# Service Level Agreement

< Service Administration >
< Service Name>



<Month><Year>

Department of Veterans Affairs

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Revision History

Note: The revision history cycle begins once changes or enhancements are requested after the Service Level Agreement has been baselined.

| Date | Version | Description | Author |
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Place latest revisions at top of table.

The Revision History pertains only to changes in the content of the document or any updates made after distribution. It does not apply to the formatting of the template.

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## Purpose

The purpose of this Service Level Agreement is to document commitments between the Office of Information Technology (OIT), as the IT service provider and the IT Customer <Enter Administration Name> to identify both services required and the expected level of service. The objectives of this Service Level Agreement are to:

* Provide clear reference to service ownership, accountability, roles, and responsibilities
* Present a clear, concise, and measurable description of the service provision to the customer(s)

## Service Name: *<Enter Service Name>*

| Service Level Category | Description |
| --- | --- |
| **Internal (OIT Service Provider to OIT Service Provider)****External (OIT Service Provider to Customer)** | <Enter Internal or External> |
| **VASI Code and Abbreviation** | <Enter VASI Code> <Enter VASI Abbreviation>. If not known, enter N/A  |
| **Service Level Agreement Duration** | This agreement renews automatically one (1) year from the date of SLMB approval.  |
| **FISMA Rating****High - 99.9%****Moderate - 99.5%****Low - 99.0%** | <Enter FISMA Rating> |
| **Service Description** | <Service Name> is a <explain the service, what it does> |
| **Sub-Services (if applicable)** | *List Sub-Services here or N/A if not known* |
| **Hosted by** | <Data Center(s), Information Technology Center, N/A> |
| **Host Tier Support Level** | <Mission Critical/Essential/Routine> |
| **Interdependent Systems** | <List all infrastructure, other systems, and applications, from OIT or Third-Party underpinning contracts that the current system **depends upon**.> |

## Roles and Responsibilities

| Roles and Responsibilities | Description |
| --- | --- |
| **Customer*** Initiates the creation of Service Level Agreements.
* Reports all system outages and degradation to the Enterprise Service Desk in a timely manner.
* Adheres to all related policies, processes, and procedures with special emphasis on IT security guidance.
* Requests all changes in accordance with the change control process outlined within the SLA.
* Provides reasonable availability of business representatives when resolving a service-related incident or request.
 | <Organization><Role><Name><Phone><Email> |
| **OIT Service Provider*** Meets all performance requirements as described in SLA.
* Provides service to maximize the design and architectural capabilities of the system.
* Provides the Customer with adequate notification of all scheduled system maintenance and planned down time outside of those listed within the SLA.
* Notifies customer of significant changes to OIT organization that may affect management of customer system/application.
 | <Organization><Role><Name><Phone><Email> |
| **Product Line Representative*** Knowledge of products and services
* Continual improvement initiatives
* Understands customer requirements
 | <Organization><Role><Name><Phone><Email>  |

## Service Hours

| **Service Hours** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| **Hours of Operations*** Unless otherwise stipulated, the coverage period for the performance levels cited herein will be recorded only for the time periods specified as the above Hours of Operation.
 | <[Example]24x7x365> |
| **Allowable Service Exceptions** |  |
| **Allowable Maintenance Windows** | <List all planned maintenance windows to include minor and major releases, CRISP releases, and any other maintenance:* [example] Thursdays from 5:00am to 5:30am ET, monthly
* [example] Sundays 8:00am to 4:00pm ET, once per quarter
* [example] 10:00am to 6:00pm ET, 2nd Sunday of every month>
 |
| **Additional Release/Maintenance Windows*** Interdependent systems, including infrastructure systems
 | <List all maintenance windows for interdependent systems* [example] AAA: Monday through Friday, 10:00 PM to 6:00AM ET
* [example] BBB: Every Saturday from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM ET
* [example] CCC: First Sunday of every month from 1:00 AM to 5:00 AM ET
* [example] DDD: 4th Saturday in the 3rd month of the Quarter from 7:00 PM to 1:00 AM ET>
 |

## Service Level Targets

Service Level Targets (SLTs) as provided by the customer and agreed to by OIT, along with the monitoring details as provided by OIT monitoring group, are listed below.

