

The
Model
Office

Managing Government
Services Anywhere, Anytime,
From Any Device



The Florida Department of Health (FDOH) protects, promotes, and improves the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, and community efforts. Teams identify health risks, prevent the spread of disease, and inform the public on health issues.

“We have 400 plus locations throughout the state of Florida, both in urban and rural counties,” explained Tony Powell, Chief Information Officer (CIO), Florida Department of Health. “Employees across the state need access to all resources within the Florida Department of Health.”

The department faced challenges when delivering consistent access to applications, providing dependable support and services, and ensuring continuity of operations. “We needed to ensure that the department could operate efficiently across all locations, from large metropolitan cities to rural communities,” explained Powell.

“As we considered modernization options, the top priority was business agility. Whether during disasters or during every day operations, we need to provide FDOH business users with access to applications and data anywhere, any time, and from any device – securely.”

– Tony Powell

“Florida faces extreme and unpredictable weather. Hurricane damage over the past several years has been significant and, in some cases, devastating,” said Powell. “We have to stay operational in all conditions – including when buildings are damaged or destroyed – to ensure the department can continue to deliver essential services, including Children’s Medical Service, Medical Quality Assurance, and Primary Health Care Management.”

“As we considered modernization options, the top priority was business agility,” said Powell. “Whether during disasters or during every day operations, we need to provide FDOH business users with access to applications and data anywhere, any time, and from any device – securely.”

Key Benefits

- Allows IT staff to automate device configurations and maximize IT staff time
- Gives team unified access to all department resources
- Enables remote configurations and consistent device profiles
- Provides ability to adjust during disasters, and if issues arise day-to-day
- Provides a model that can be replicated in other counties

Model Office Concept

To meet their goals, the FDOH created an innovative Model Office concept designed to ensure its personnel can adapt to whatever challenge might come their way.

The Model Office is based on moving infrastructure to the cloud – with disaster recovery and security built in. “We took on a series of projects to prepare, doubling the network bandwidth and executing crucial security updates,” said Powell. “These updates included adding dual-factor authentication, encryption at rest and at transport, SSL inspection, and new identity management capabilities.”

The FDOH rolled out the Model Office with AWS, Microsoft, Northwest Regional Data Center, and Citrix, using the Citrix Workspace to manage the multi-cloud, multi-device environment.

Workspace enables the team to configure endpoint devices remotely and maintain consistent device profiles. The FDOH manages 26,000 endpoints (desktops, laptops, and mobile devices), so this saves significant time and delivers reliable user experience and security. The department has adopted a multi-cloud and hybrid cloud approach for production workloads, non-production workloads, and disaster recovery with encryption at rest and at transport.



Managing Remotely with Desktops in the Cloud

The virtual desktop deployment allows IT staff to automate device configurations, consistently, maximizing IT staff time.

“The result is the ability to be nimble, adjust during disasters, operate when issues arise during day-to-day operations, and provide maximum adaptability to meet all circumstances,” said Powell. Even if a facility is destroyed, the team has full access to department resources.

“We’ve created a secure environment that delivers the best possible employee/user experience,” adds Powell. “One log in – from any device – provides unified access to all resources.”

“We have created an environment that ensures our teams – regardless of location – have access to the same services and support. Most important – we know we can continue to deliver citizen services when they are most needed, during an emergency.”

– Tony Powell

Serving Florida and Beyond

In addition to serving citizens of Monroe County, any county within the state can replicate the Model Office to modernize and standardize IT services delivery across dispersed locations, regardless of IT staffing or variety of endpoint devices. The approach also provides a model that can be replicated in the remaining 66 counties within Florida and possibly duplicated in other states.

The feedback on the FDOH’s initial pilot implementation in Monroe County has been positive and enthusiastic.

Key business leaders in the FDOH recognize that the Model Office provides the opportunity to deliver the highest quality services, regardless of location, amidst even the worst of circumstances.

“We have created an environment that ensures our teams – regardless of location – have access to the same services and support,” says Powell. “Most important – we know we can continue to deliver citizen services when they are most needed, during an emergency.”

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