



FTA Awards Nomination/Entry Form

Person who led this effort or project

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About your program, idea, or project

Name your program, idea, or project: Plain Language Initiative

What is the problem that you wanted to solve?

Nevada taxpayers were receiving highly technical, complex correspondence written at collegiate reading levels even though letters were sent to a broad population with widely varying literacy and tax knowledge. Notices frequently failed to clearly explain why the Department was contacting the taxpayer, what action was required, and what would happen if no action was taken. This ambiguity created unnecessary confusion, delayed voluntary compliance, increased follow-up call volume, and slowed revenue recognition for the State. The Department set out to eliminate these barriers at enterprise scale by converting its portfolio of system generated taxpayer correspondence into clear, plain-language communications that any Nevada taxpayer can read, understand, and act upon.

Who was involved in addressing the problem?

Once the strategic direction was charted by Director Hughes and Deputy Director Bernardy, the following teams collaborated on tactical delivery of the Plain Language Initiative:

- Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO) - Provided strategic oversight, enforced milestone compliance, and maintained governance authority across the initiative.
- Quality Forms Committee (QFC) - Served as the operational engine—managing letter inventory, assigning converters, tracking readability scores, coordinating AI-assisted drafting through Microsoft Copilot, and conducting independent quality reviews before any letter advanced to production.
- Business Unit Stakeholders and Product Owners - Owned the substantive legal and procedural content of each letter, participating in inventory validation, content review, and user acceptance testing. A deliberate separation of responsibilities ensured that plain-language conversion never altered legal intent.

How did they go about finding a solution?

The Department recognized that MYNT's multi-year modernization effort required every outgoing letter to be rebuilt and recoded within the new tax system. This created a natural opportunity to integrate a comprehensive plain-language conversion. Because the volume of work far exceeded staff capacity, the team identified this effort as an ideal first application of responsible generative AI. Using AI allowed the plain-language project to run alongside the broader modernization effort; otherwise, it would have been delayed for several years until after MYNT's completion. Working in Microsoft Word with Copilot, staff processed each letter through a structured, engineered prompt sequence that endeavored to produce an 8th grade level draft while retaining all statutory NRS references and legal intent. Word's native Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch–Kincaid Grade Level metrics provided objective, reproducible before and after readability scores. A multistage governance process, overseen by the Quality Forms Committee, validated every draft for clarity, accuracy, formatting, and legal compliance before final release.

Describe the outcome. What is the new idea, approach, program, or activity?

The Plain Language Initiative delivered a systematic, AI-assisted methodology for converting government correspondence into accessible, plain-language communications and embedded that methodology as a permanent operational standard. Our approach is built on a four-stage conversion process:

- 1. Letter retrieval and baselining
- 2. AI-assisted drafting
- 3. Document preparation
- 4. Structured governance overseeing review and approval

This process is repeatable, scalable, and executable using standard staff tools requiring no specialized software. To date, 119 letters have been implemented, covering 67% of system-generated letter volume and reaching 65% of unique Nevada taxpayers. The average Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level dropped from 13.4 (college level) to 8.4 (middle school), a reduction of 5 full grade levels. The average Flesch Reading Ease score improved from 33.9 (Difficult) to 52.7 (Standard). Several letters showed especially dramatic gains: the Modified Business Tax Welcome Letter improved from a 22.2 to a 7.7 grade level; the Credit Determination Notice improved from an 11.1 to a 4.9 grade level. Our strategy of leveraging reusable prompts, common tools, objective scoring, and committee governance has drawn interest from agencies across multiple states and has been presented at national conferences.

What has changed since this was implemented? How have your operations improved? Include any data, analytics or metrics that would show the value of your program. Don't forget management advantages such as improved morale.

The impact is most clearly reflected in a dramatic reduction in general-inquiry call volume. In 2023, the baseline year before both the Plain Language initiative and the broader modernization effort, staff logged 23,121 general inquiry calls, roughly one call for every five letter-receiving taxpayers. By 2025, the first full year of revised plain-language letters, those calls had fallen to 11,175 representing a reduction of more than 50%. While general inquiry calls can reflect multiple factors, the scale and consistency of the decline strongly indicate that clearer correspondence is reducing taxpayer confusion and enabling greater self-resolution.

Operationally, the initiative reduced the burden on a lean call-center team, freeing frontline staff to focus on complex cases rather than decoding letters for callers. The hybrid waterfall-plus-agile project management approach kept conversion work within the existing MYNT release calendar with no additional budget line and minimal project burden on staff. This result is enabled by generative AI absorbing the first-draft workload. Readability improvements are consistent across all letter types, with post-conversion grade levels clustering tightly in the 7–9 range versus widely scattered pre-conversion scores reaching as high as grade 22. Release 3 will complete the transformation and deliver a fully plain-language-compliant system generated letter portfolio.

Is there any component of your program that makes it workable only in your state or city?

Everybody ought to be doing this.

Is this an in-house project, or did you partner with an outside vendor or service-provider?

100% in-house

What comes next — will you be adding to your program, rolling it out more widely, trying additional approaches?

Release 3 of the MYNT modernization program will complete the plain-language conversion of the Department's remaining public-facing letters, delivering a fully compliant plain-language portfolio across all correspondence types. The Quality Forms Committee will continue applying the validated conversion methodology, AI-assisted drafting workflow, and quality assurance framework as a permanent operational standard not as a one-time project. Readability scoring will remain embedded in every future letter developed or revised within the system, ensuring that plain-language compliance is maintained as programs evolve. Beyond Nevada, the Department has already been invited to present its implementation model at multiple national conferences and has conducted one-on-one sessions with agencies in other states exploring the same approach. The framework of reusable prompts, standard tools, objective readability scoring, and committee governance is fully transferable and ready for adoption by any revenue

or administrative agency seeking to improve the accessibility of its taxpayer correspondence.

Additional Optional Materials

Documentation Upload

 FTA_Nevada_Plain_Language_Expand... .pdf