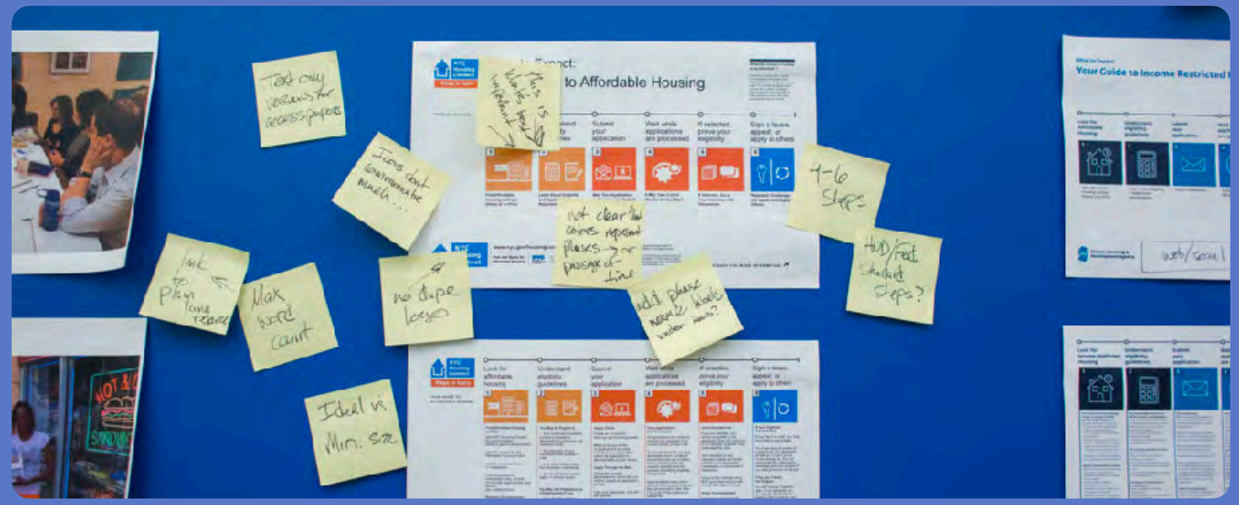
publicpolicylab.org | @publicpolicylab

publicpolicylab.org | @publicpolicylab

- First nonprofit policy-design lab for US public sector
- Partner with government agencies and NGOs
- Design both policy and services
- Focus on experiences of low-income and marginalized people

## SERVICE DESIGN



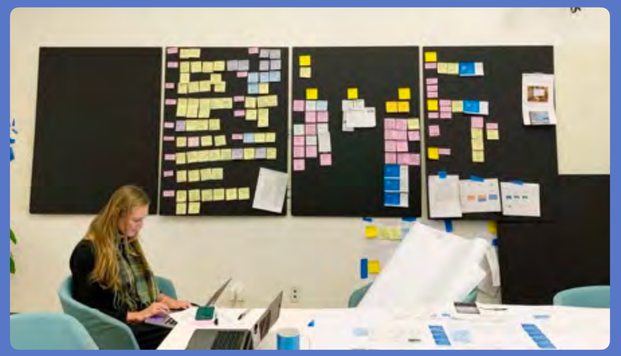

## POLICY DESIGN

## RESEARCH & EVALUATION

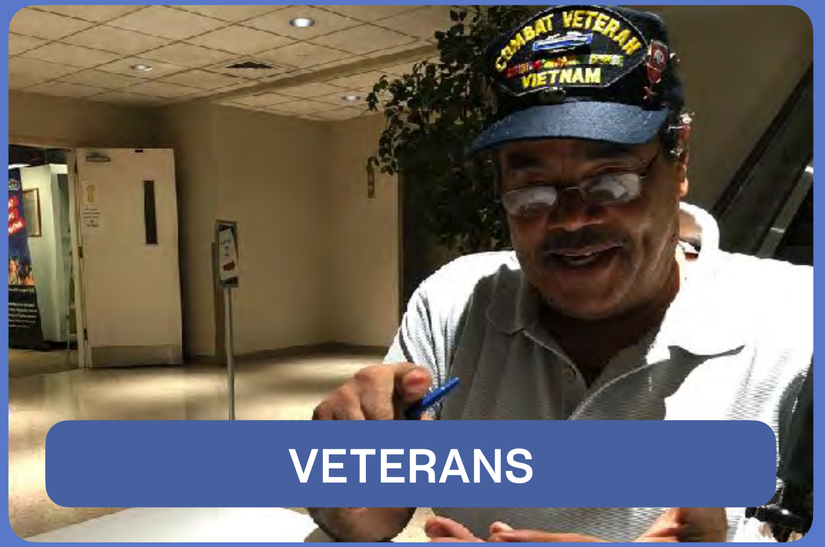
## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