Note: If the target cannot be monitored, it cannot be included.

Performance against SLTs presented below will be reported on a dashboard.

| Service Level Target Area | Service Level Target | Monitoring system | Measurement Frequency (from monitoring) | Calculation (if needed) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Target Area 1:** (Application Availability) |  | <[Example] APM system Monitor at AITC> | <[Example] Every 15 seconds> | <[Example] or N/A> |
| **Target Area 2:** Service Continuity | Recovery Point Objective (RPO):Recovery Time Objective (RTO):Maximum Tolerable Downtime (MTD): |  |  |  |
| **Target Area 3:** | <Service Level Target> |  |  |  |

Additional Service Level Targets may be added as needed.

## Key Performance Indicators

A KPI is used to determine how customers are performing against their business objectives. Any metric that can be impacted by OIT services and with the ability to directly influence an important business outcome can be included as a KPI. KPIs are optional and only the business can determine them.

List the metrics that are used to measure the achievement of the Critical Success Factor (see CSF in definition of terms) as defined by the business.

| Key Performance Indicator | Metrics |
| --- | --- |
| **KPI 1:** <List KPI><IT Performance Dashboard report location> | <Target metric for success> |
| **KPI 2:** <List KPI><IT Performance Dashboard report location> | <Target metric for success> |
| **KPI 3:** <List KPI><IT Performance Dashboard report location> | <Target metric for success> |

Additional Key Performance Indicators may be added as needed.

## Operational Sustainment Functions

| Service Level Category: | Description |
| --- | --- |
| **Customer Support** | Enterprise Service Desk (ESD) for <Service Name> is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.  |
| **Escalation** | Once the Enterprise Service Desk is made aware of an Incident, it will follow established procedures to ensure proper resolution or escalation within established timeframes. |
| **Root Cause Analysis (RCA)** | Root Cause Analysis (RCA) Problem Reports are required within ten (10) working days following a Priority 1 incident closure. The RCA describes the root cause of a particular incident or sequence of incidents. A Priority 1 incident is defined as a Critical Incident accepted by the Major Incident Management Team (MIM). |
| **Service Level Agreement Changes** | Any party to this agreement may request changes at any time with a written request to the SLMB. The technical description of availability (what components are monitored, measured, and reported) does not require a formal SLA change. Requests to change or add what is monitored must be sent to the SLMB who will schedule a meeting with OIT and the customer within thirty (30) business days. The goal is to reach a mutually agreeable solution within ninety (90) calendar days of the request.  |
| **Conflict Resolution** | Either the customer or the service provider may request a meeting with the SLMB to address any conflict that cannot be resolved via normal processes and channels. A formal request shall be made to the SLMB, including a detailed explanation or the issue(s) along with documentation to point out the conflict. The SLMB will schedule a meeting with all pertinent parties within ten (10) business days and shall act as mediators for the event. Final determination and resolution shall be made by the SLMB.  |
| **Service Reviews** | Service Reviews will be conducted by the Governance, Risk, and Compliance Service Level Management Team in regular intervals based on customer and service provider need. Service Reviews provide the opportunity for open dialogue between the customer and service provider to discuss performance, trends, and issues experienced. The goal is to identify possible improvements for implementation as needed. |

