guide businesses on their reopening plan and provide New Yorkers with the data and resources to stay safe and track regional reopening announcements. The website included industry guidance for each phased opening, a safety plan template for businesses to use, and daily regional metrics on testing, infection rates, and hospitalizations to guide reopening decisions.

Deliverables: <https://forward.ny.gov> and forward.ny.gov/percentage-positive-results-region-dashboard

New York Forward Business Reopening Lookup Tool

Project Overview: Governor Cuomo has announced NY Forward, a plan to re-open New York State (NYS) following the NYS On Pause Executive Order related to COVID-19. As part of NY Forward, the NYS Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) GLP developed a NY Forward Business Reopening Lookup Tool to assist NYS businesses in determining their eligibility for re-opening as well as regulations for re-opening.

Deliverables: <https://www.businessexpress.ny.gov/app/nyforward>

NYS Contact Tracing Recruitment Landing Page

Project Overview: To support the recruitment of a capable cohort of statewide contact tracers, the Digital Service Team developed a website with critical information on the role of contact tracing and how candidates can join New York's tracing corps.

Deliverables: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/new-york-state-contact-tracing>

Nourish New York Platform

Project Overview: ITS supported the Governor's Nourish NY program, a lifeline for families and farmers who have been struggling with changes brought on by COVID-19. ITS administered \$25M in grant funding to food banks in need and launched a marketplace for farmers with excess products to connect with buyers across the state.

Deliverables: <https://agriculture.ny.gov/nourishny>

NYS Coronavirus Website

Project Overview: To ensure critical, timely, and digestible information on New York's nation-leading actions was available and updated at all times, the Digital Service Team built and managed the state's COVID-19 hub. The website served as a critical statewide and national source of essential information on how New York is responding to COVID-19 in real-time.

Deliverables: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

Governor & NY.Gov Websites

Project Overview: The Digital Service Team built upon and updated the Governor's and State's

websites to ensure daily press briefings, executive orders, and other actions were accessible to all audiences.

Deliverables: <https://governor.ny.gov> and <https://ny.gov>

“Wear a Mask” Website & Public Information Campaign

Project Overview: As part of the Governor’s campaign to drive more protective mask-wearing, New York solicited creative 30-second homemade ads by New Yorkers to feature in ongoing public service announcements. The Digital Service Team built its central program page and a portal for video submission & public voting.

Deliverables: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/node/2871>

Elected Official Unemployment Inquiry Form

Project Overview: To be responsive to observations and feedback from elected officials on issues that their constituents were having accessing unemployment insurance, ITS launched an online form to gather data and respond to resident issues quickly.

Deliverables: <https://forms.ny.gov/s3/DOL-Elected-Official-Inquiry>

COVID-19 Tech SWAT Team Playbook

Project Overview: ITS published a Playbook to empower other governments to design and employ their own pro-bono “SWAT Team” efforts during COVID-19 and beyond. The Playbook includes key details on how to design, structure, and launch a SWAT team in a government context.

Deliverables: <https://www.ny.gov/new-york-state-covid-19-technology-swat-team/new-york-state-technology-swat-team-playbook>

COVID-19 Screening Application for NYS Agencies and Entities

Project Overview: ITS developed an application to streamline and standardize the daily health screening process for state agencies and authorities as they phase in employees back into the workplace amid COVID-19.

Deliverables: Internal

COVID-19 Quarantine Travel Advisory Website

Project Overview: In response to increased rates of COVID-19 transmission in certain states, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut jointly issued a travel advisory for anyone returning from travel to states that have a significant degree of community-wide spread of COVID-19. The Digital Service Team created the travel advisory site and has updated it with new guidance over time.

Deliverables: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>

COVID-19 'New York on PAUSE' Enforcement Task Force Violation Complaint Form

Project Overview: The Governor's "NY on Pause" Executive Order is a 10-point policy to assure uniform safety for all New Yorkers and statewide businesses. ITS launched an Enforcement Task Force Violation Complaint Form, which allowed individuals or businesses to submit online complaints highlighting violations of the executive order. The system also functioned as a ticketing system for state investigators.

Deliverables: <https://mylicense.custhelp.com/app/ask>

COVID-19 'New York on PAUSE' Enforcement Task Force Call Line

Project Overview: The Governor's "NY on Pause" Executive Order is a 10-point policy to assure uniform safety for all New Yorkers and statewide businesses. ITS launched a dedicated call line to allow individuals or businesses to report executive order violation incidents to investigators.

Deliverables: 1-833-789-0470

DOH COVID-19 Hotline

Project Overview: New York State COVID19 Hotline providing citizens with answers to all their pandemic related questions

Deliverables: 1-888-364-3065

DOL Unemployment Insurance Hotline Surge

Project Overview: DOL saw an unprecedented surge in unemployment benefit claims throughout the COVID-19 crisis. The Governor placed critical importance on ensuring all claimants received their benefits and had their questions answered. ITS surged call center capacity to ensure New Yorkers were able to be connected to someone on the phone who could support them in accessing unemployment benefits.

Deliverables: 1-888-209-8124