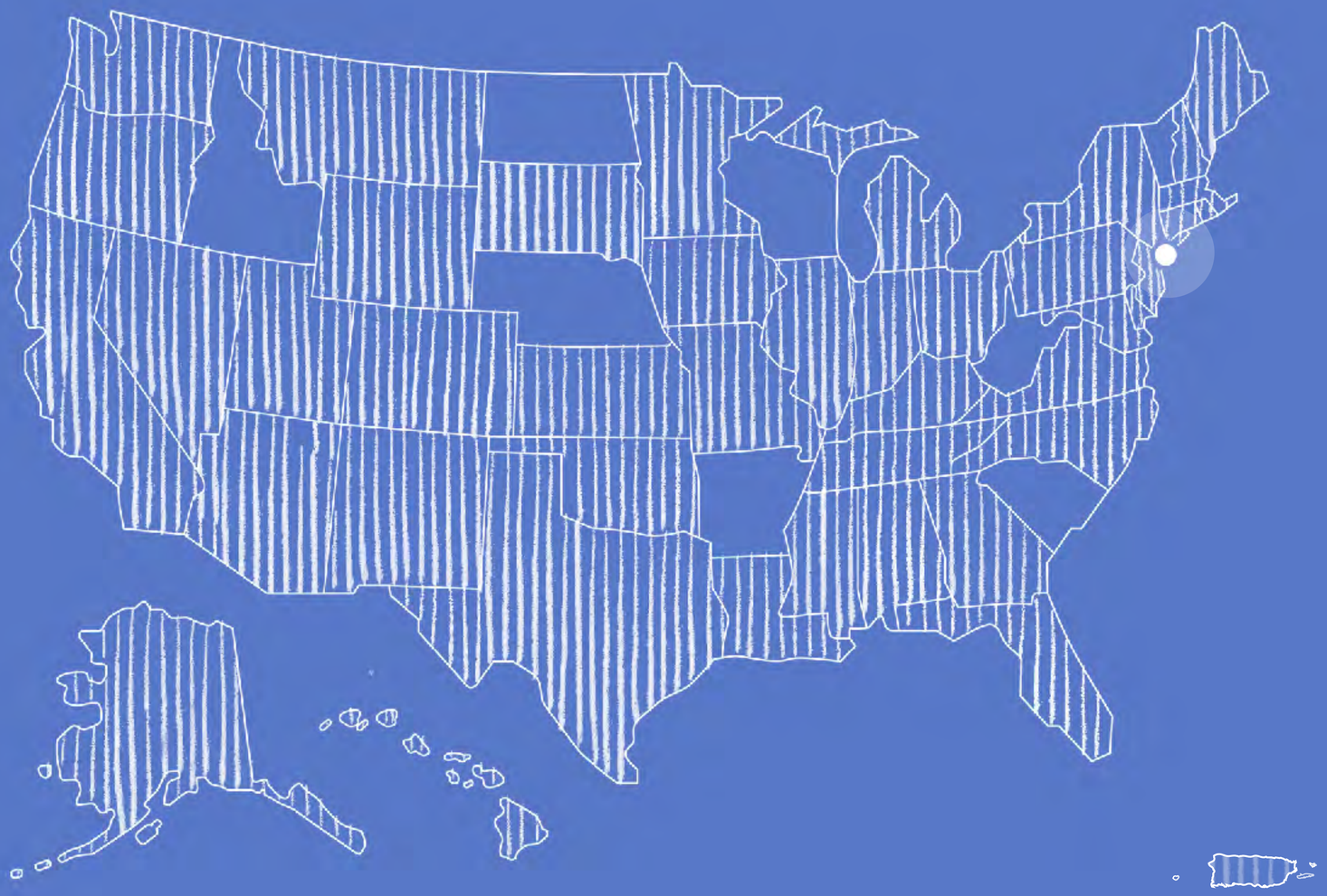
## PRODUCT DESIGN

## CHANGE MANAGEMENT



PUBLIC POLICY LAB

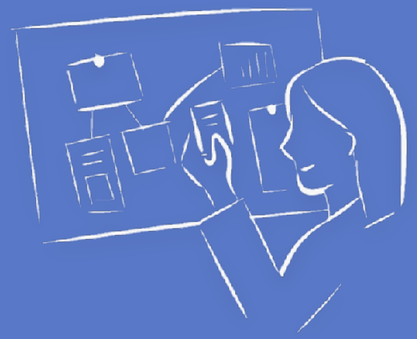




See case studies online at:
publicpolicylab.org/our-work

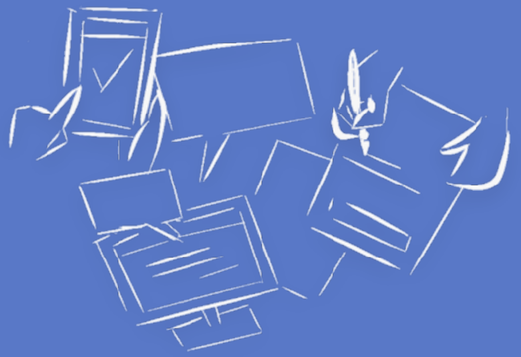
Human-Centered & Co-Creative

Visual & Iterative



Holistic & Time-Based

Now and Futures-Oriented



Public & Open

ATTENTION
Intake Fact Schedule

SPELMAN
COMMUNITY
RESOURCES
new york city
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Strong Schools, Strong Communities
Learn More: nyc.gov/communityschools
PUBLIC POLICY LAB

A

B

C

D

### A. WELCOME LETTER

A one-page letter, signed by Secretary Bob, welcomes Veterans into VA and lets them know someone cares.

### B. WELCOME GUIDE

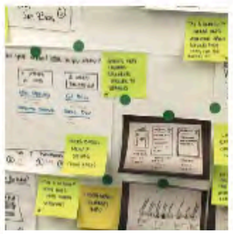
A lightweight booklet introducing Veterans to what VA has to offer, where and when VA can help throughout their lives, and the first few steps to take to get started with the VA.

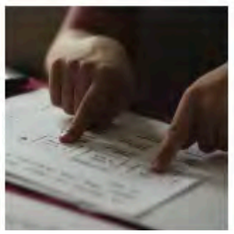
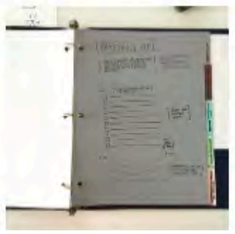
### C. QUICK START GUIDE

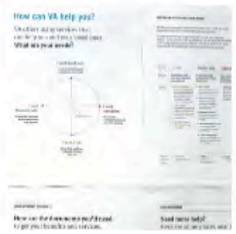
Templatized, front and back one-pagers provide simple, actionable, and step-by-step information to help Veterans apply for or get started with specific services.

