

Project Startup Report

Submitted to Project Oversight on 8/14/2025

GENERAL INFORMATION

Project Name: Unemployment Insurance Modernization (UI Mod)

Agency Name: Job Service North Dakota

Project Sponsor: Darren Brostrom

Project Manager: Heather Raschke (Primary) and Jai Saini

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project is to replace Job Service North Dakota's (JSND) Unemployment Insurance (UI) system with a Commercial-off-the-Shelf (COTS) Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solution provided by Geographic Solutions, Inc. (GSI). The solution, Geographic Solutions Unemployment System (GUS), was procured via a Request for Proposal (RFP). GUS is a companion offering to the currently deployed GSI Virtual One-Stop (VOS) workforce solution. The project will be completed in the following phases:

- Phase 0: Azure cloud platform installed. VOS ported to Azure in the production environment.
- Phase 1: Development and UAT testing of the Tax and Tax Appeals functionality.
- Phase 2: Development and UAT testing of the Benefits and Benefits Appeals functionality; UAT and go-live of the fully integrated system (VOS, Benefits and Benefits Appeals, and Tax and Tax Appeals).
- Phase 3: Enhancements and lower priority scope added to the system.

BUSINESS NEEDS AND PROBLEMS

JSND must meet the UI program objectives of taking in UI taxes from employers and making benefit payments to claimants despite over a decade of flat federal funding and no state funding for the UI program. The current JSND UI mainframe system is at a high risk of failure due to its technology. Should the system fail, JSND may not be able to recover the system which will essentially halt the agency's ability to service its 26,000 employers and 20,000 claimants.

PROJECT BASELINES

Project Start Date	Baseline End Date	Baseline Budget	Funding Source
10/03/2022	10/29/2027	\$43,175,933.38	Federal

Notes:

- The Project Start Date represents the date when the team first started to work on the project charter and request for proposal.
- The project is 100% federal funded. Fund sources are:
 - ARPA funding – COVID federal funding dollars allocated to the State of North Dakota and obligated to JSND by the state legislature for purposes of modernizing the unemployment insurance technology system.
 - UIPL 11-23 – Federal funding grant provided directly to JSND for specific uses.
 - Reed Act – Federal funding provided to directly to JSND which has a limited use. System automation is one of the few allowed expenditures.

OBJECTIVES

Business Objective	Measurement Description
1.1 Utilize a maintainable and sustainable UI technology system.	1.1.1 Three years after implementation, ND's UI program is running at or above levels of federal performance as compared to the calendar year prior to implementation.
	1.1.2 At time of implementation, the pool of available contract developers in the United States will be increased from three to a minimum of one hundred.

KEY CONSTRAINTS AND/OR RISKS

Below are key constraints for the project.

- **Funding:**
 - The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding must be expended by December 31, 2026, per federal guidelines.
 - The Reed Act funding is not enough to complete the project on its own.
- **Resources:**
 - The number of JSND full-time equivalent employees is finite.

Below is the key risk on the project.

- **Schedule:**
 - Project is not completed on time. (The implementation of Phase 2 is set for October 2026. This is when the majority of the funding is to be expended.)