

## Franklin County Auditor's Office

### Unclaimed Funds and Wages System

The Franklin County Auditor's Office is responsible for holding payments and wages related to a number of transactions within the county. Searching for unclaimed funds online in the original system that the Auditor's Office utilized had limitations, which could hinder members of the public from locating the funds to which they were entitled. Moreover, it is critical for Auditor's Office staff to be able to track payouts and maintain an accurate listing of available funds as well. Ultimately, the Auditor's Office needed an improved system that could allow for more detailed searching and additional tracking abilities.

### Improving the System

The Franklin County Data Center was familiar with the aged unclaimed funds system, and worked to provide improvements in querying and tracking payments.

To assist the public in locating more of their money, the Data Center added the ability to search online for unclaimed wages in addition to unclaimed funds. Members of the public, furthermore, are able to download the unclaimed funds/wages database in order to execute more detailed searches. The online search also was modified to allow individuals to query the name field utilizing any terms, regardless of where they appear in the field. This was a particularly helpful addition, since the data that is held in the unclaimed funds system is an aggregate of information from multiple other systems. As such, the name field consists of numerous formats. For example, an entry in the name field may be comprised of "Last Name-First-Middle," "First Name-Middle-Last," names with or without the middle initial included, and other variations.

The original search function only considered the beginning characters in the name field and positioned the user at the first name that either matched or exceeded the string entered. Given that entries for an individual could be listed under multiple formats, numerous searches might be required in order to locate all possible claims for a person. With the new search capabilities, submitting a name query allows the system to locate an exact match of the search string, regardless of its position in the name field. Now if someone were to search for an individual's last name, all entries under that name would be

## Unclaimed Funds/Wages

### The Challenges:

- Limited public search capabilities for unclaimed funds
- Expanding payout tracking

### The Results:

- System modifications allow for improved search capabilities
- More accurate tracking of payouts through the addition of a third payout field
- Increased efficiency

## CASE STUDY

returned in the search results, no matter how the name was entered into the database.

The Data Center's updates to the system have had a beneficial impact for the public. As a result of the advanced search capabilities, individuals utilizing the system can easily locate unclaimed funds without having to conduct multiple searches. Providing more thorough results through straightforward searching methods allows Franklin County citizens to view all unclaimed funds due to them without having to spend a lengthy amount of time attempting to determine the various individual name permutations listed in the system. This positive outcome for the public is a direct result of the Data Center's work on the unclaimed funds system.

On the administrative side, the Auditor's Office was given the ability to add unlimited text lines to every header and detail record, allowing them to input more descriptive information into the system. An existing search by agency was expanded to allow search by pay-in number, as well as transaction number. System edits also were overhauled to enforce data requirements, preventing incomplete information from being permitted in transactions. A third payout field was added to the system, allowing Auditor's Office staff to easily track payout information and determine the availability of a claim. Ultimately, the Data Center's efforts to improve the system have made it easier for the Auditor's Office to maintain the unclaimed funds and wages system and track payouts.

### Utilizing a Refined System

Thanks to the work of the Data Center, the Auditor's Office Unclaimed Funds and Wages system now allows for enhanced search capabilities, refined recordkeeping, and additional payout tracking. This has proved invaluable to Auditor's Office staff, as well the citizens of Franklin County who utilize the system.

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