### D. LOCAL RESOURCES

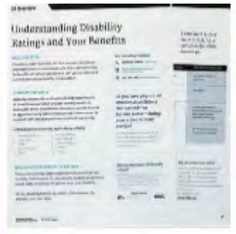
A one-page template allows VE district field officers to create a comprehensive and personalized list of local people and places who can help along the way.

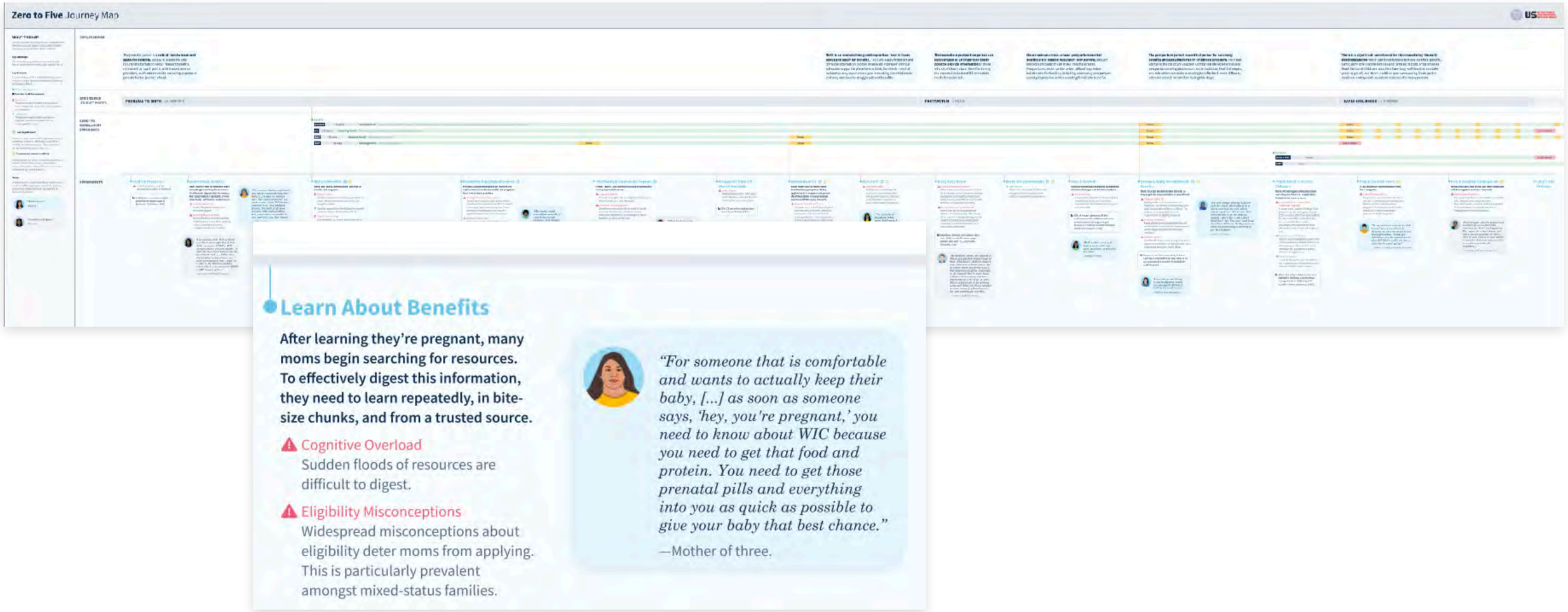


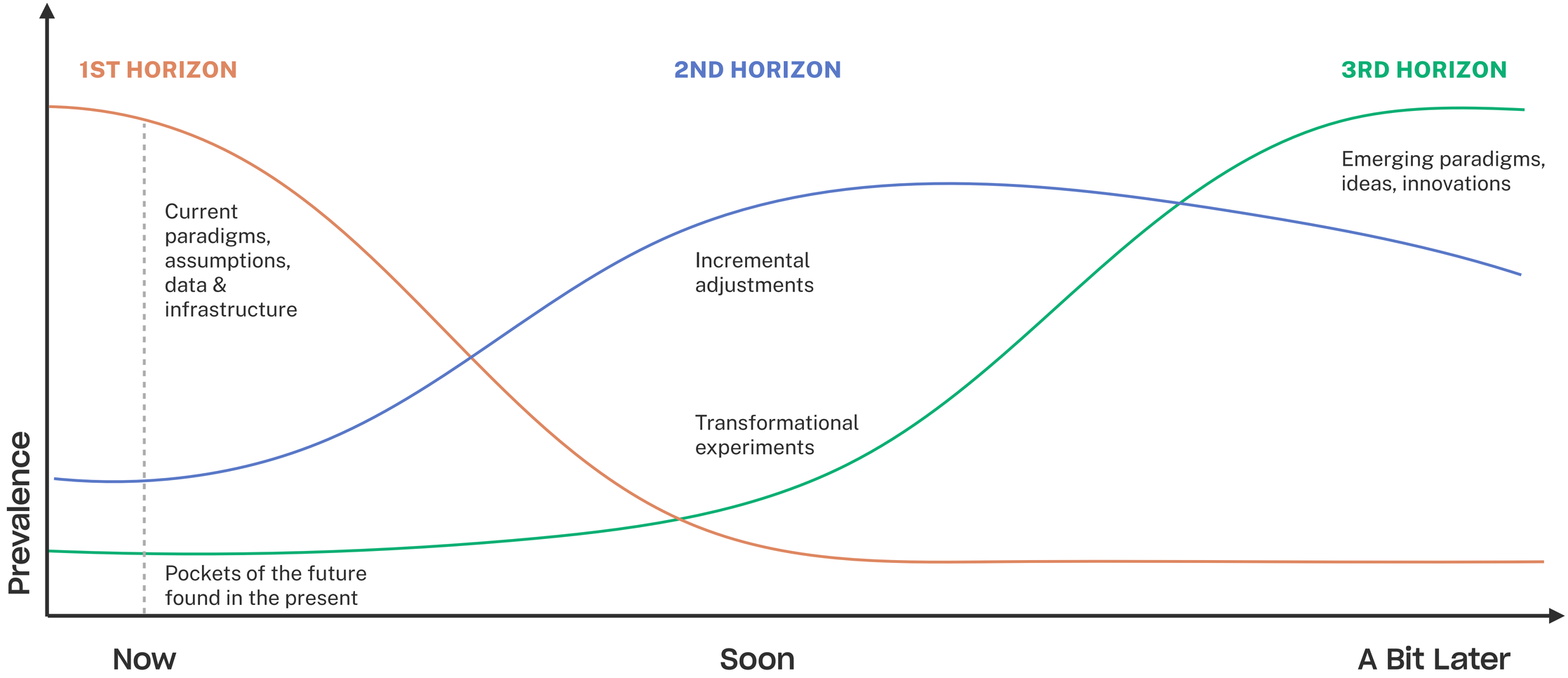





V1 V2 V3 V4 V5 V6 V7 V8 V9 V10

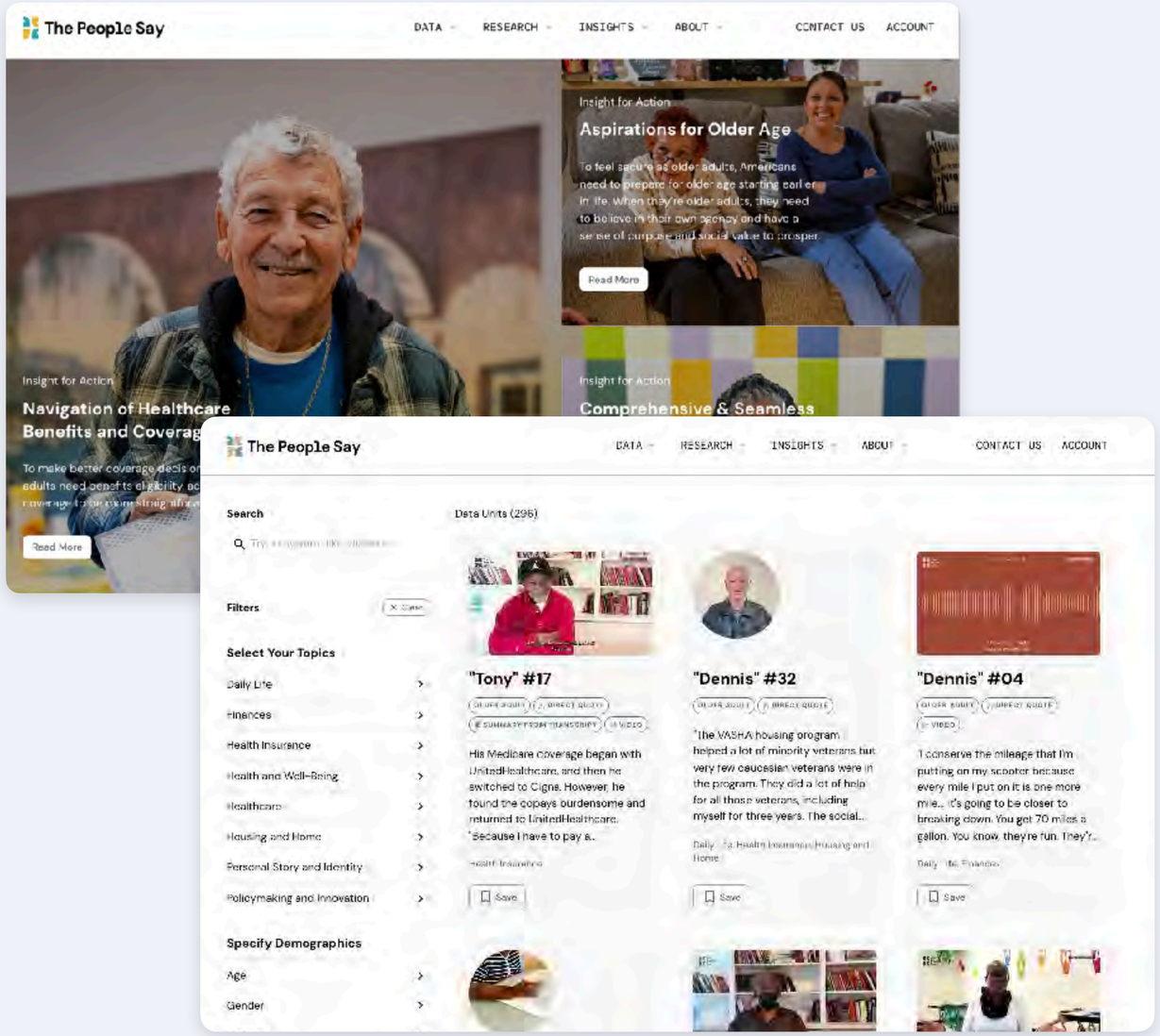



Zero to Five Journey Map
Learn About Benefits
After learning they're pregnant, many moms begin searching for resources. To effectively digest this information, they need to learn repeatedly, in bite-size chunks, and from a trusted source.
Cognitive Overload
Sudden floods of resources are difficult to digest.
Eligibility Misconceptions
Widespread misconceptions about eligibility deter moms from applying. This is particularly prevalent amongst mixed-status families.
"For someone that is comfortable and wants to actually keep their baby, [...] as soon as someone says, 'hey, you're pregnant,' you need to know about WIC because you need to get that food and protein. You need to get those prenatal pills and everything into you as quick as possible to give your baby that best chance."
—Mother of three.

