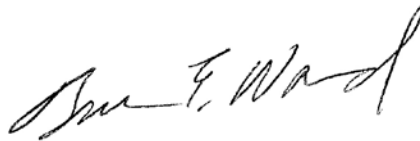


For: State Offices

State "Fax2Mail" Implementation Plans

Approved by: Associate Administrator for Operations and Management



1 Overview

A Background

OCIO, International Technology Services (ITS), awarded a contract to Tactical Digital for electronic FAX service to replace FSA's existing analog FAX machines. This service is provided by EasyLink and is called "Fax2Mail". Fax2Mail allows a person, or group of people, to send and receive FAXes using USDA's Microsoft Exchange Outlook e-mail system, rather than using FAX machines.

When FSA employees convert to Fax2Mail, it will not affect FSA's customers. Customers will still be able to use their FAX machines to exchange FAXes with FSA offices.

Cost savings can be achieved from decommissioning FAX machines, canceling leased FAX lines, and reducing the need for FAX supplies. These savings will help offset the costs of the Fax2Mail service. Moreover, the benefits of electronic FAX handling will enable users to quickly and efficiently send, receive, share, and store FAXes electronically from any computer with FSA e-mail access, even while teleworking. Printing becomes optional and will save paper and physical storage.

Notice IRM-455 requested that SED's work with their local ITS, Technical Support Division (TSD) group managers to complete Fax2Mail surveys for each FSA State and County Office FAX machine. As was requested, all FSA State Offices have confirmed that their FAX volume surveys are complete. A total of 2,301 FSA surveys were completed nationwide, identifying a total FSA volume of approximately 4 million FAXed pages per year.

ITS, TSD group managers are using the FAX volume survey data and have created initial Fax2Mail cost analysis for each State. These cost analyses identify the estimated FY 2013 and FY 2014 cost savings expected to be realized in each State from implementing Fax2Mail for each Service Center Agency (SCA), including RD, NRCS, and FSA. These cost analyses and additional information can be accessed from the ITS, TSD SharePoint site at <https://its.sc.egov.usda.gov/tsd/default.aspx>. CLICK "Fax2Mail".

Disposal Date	Distribution
July 1, 2014	State Offices

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1 Overview (Continued)

B Purpose

This notice requests that SED's work with their local ITS, TSD group managers to complete an FSA State-specific Fax2Mail implementation plan as soon as possible.

There is no specific deadline for SED's to accomplish the implementation plan, because the time required will vary based on the progress made by ITS, TSD group managers and SCA's. However, FSA will benefit from the savings and efficiencies resulting from implementation of State implementation plans. Therefore, it is in FSA's best interests to implement Fax2Mail as quickly as is feasible.

Note: Some State-specific implementation plans have already been completed and/or approved.

2 Nationwide Deployment

A Implementation Plans

The next step in the nationwide deployment of Fax2Mail involves developing Fax2Mail implementation plans specific to the needs of each State.

The survey-provided FAX volume estimates, along with ITS, TSD cost analyses for each State, will be used by ITS, TSD group managers, in coordination with SED's, to create FSA State-specific implementation plans.

The resulting State-specific FSA implementation plans will be combined with the implementation plans for RD and NRCS to create comprehensive Fax2Mail implementation plans for each State. These joint-plans are needed to calculate cost savings because telecommunication costs are shared between all SCA's on a national percentage basis.

The State plans will then be reviewed at the national level and then approved subject to funding availability.

2 Nationwide Deployment (Continued)

B Planning Process

SED's or designees shall work with local ITS, TSD group managers to make the business decisions needed to develop State-specific FSA Fax2Mail implementation plans. The implementation plan will address unique considerations, such as:

- toll-free numbers, because State site Fax2Mail accounts might, in some cases, be combined into a shared Fax2Mail account and phone number to enhance business process efficiency

Note: Sharing is geographically independent, and is accomplished by using a shared e-mail box in Microsoft Outlook called a "resource account". The incoming messages are all delivered into the shared resource account in-box. Therefore, when combining sites, it is sometimes better to convert existing FAX numbers into new toll-free FAX numbers, rather than to port the existing FAX numbers to the new Fax2Mail service.

- additional scanners, because Fax2Mail requires that sites have the ability to scan documents

Note: Some State sites might lack scanning capability. In such cases, there might be a need to request additional scanners and multi-function printers, or managed print services subject to funding availability.

- postage meters, because in some cases, there may be legacy postage meters in use that rely on using an existing analog FAX line.

Note: The process used to purchase postage needs to be addressed **before** converting a site to Fax2Mail. In many offices, postage is purchased by temporarily attaching the postage meter to the FAX machine analog line. The analog FAX line will be disconnected because of implementing Fax2Mail and; therefore, this will no longer be an option. There are other options for purchasing postage, such as:

- attaching the postage machine to another analog phone line, if available
- attaching the meter to another analog port on the telephone system
- attaching the postage machine to a workstation that is attached to the network
- eliminating the postage meters altogether and implementing an authorized USPS provider, such as "Stamps.com" or "Endicia.com".

The processes used to purchase postage may be a site-by-site determination, or alternately, a Statewide solution could be adopted. ITS-TSD group managers can work with State Offices, as needed, to review and evaluate alternative possible solutions.

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2 Nationwide Deployment (Continued)

B Planning Process (Continued)

Exceptions: In rare instances, it might be necessary to exclude sites from the State implementation plan. Situations for exclusion might include the following:

- there is an exceptionally high FAX volume; therefore, it may be less expensive to keep the analog line and FAX machine
- digital phone lines or Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) is already in place, there is no analog line to disconnect, and there are little or no corresponding cost savings to be realized.

A document title, “Fax2Mail Implementation and Migration Decision Tree”, is located at <https://its.sc.egov.usda.gov/tsd/fax2mail/default.aspx>, in the “Fax2Mail Documents” folder. This document will provide an aid in the decision process.

C National Office Review

When the final consolidated SCA implementation plan for each State is complete, SED’s should provide approval to the local ITS, TSD group manager.

After SED approves, the implementation plan will be reviewed at the National Office and approved subject to funding availability.

ITS, TSD group managers will notify SED’s and other NRCS and RD leadership in each State, and will provide a proposed Fax2Mail implementation schedule for each State.

Similar communications have been forwarded by NRCS and RD to their State and Regional Offices and Service Centers.

D Contacts

Any questions about Fax2Mail should be directed to the local ITS, TSD group manager.

If there are any questions about this notice, contact either of the following:

- Louis Iacoletti, FSA, OCIO, by either of the following:
 - e-mail at louis.iacoletti@wdc.usda.gov
 - telephone at 202-720-4143
- Tom Radermacher, OCIO, ITS, TSD, by either of the following:
 - e-mail at tom.radermacher@mn.usda.gov
 - telephone at 218-927-2912, Ext. 114.