



# Telephonic Signatures:

## The Whole Truth

REAL PEOPLE. REAL CONNECTIONS. REAL HELP.

# What is a Telephonic Signature, really?

- Electronic signature, not an ink signature
- Recorded verbal attestation from a signer
- If done properly, holds the same legal force and effect of an ink signature



# Where did they come from?

- **1999 Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (UETA) approved**
  - Purpose of making electronic commerce easier by finding ways to validate signatures through electronic means
  - Defines electronic signature as *“an electronic sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically associated with a record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.”*
- **Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (aka Farm Bill)**
  - Specifically comments on electronic records and gives options to State agencies to establish telephonic signature systems and processes
  - *“a State agency may establish a system by which an applicant household may sign an application through a recorded verbal assent over the telephone...”*
  - Provides specific requirements for State and County agencies to implement

# WHY telephonic signatures?

## To reach clients who can't be served other ways

- Overcome barriers to other methods of applying
  - Computer access and/or computer literacy
  - Transportation barriers
  - Scheduling barriers such as childcare, work schedules, etc
- To simplify the process for clients and make applying easier

## To help our Counties streamline their processes

- Reduce walk-in traffic, double entry of data and help Counties save money
- Protect Counties by following solid procedures



# So how do you do them?



**The concept is easy, but telephonic signatures are anything but simple!**

# What is legally necessary?

UETA defines electronic signature as:

*“an electronic sound, symbol, or process attached to or logically associated with a record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.”*

Farm Bill states that a telephonic signature must be:

*“a recorded verbal assent over the telephone...”*

**So taking an application over the phone isn't enough. The application must have a recorded verbal signature that can be attached to or logically associated with the application in order to be a legally submitted document.**

# Current Implementations

## 2-1-1 Experience

### San Diego

- Recorded telephonic signature through call recording software.
- File uploaded through MyBCW and transmitted to County.
- County listens/reviews audio file, converts to pdf and uploads to document repository.

### San Bernardino

- Recorded telephonic signature through call recording software.
- File retrieved and renamed following County's requested guidelines.
- Files stored indefinitely for retrieval upon request.

### San Francisco

- Recorded telephonic signature through call recording software.
- File re-named to match County case information with County case number.
- File uploaded into 2-1-1 CRM system for retrieval upon request.

### Imperial

- Recorded telephonic signature through call recording software.
- File re-named following County's requested guidelines.
- File uploaded into 2-1-1 CRM system for retrieval upon request.

# Current Implementations

## Outside of 2-1-1's

### Pennsylvania\*

- Partnership between Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and local non-profit.
- Full phone calls recorded with call recording software or system.
- Files stored by non-profit partner organization and provided to SNAP agency upon request.

### Florida\*

- Florida Departments of Elder Affairs and Children and Families in collaboration with Area Agencies on Aging.
- Using IVR phone system to record calls.

### Wisconsin\*

- Wisconsin Department of Human Services
- Signature portion of phone calls recorded
- SNAP agency stored phone calls with specialized software.



# Best Practices

- Partnership - Work with your County first
- Call recording software is helpful – many ways to accomplish this
- Partnership
- Scripting for consistency
- Partnership
- Strong naming convention for the file that the County has agreed to
- Partnership!



# Share our Experiences

- County hesitancy or fear
- Giving too much information about how San Diego is doing it
- Working with County IT departments
- Finding a County champion
- Proving yourself through small wins



**The Draft Telephonic Signature Toolkit includes more information to help you**



# Questions?

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