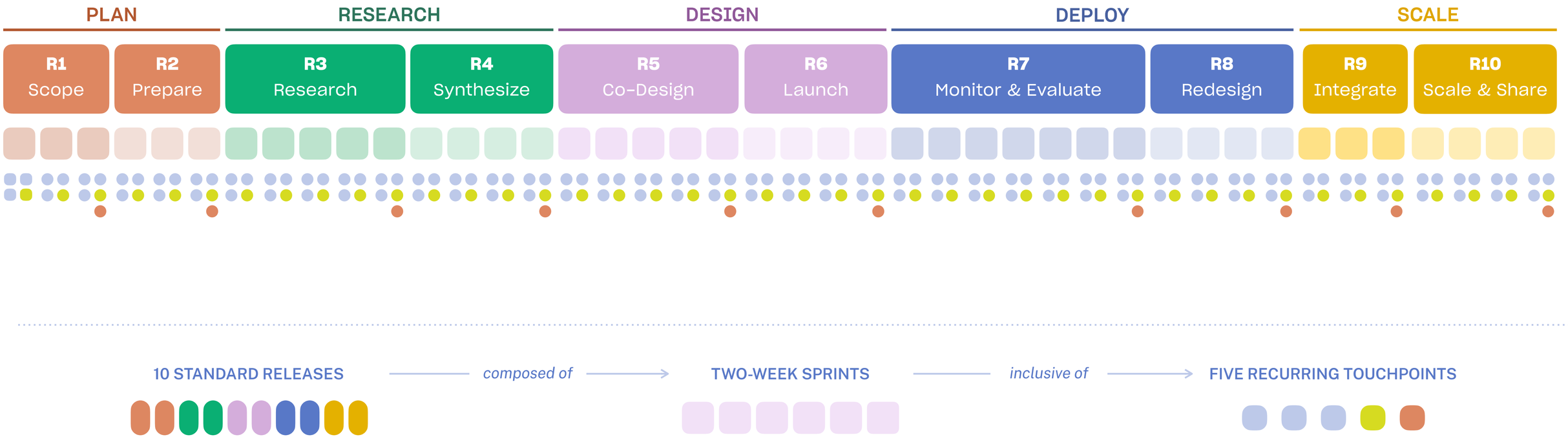





Adapted from Sharpe, Hodgson, et al.


The People Say
DATA
RESEARCH
INSIGHTS
ABOUT
CONTACT US
ACCOUNT
Insight for Action
Aspirations for Older Age
To feel secure as older adults, Americans need to prepare for older age starting earlier in life. When they're older adults, they need to believe in their own agency and have a sense of purpose and social value to prosper.
Read More
Insight for Action
Navigation of Healthcare Benefits and Coverag
Read More
Insight for Action
Comprehensive & Seamless
Search
Data Units (296)
Filters
Select Your Topics
Daily Life
Finances
Health Insurance
Health and Well-Being
Healthcare
Housing and Home
Personal Story and Identity
Policymaking and Innovation
Specify Demographics
Age
Gender
"Tony" #17
His Medicare coverage began with UnitedHealthcare, and then he switched to Cigna. However, he found the copays burdensome and returned to UnitedHealthcare. "Because I have to pay a...
Save
"Dennis" #32
"The WASHA housing program helped a lot of minority veterans but very few caucasian veterans were in the program. They did a lot of help for all those veterans, including myself for three years. The social...
Save
"Dennis" #04
I conserve the mileage that I'm putting on my scooter because every mile I put on it is one more mile... it's going to be closer to breaking down. You get 70 miles a gallon. You know, they're fun. They'r...
Save

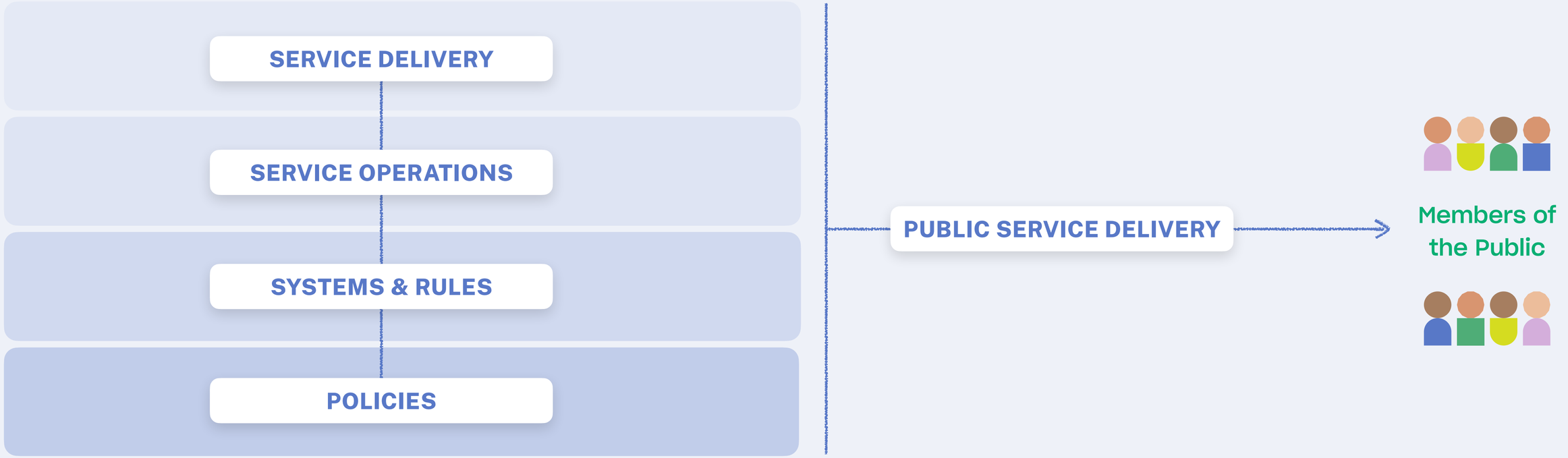
NYC
Department of Housing Preservation & Development
Housing Choice Voucher
Application
This is the form you have to fill out to be considered for a Housing Choice Voucher. It usually takes people 30 minutes to complete this application.
Application ID
HPD Use Only
Introduction
Before You Begin
After You Submit the Application
What Happens Next
Get Support in Your Language
HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER APPLICATION
Head of Household
Social Security Number
Ethnicity
Race
Preferred Name
Zip Code
Unit
Can we text this number for information or updates?
Yes
No