## Additional Stakeholders

| Additional Stakeholders | Description |
| --- | --- |
| **IT Operations Monitoring** | * Responsible for adhering to the reporting process, which is owned and managed by the Service Level Management Board.
* Displays accurate data in a centralized location accessible by both the Customer and the Service Provider.
* Provides monthly reports to document the level of adherence to the Service Level Targets as agreed to in the SLAs.
 |
| **Governance, Risk, and Compliance** | * Responsible for the evaluation, monitoring, support, validations, and sign offs of SLAs.
* Continuously researching best practices and analyzing lessons learned from past incidents and trends to improve future SLAs.
* Responsible for the approval, documentation and communication of all changes made to an SLA.
* Chair the SLMB and act as moderator for all discussions and conflicts.
 |
| **Account Management Office** | * Act as the primary point or outreach to all business units regarding SLAs.
* Review all SLA changes and seek clarification when necessary.
* Validate compliance between SLA activities and processes making recommendations for alignment.
 |
| **Service Level Management Board** | * Responsible for the review of the SLAs within the timeframe agreed to in the SLA.
* Responsible for ownership and management of the policies, processes, and procedures with special emphasis on IT security guidance.
* Responsible for scheduling and escalating annual Service Level Reviews (SLRs) as required.
 |
| **Out of Scope** | * Major changes to the Customer's business unit, which is agreed to have a significant impact on the system, will be treated as out of scope of this agreement and will trigger the creation of a new SLA.
 |

## Terms and Definitions

| Term | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| **Agreed Service Time** | The total agreed time that a service will be readily available for use. For example, typical service times may include: 24/7/365 (525,600 minutes of availability per year) or normal business hours, typically 8 hours daily (125,280 minutes of availability per year). Agreed Service Time can be customized based on time zones, recognized holidays, business need, etc. |
| **Availability** | The ability of an OIT service or other configuration item to perform its agreed-upon function when required. This means that users are able to complete tasks as advertised and/or within the reasonable amount of time expected.* Availability will be calculated as Agreed Service Time minus Unplanned Downtime divided by Agreed Service Time times 100 (to express it as a percentage)
* Agreed Service Time is Total Time less Planned Downtime (see definitions below)
* OIT must provide planned maintenance times for subject service and dependent systems for exclusion from the availability and degraded service calculations
* The technical description of availability (what components are measured/monitored) is maintained by the SLMB.
 |
| **Critical Success Factor (CSF)** | A CSF is an objective that must be attained if an IT service is to succeed. Key performance indicators are used to measure the achievement of each CSF. For example, for VBMS, a CSF could be the ability to process claims timely and accurately. Another example of a CSF for VBMS could be to enable each Veteran to manage his/her relationship with VA in a unified manner. |
| **Degraded Service** | Condition that exists when one or more of the required service performance parameters fall outside of predetermined limits resulting in a lower quality of service. |
| **Degraded Service Time**  | Includes time when features of the service are unavailable, but the entire service is not unavailable. Includes response times greater than three standard deviations from the average response time. Includes time when the service is unavailable. The system will be considered degraded when greater than 0% or less than 5% of users are affected. |
| **Enterprise Incident Guardrails** | Incident Guardrails are created for each application reporting on Incident Resolution Time (IRT), Time to Initial Assignment (TTIA), Time to Assignment (TTA), and Incident Update Frequency (IUF). These dashboards will be available in Service Now and available to the customer (read access will need to be requested). <https://yourit.va.gov/kb_view.do?sysparm_article=KB0110365> |
| **Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA)** | FISMA is a piece of United States legislation, enacted as part of the Electronic Government Act of 2002. The intent is to protect government information and assets from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction of information and information systems. FISMA is the law; NIST Special Publication 800-53; Security Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations, is the standard that contains the individual security controls required to comply with FISMA. |
| **IT Business Service** | Provided to one or more business units by OIT. It is based on the use of Information Technology and is made up of a combination of IT Technical Services (applications, infrastructure, and resources) that collectively support a function of the business. |
| **Maximum Tolerable Downtime (MTD)** | The total amount of time that a business process can be disrupted without causing any unacceptable consequences. |
| **Planned Downtime** | Planned maintenance time for normal service on a respective system, includes planned maintenance time for scheduled maintenance on upstream systems to which the service is dependent.  |
| **Recovery Point Objective (RPO)** | The maximum tolerable period in which data might be lost from an IT service due to a major incident. Acceptable data loss between backups - Example: With an RPO of 2 hours and If there is a complete replication at 10:00am and the system dies at 11:59am without a new replication, the loss of the data written between 10:00am and 11:59am will not be recovered from the replica. This amount of time data has been lost has been deemed acceptable because of the 2-hour RPO. This is the case even if it takes an additional 3 hours to get the site back into production. The production will continue from the point in time of 10:00am. All data in between will have to be manually recovered through other means. |
| **Recovery Time Objective (RTO)** | The duration of time and a service level within which a business process must be restored to at least the RPO after a disaster (or disruption) in order to avoid unacceptable consequences associated with a break in business continuity. |
| **Unplanned Downtime** | Includes all unplanned outages, upstream outages, a significant number of errors reported over a set duration of time; excess time from scheduled release / maintenance windows that extend beyond allotted time, system-wide or near system-wide events, and can be national or regional in scope. |

