



**Washington State**

# From File Cabinets to Cloud Confidence: WaTech's HR Digitization Breakthrough

**CATEGORY:** Operational Excellence

**PROJECT:** HR Digitization Modernization

**PROJECT TIMELINE:** March 21, 2024 – March 31, 2025

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Washington Technology Solutions (WaTech) embarked on a transformational initiative to modernize its Human Resources (HR) operations through the **HR Digitization and Workflow Modernization Project**, addressing decades-old inefficiencies in paper-based records management. With a largely remote workforce and increasing demands for compliance, security, and efficiency, the agency recognized a critical need to transition to a digital-first HR environment.

The project digitized over **1,242 HR files and 26,489 documents**, replacing manual, error-prone processes with a secure, cloud-enabled platform—**ILINX Content Store**—to manage medical, personnel, position, and recruitment files. The new system introduced real-time access, automated workflows, and role-based security controls, ensuring full compliance with federal and state laws, including HIPAA and RCW 49.58.

Key outcomes included:

- **A 75%+ reduction in document retrieval time**, transforming hours-long processes into seconds.
- **Elimination of paper mail and manual file transfers**, replaced by encrypted digital exchange.
- **Reclaimed office space**, enabling more efficient use of facilities and support for Washington's remote-first goals.
- **Improved audit readiness and increased HR staff satisfaction.**

Cross-divisional collaboration, strategic project management, and early stakeholder engagement were critical to success. This effort not only modernized internal operations but serves as a scalable, replicable model for digital transformation across state agencies. The project exemplifies excellence in operational efficiency and supports NASCIO priorities around digital services, workforce modernization, cybersecurity, and enterprise governance.

By turning file cabinets into cloud confidence, WaTech's HR Digitization Project offers a powerful example of how state IT innovation can enhance service delivery, improve compliance, and prepare the workforce for a resilient, digital future.

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## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### What problem or opportunity does the project address?

Washington Technology Solutions (WaTech) faced a critical challenge: managing sensitive HR records using outdated, paper-based processes. WaTech's HR team, supporting over 300 employees, relied on manual paper-based processes that were slow, cumbersome, and

incompatible with the remote-first workforce environment introduced in 2020. Tasks like retrieving employee files, conducting inter-agency audits, and responding to records requests often required days and in-person access to physical filing cabinets. This resulted in bottlenecks across hiring, performance reviews, inter-agency file reviews, and compliance audits. Delays, misplaced records, and security concerns undermined both efficiency and trust.

The **HR Digitization and Workflow Project** transformed this outdated system by digitizing 1,242 HR files and over 26,000 documents into ILINX Content Store, implementing secure, structured, and searchable workflows that support both in-office and remote operations

### Why does it matter?

Manual HR processes created unnecessary delays and compliance risks in a fast-moving digital work environment. Key functions such as onboarding, document review, and file sharing could take days or even weeks, significantly impacting productivity, security, and staff satisfaction.



Without intervention, WaTech risked non-compliance with public records laws, hindered service to internal teams and other agencies, and perpetuated inefficiencies at odds with state modernization goals.

### What makes it different?

This project goes beyond scanning paper—it reimagined HR operations from the ground up:

- **Integrated ILINX content platform** automates workflows and organizes files into distinct record types (Personnel, Medical, Recruitment, Position).
- **Role-based access controls and firewalls** protect sensitive employee information and support compliance with HIPAA and RCW 49.58.
- **Remote-first design** ensures all HR operations—from file reviews to audits—can occur securely and entirely online.
- **Real-time digital workflows** replace 10+ step manual retrieval processes and eliminate the need for physical visits or paper handling.

The project reflects WaTech’s Lean values and was executed with strong cross-divisional collaboration across IT, cybersecurity, and HR teams - something rarely achieved at this scale in public sector HR modernization.

### What makes it universal?

This project addresses needs all states share:

- Managing secure personnel records.
- Supporting a remote/hybrid workforce.
- Meeting public record, audit and labor law compliance requirements.
- Modernizing legacy file systems.

It aligns directly with NASCIO priorities:

- **Digital Government/Digital Services**
- **Enterprise IT Governance**
- **Cybersecurity & Risk Management**
- **Workforce Modernization**

The HR Digitization project is a practical model of how government can modernize internal services, reduce costs, and adapt to changing workforce expectations. The secure and scalable architecture is transferable across agencies and jurisdictions.

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# IMPLEMENTATION

### What was the roadmap?

This initiative aligned with WaTech's enterprise goals of Lean transformation and operational agility. It followed a structured roadmap:

1. **Business case development** with executive leadership.
2. **Vendor engagement** (ImageSource) for ILINX implementation.
3. **Digitization** of 1,242 files using dedicated scanning hardware.
4. **Workflow configuration and role-based access setup.**
5. **Training**, testing and go-live.
6. **Post-implementation feedback loops and refinement.**

Milestones were managed by WaTech's Project Management Office and guided by measurable success metrics: real-time access, reduced processing time, and remote readiness.