PLAN
RESEARCH
DESIGN
DEPLOY
SCALE
R1 Scope
R2 Prepare
R3 Research
R4 Synthesize
R5 Co-Design
R6 Launch
R7 Monitor & Evaluate
R8 Redesign
R9 Integrate
R10 Scale & Share
10 STANDARD RELEASES
composed of
TWO-WEEK SPRINTS
inclusive of
FIVE RECURRING TOUCHPOINTS

Government

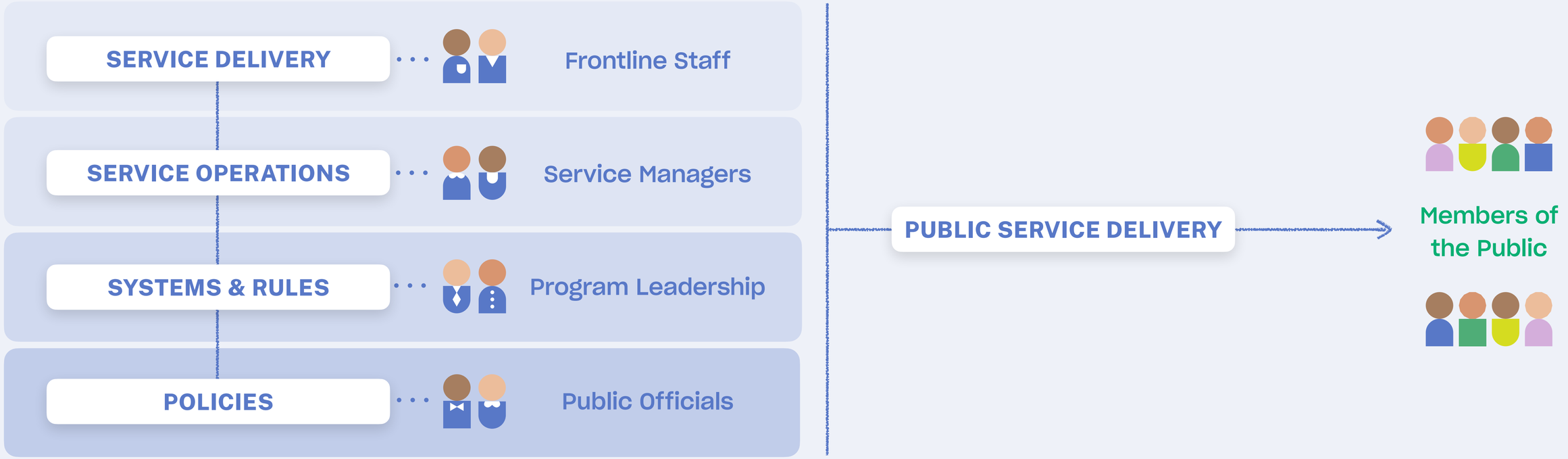
PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Members of the Public


SERVICE DELIVERY
SERVICE OPERATIONS
SYSTEMS & RULES
POLICIES
PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY
Members of the Public