## SLA Review and Concurrences

The following organizations concur with this Service Level Agreement with monitoring capabilities confirmed.

DSO Concurrence received on <date>

AMO Concurrence received on <date>

SLMB Concurrence received on <date>

The parties below reviewed the <Service Name> SLA and approve.

<Customer Representative Name> Date

<Customer Representative Title, Organization>

<Customer Administration>

<OIT Representative Name> Date

<OIT Representative Title, Organization>

Office of Information and Technology

<OIT Representative Name> Date

<OIT Representative Title, Organization>

<Office of Information and Technology or Business Representative>

| Date | Version | Description | Author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| October 2021 | 3.6 | Added Incident Guardrail information, updated Purpose, and KPI definition | SMO - JDA |
| May 2021 | 3.5  | FISMA percentages | SMO - JDA |
| Feb 2021 | 3.4 | Added in FISMA ratings and language | SMO - JDA |
| July 2020 | 3.3 | Document overhaul | SMO |
| May 2020 | 3.2 | Updated Roles and Responsibilities | SMO – A. Blair |
| April 2018 | 3.1 | Added language re: service hours = hours of SLA perf. monitoringii. Requires OI&T as service provider | SLMO R. Murray |
| March 2018 | 3.0 | Final updates. Calling this Version 3.0 to acknowledge the two previous SLA templates. | SLMO R. Murray |
| March 2018 | 0.95 | Further refinement in prep for PAL inclusion | SLMO R. Murray |
| January 2018 | 0.8 | Flesh out Interdependencies. Include systems that depend upon current system | SLMO R. Murray |
| November 2017 | 6.0 | Modify for CD2 co-use | SLMO |
| November 2017 | 5.0 | Further revision from. Team review w/ BTI & SLMO | SLMO |
| November 2017 | 4.0 | Major revision. Includes monitoring specs, ATO/SLAM | Service Level Management Office and BTI |
| December 2015 | 3.0 | Major revision of document submission including substantial edits to fields in the Service Level Agreement section and Definition of Terms. Added SLA Concurrence page. | Office of Customer Advocacy |
| June 2015 | 2.7 | Edited to conform with Section 508 guidelines and remediated with Common Look Office tool | Process Management |
| June 2015 | 2.6 | Updated fields in Service Level Agreement section. Updated Definition of Terms and added Disaster Recovery Terms Diagram. | Office of Customer Advocacy |
| June 2015 | 2.5 | Edited to conform with Section 508 guidelines and remediated with Common Look Office tool | Process Management |
| January 2015 | 2.4 | Updated status to Final Draft | PMAS Process Improvement |
| January 2015 | 2.3 | Minor updates to wording and format | PMAS Process Improvement |
| January 2015 | 2.2 | Addition of Service Degradation definition and metrics, many miscellaneous wording changes to add clarity | PMAS Process Improvement |
| January 2015 | 2.1 | Added System Errors and updated Acceptable and Degraded performance categories  | PMAS Process Improvement |
| December 2014 | 2.0 | Major revision of document submission | PMAS Process Improvement |
| November 2014 | 1.2 | Remediated with Common Look Office tool | Process Management |
| March 2013 | 1.1 | Updated formatting to ProPath documentation standards and edited to latest guidelines for Section 508 conformance | Process Management |
| January 2013 | 1.0 | Initial Version | PMAS Business Office |

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