### Who was involved?

Project success relied on a coalition of WaTech divisions:

- **Human Resources** – Project sponsors and subject matter experts.
- **Application Technology Services** – ILINX implementation and customization.
- **Small Agency Services, Computing Services, Network Services** – Infrastructure and network segmentation.

- **Office of Cybersecurity & Information Security Operations** – Data protection and compliance.
- **Project Management Office** – Planning, execution, and milestones.

Buy-in was secured through early communication, demonstration of the business case, and continuous collaboration with leadership and users.

## How did you do it?

### Key Resources:

- Financial investment in ILINX software and ImageSource professional services.
- Internal staff time for digitization, classification, and validation.
- VPN/VLAN setup to secure document access.
- Training resources for ILINX users and HR stakeholders.

The **ILINX architecture** enabled secure, scalable, cloud-enabled access to HR records. ILINX Content Store serves as a centralized, encrypted repository for all HR files. The system supports real-time access, digital filing from email, and secure file sharing through encrypted portals—dramatically improving speed and data integrity.

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# IMPACT

## What did the project make better?

The HR Digitization Project turned slow, manual, and fragmented HR operations into an efficient, secure digital service:

Before	After
3–5 days for inter-agency file transfer	Instant delivery via encrypted portal
10+ steps to retrieve a single document	Seconds via search/sort/filter
~4.5 minutes to file one document into paper files	~30 seconds to file a document electronically in ILINX
Delayed filing due to in-office visits	Continuous filing from remote locations
Infeasible manual audits	Searchable, exportable data in minutes
Lost space due to filing cabinets	Room repurposed for modern workstations

## How do you know?

In 2024 alone, HR filed **3,056 documents**. Using legacy paper-based methods, this task would have required approximately **229 hours** annually—assuming an average of 4.5 minutes per

document. With ILINX, the same task now takes just **25 hours**—a time savings of over **200 hours per year**. While actual savings vary depending on batch processing, this conservative estimate highlights dramatic gains in efficiency.

Moreover, staff no longer have to coordinate physical office visits just to file documents—previously causing delays of **a week or more**. This operational improvement enhances both compliance and responsiveness, allowing HR to focus on strategic work such as employee engagement and performance development.

### Quantitative results:

- 1,242 files and 26,489 documents digitized.
- Document access time reduced by over 75%.
- File transfers that took 3–5 days now occur instantly.
- 100% reduction in physical mail use for file transfers.
- Reclaimed square footage now used for modern office workstations.
- Enhanced security via network segmentation and VPN subnet rules.

### Testimonials:

*“This new technology allows us to track our records better, enhance accessibility and security, and save HR staff significant time.”*

— Cathleen Overmiller, HR Director, WaTech

*“The project provides real value to Washington state by reducing processing times and improving productivity in a way that will have a long-term, positive impact.”*

— Bill Kehoe, State CIO & WaTech Director

### What now?

With the successful launch of ILINX and digitization of over 26,000 HR documents, the project has transitioned from implementation to optimization. Moving forward, WaTech is focused on developing **a structured performance measurement framework** to track the ongoing impact of HR digitization. This includes creating metrics to evaluate system usage, document retrieval times, compliance readiness, filing efficiency, user satisfaction, and security outcomes.

Key next steps include:

- **Defining and monitoring SMART metrics** that reflect operational improvements, such as reductions in filing delays, increased audit-readiness, and system uptime.
- **Tracking document filing and retrieval times** to establish benchmarks and identify areas for further efficiency gains.

- **Evaluating user satisfaction** through surveys and feedback loops to refine workflows and enhance the employee experience.
- **Conducting quarterly process reviews** to pinpoint opportunities for automation, standardization, and user support enhancements.

This continuous improvement model will ensure the system evolves with organizational needs while maintaining compliance, performance, and user engagement. By embedding analytics into its operations, WaTech is not only preserving the gains achieved through this transformation but actively advancing toward a more data-informed, responsive HR service model.

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## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the HR Digitization and Workflow Modernization Project represents a bold and necessary leap into the future of digital government. By dismantling outdated, paper-based systems and replacing them with secure, efficient, and fully digital workflows, WaTech not only modernized its internal HR operations but also set a new standard for how state agencies can evolve to meet the demands of a remote-first, data-driven world. This transformation has improved accessibility, strengthened compliance, enhanced employee experience, and unlocked new operational efficiencies—proving that digital innovation is not just about technology, but about empowering people and processes to work smarter, faster, and more securely. As agencies across the nation navigate similar challenges, WaTech’s success offers a replicable roadmap for sustainable digital transformation in the public sector.