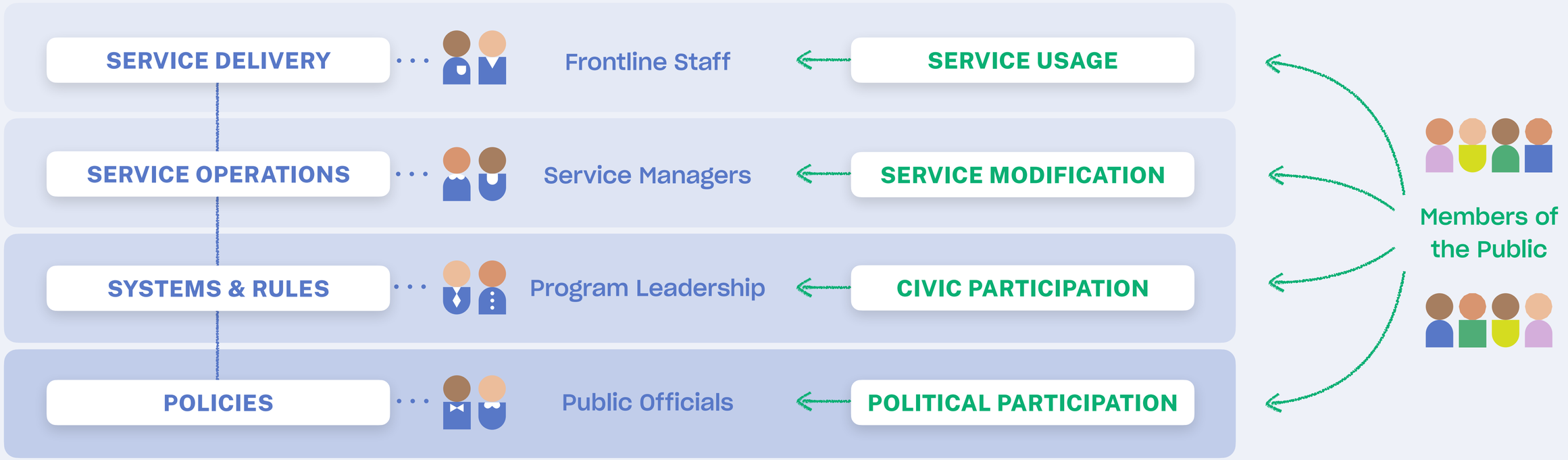
Policy-Delivery Layers

PUBLIC POLICY LAB



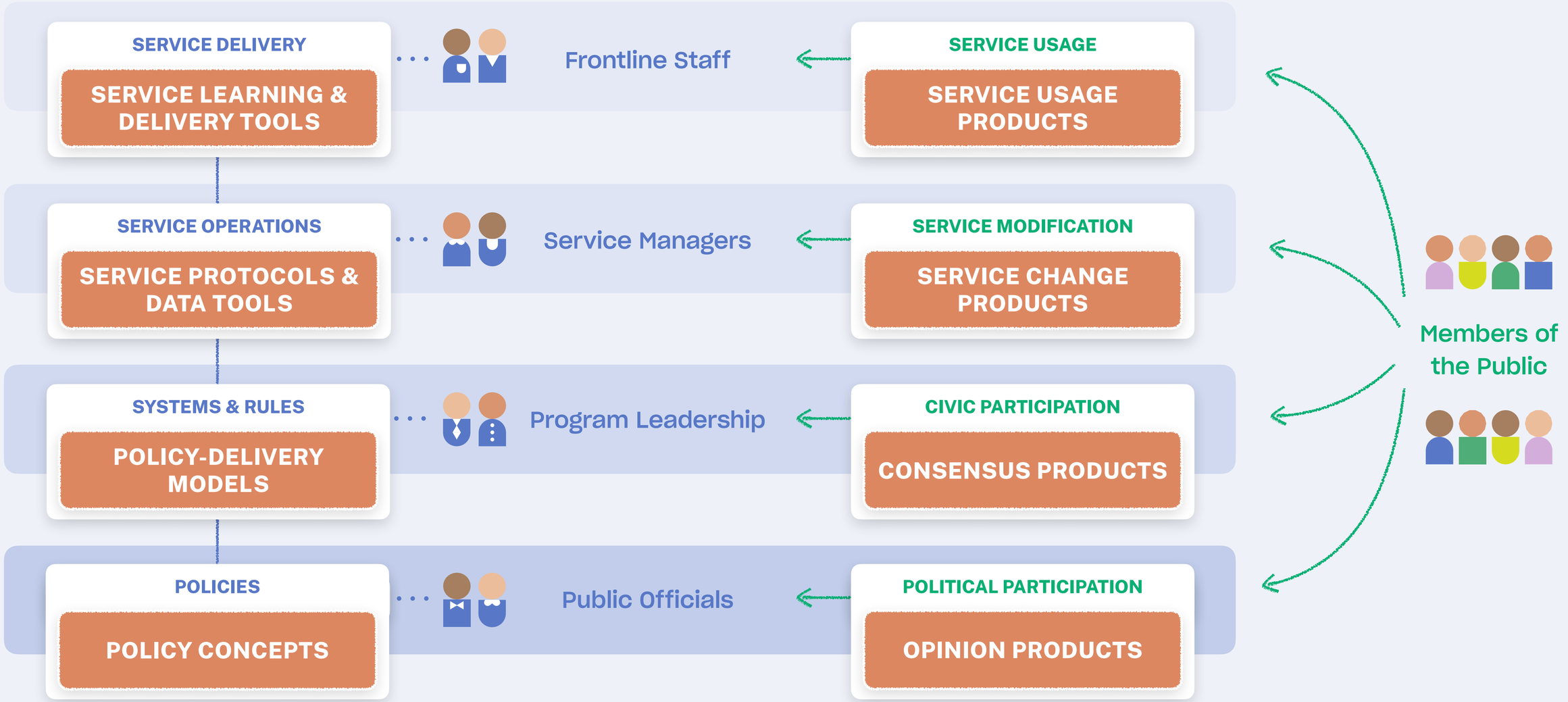
Policy-Delivery Layers
Public Interaction Points

PUBLIC POLICY LAB



Policy–Delivery Layers
Public Interaction Points
Potential Design Products

PUBLIC POLICY LAB



# QUESTIONS?

# A PLATFORM TO INFORM EFFECTIVE PERSON-CENTERED POLICYMAKING

## PROBLEM

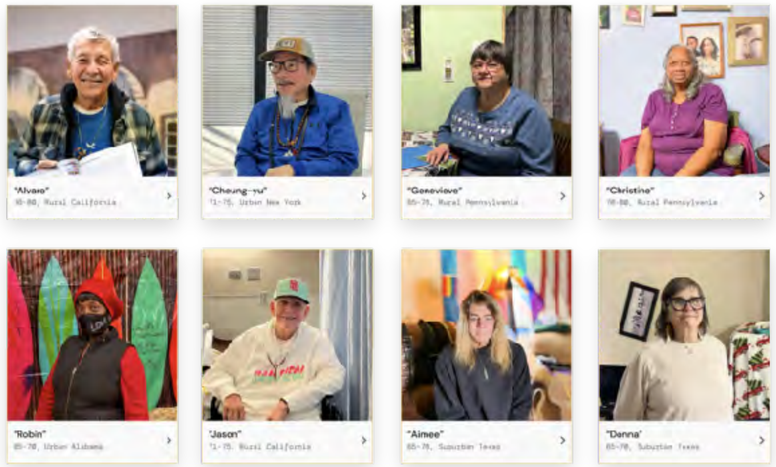
# Policies and systems are designed from a systems perspective, rather than by and with **the public**.

