

# Connectivity for all

Making eligibility  
verification a breeze



# Call for change

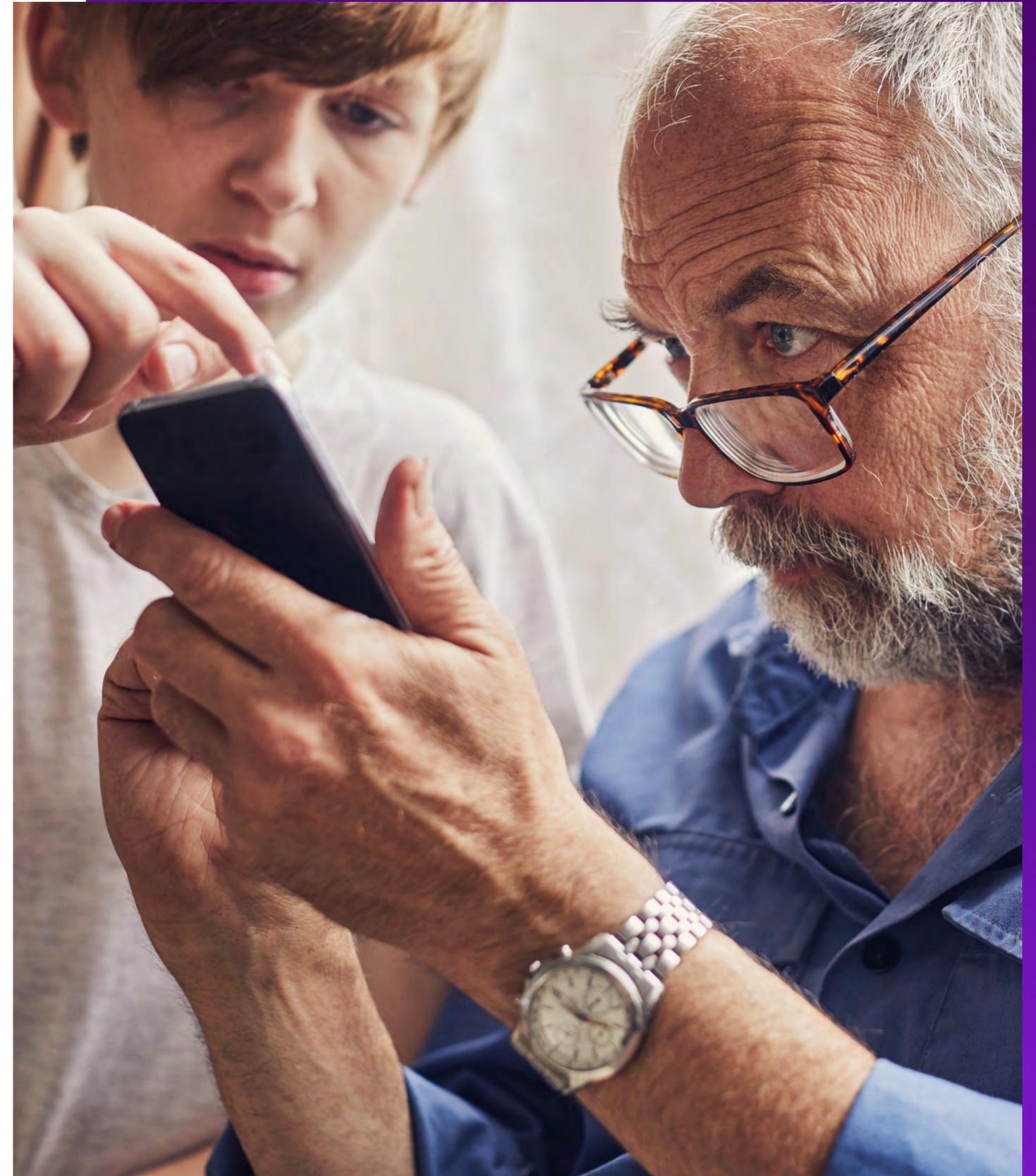
**People everywhere in the US need access to reliable, affordable, and high-speed internet. Not only is it essential for those trying to do their jobs (or look for work), it is also key to participating equally in remote learning when schools close in response to local COVID-19 infections. High-speed internet is critical for individuals to participate in today's hyper-connected economy—and to close the digital divide for everyone.**

One federal nonprofit is responsible for administering billions of dollars in funds annually across multiple national programs—one of which is focused on providing more affordable access to broadband and voice services for more than 10 million low-income families through subsidies to their telecommunications providers. But it isn't necessarily easy for families to access this assistance. An approach was needed that could securely leverage an applicant's eligibility status in other state and federal government systems, and to help qualify applicants for enrollment in this program.

