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Riverside County Department of Veterans' Services has adapted the way we provide services to our clients in response to the COVID-19 pandemic public health emergency. Our offices now provide both telephonic and digital services, allowing our clients continued access to the services we provide. Our offices also offer curbside service to our clients who are technologically challenged.

Historically, our department relied on “face to face” service for meeting our clients. Simultaneously transitioning to an all-digital platform and setting up the infrastructure and equipment to allow staff to telecommute has been a challenge for our department during the COVID-19 pandemic. We quickly acquired laptops, printers, and scanners, through Riverside County’s Digital Equity Program (electronic recycling program), for all staff to use when telecommuting. This was able to save Riverside County and our department thousands of dollars. Our offices also utilize a smartphone application called “Finger.ink,” which allows clients to digitally sign documents. Our staff members can send forms for claims processing directly to State and Federal agencies using the Panoramic Software, Inc. platform “Vetpro.”

The program is a great success and most of our clients are very receptive and even prefer the new practice. This relieves many veterans and their families from taking time off work, driving to one of our facilities, and waiting in a lobby. Also, many elderly or physically challenged veterans and family members, who might not be able to come to our office, now have access to services they might not have been able to capitalize on previously.

This program is easily replicable for all our county veterans service officer counterparts since we share the same platform which has all the same functionality. The initial move from a paper to digital platform does take some initial inertia; however, the results are well worth the time and investment.

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