Doing so would help ease the burden for those in need rather than create duplicative, sometimes confusing, application tasks.

Accenture Federal Services (Accenture) was asked to help the nonprofit implement a new, secure, user-centered eligibility verification platform (EVP). Not only would this better serve applicants, but also the private-sector telecommunications companies that provide the actual connectivity services to those applicants.

Thus began a four-year partnership to make it easier for everyone to access high-speed internet and close the digital divide.





Where tech meets human ingenuity

# Where tech meets human ingenuity

**The Accenture team developed the blueprints for the EVP as a unified system for determining eligibility for the nonprofit's program. The EVP would determine whether an individual is already approved for certain state or federally run benefits programs, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or Medicaid, and use that information to help determine eligibility.**

Accenture used an agile process, meaning it was constantly discovering, evaluating, prioritizing, building, operating, analyzing—and repeating. This allowed the team to rapidly innovate in response to new demands. Accenture also leveraged Development, Security and Operations (DevSecOps) principles to deliver greater automation, repeatability, agility, and security across the entire project lifecycle.

As a result, Accenture was uniquely equipped to improve two key elements of the EVP: the portal and the eligibility integration engine.

The portal was built using ServiceNow®, a leading, cloud-based Digital Platform that accelerates digital transformations for its applicants. This would serve as the main interface for millions of applicants and telecom service provider employees. It allows applicants and telecom employees to submit applications where automated validations make an initial status decision. When a status cannot be determined via automated means, consumers and telecom employees can submit supporting documentation through the portal to a Business Process Operations (BPO) group, which is tasked with supporting applicants.

## Where tech meets human ingenuity

In other words, applicants looking to sign up for the connectivity services would no longer need to access multiple systems to verify their eligibility. Instead, they could easily submit their information through a single portal—one that is connected to several other databases—and receive assistance from someone at the BPO should they encounter issues completing their applications.

The eligibility integration engine was built within the Accenture Insights Platform for Government (AIP.IQ), a solution that brings together industry-leading analytics technology and proven best practices as a cloud-managed service. From Amazon Web Services to Microsoft Azure to Oracle Cloud Platform, the AIP.IQ offers government agencies access to a suite of capabilities that range from pre-integrated data management all the way to collaboration and visualization tools.

The engine uses a complex combination of data structures and interface frameworks to validate a consumer's eligibility. It does this by accessing external federal and state eligibility systems, as well as internal applications, to render an automated decision on the consumer's eligibility. Put simply, the engine is what makes the portal run smoothly for end-users. By connecting multiple databases, the engine can quickly and efficiently determine if an applicant meets certain criteria and approve them on the spot.



# A valuable difference

**Accenture rapidly delivered the first release of the EVP in June 2018, combining its infrastructure and data and analytics platform with the ServiceNow platform. Thanks to the solution being in the cloud, Accenture was able to rapidly mobilize and cut years off the project timeline, providing a highly scalable and secure technical platform.**

Using DevSecOps and Agile principles, Accenture provided ongoing value to the nonprofit's stakeholders by rapidly developing and deploying 12+ major releases after the success of the initial EVP. Each one consistently honed the digital experience to ease the burden on applicants and business partners. On top of that, each rollout optimized the program's integrity and the quality of customer support as services were being delivered rapidly across the U.S.

Through Accenture's ability to quickly scale to meet its client's needs, and the team's agile development processes, the EVP has been able to expand to support additional verification programs for the federal nonprofit agency. In May 2021, the EVP added support for a new, congressionally appropriated broadband fund within three months of project commencement. The EVP supported eligibility checks for over 2.4 million users for the new program within the first two weeks of launch, providing valuable benefits to those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.



## A valuable difference

In addition to checking federal databases, the EVP also checks state eligibility databases for residents in 56 states and territories—with automates connections to 19 states and two federal data sources. These integrations enable real-time consumer verifications, increase the deterrence of fraudulent activities and provide a modern, streamlined user experience.

Accenture has also developed capabilities to support the nonprofit's third-party BPO provider—deploying capabilities for its 1,000+ BPO staff to process more than:

**4 million** eligibility applications

**3 million** mailed outreach letters and

**3.5 million** customer contacts

Looking ahead, Accenture plans to continue to enhance the consumer experience and support the nonprofit in training end users. On top of that, Accenture plans to add additional state and federal connections—all while promoting the program to every eligible American. How's that for liberty and high-speed internet for all?

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## **About Accenture**

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