## OUR GOAL

Create an infrastructure to recruit, ethically consent, pay, and maintain relationships with members of the public over time

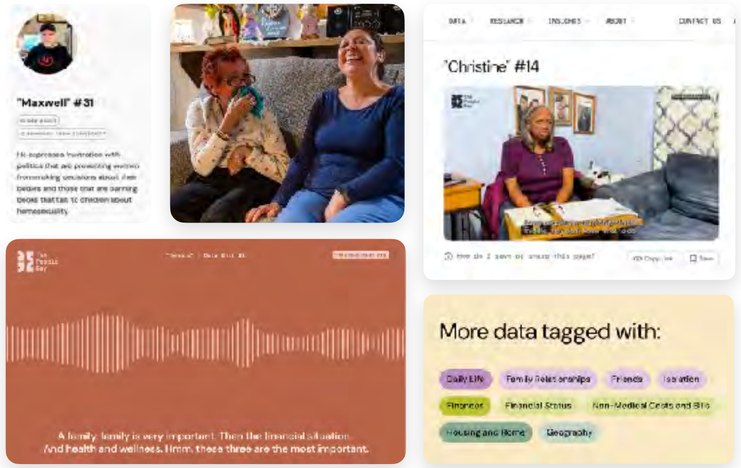
Build an online database with tagged multimodal/multi-language research data that can be expanded with new topics and participants

Provide an extensible platform for collecting lived-experience data and generating policy insights – and sharing them publicly



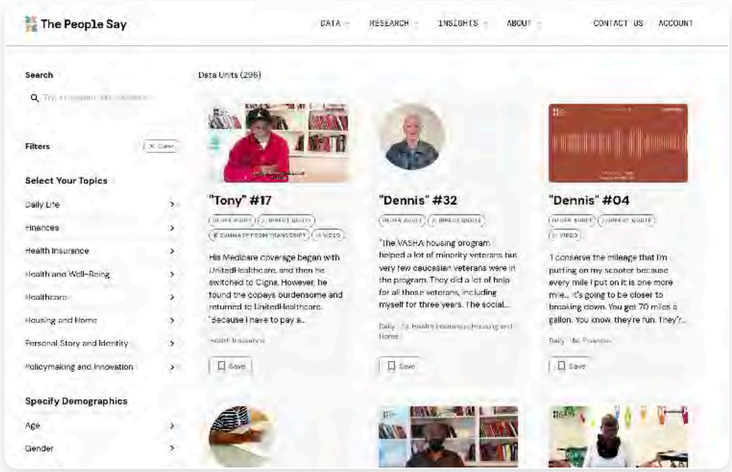

## Research Pool to Date

- 140 Older Adults in 15 states
- 11 Caregivers & Staff
- 13 Subject-Matter Experts




## Research Data

- 4,000+ Data Units
- 200+ Hours of Research
- 115 Topics




## Online Platform

- Database
- Participant Profiles
- Insights for Action

## Legislators, policymakers, and staff

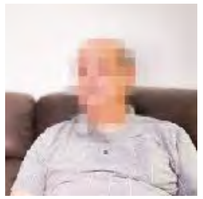
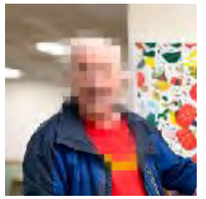
can use the platform to understand the lived experience of their constituents and find compelling inspiration and evidence on key policy issues.

## Agency and program leaders

can use the database to learn about their service beneficiaries' needs and challenges – and their preferences for service improvement.

## Advocates, researchers, and designers

can hear older adults speak firsthand about their experiences and aspirations.

# The People Say is a qualitative data platform featuring older adults talking about their lives and the policy issues that affect them.

Select a topic below to explore the database:

- Daily Life
- Finances
- Health Insurance
- Health and Well-Being
- Healthcare
- Housing and Home
- Personal Story and Identity
- Policymaking and Innovation

# Trust in clinicians in underserved communities

The People Say
thepeoplesay.org
PAY-IT-FORWARD LIBRARY
Take, Read, Share, Return, or Keep
Eleanor: Being a rural community, I think...

**Search**

Try a keyword like "diabetes"

**Filters** × Clear

**Select Your Topics**

- Daily Life
- Finances
- Health Insurance
- Health and Well-Being
- Healthcare
- Housing and Home
- Personal Story and Identity

Data Units (2394)

## "Georgia" #20

OLDER ADULT | DIRECT QUOTE | SUMMARY FROM TRANSCRIPT | VIDEO/AUDIO

When she was young, she never thought she would be 71 years old. Her sister is 77, and her late brother would have been 80. These ages were never on their radar. "Just like, wow, 70. I'm like...

Personal Story and Identity: Prior Expectations of Aging;

## "Alice" #10

OLDER ADULT | DIRECT QUOTE | VIDEO/AUDIO

"When I get up, sometimes I call [my caregiver]. She comes in the morning at five o'clock, and [she] leaves at seven, and sometimes I tell her, you gotta call me, or I'll call you, we share a call.... She...

Daily Life: Caregiver Ecosystem, Routines and Activities;

## "Bob" #18

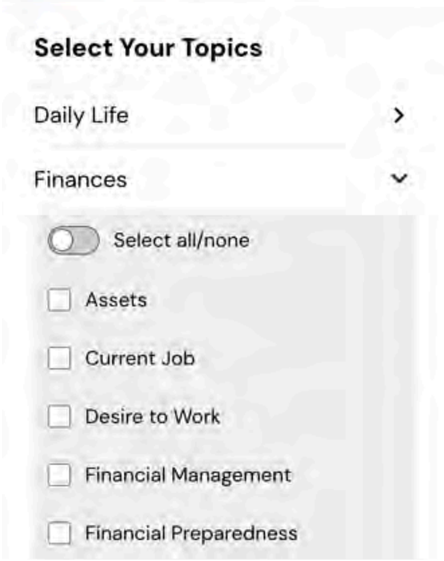
OLDER ADULT | DIRECT QUOTE | SUMMARY FROM TRANSCRIPT

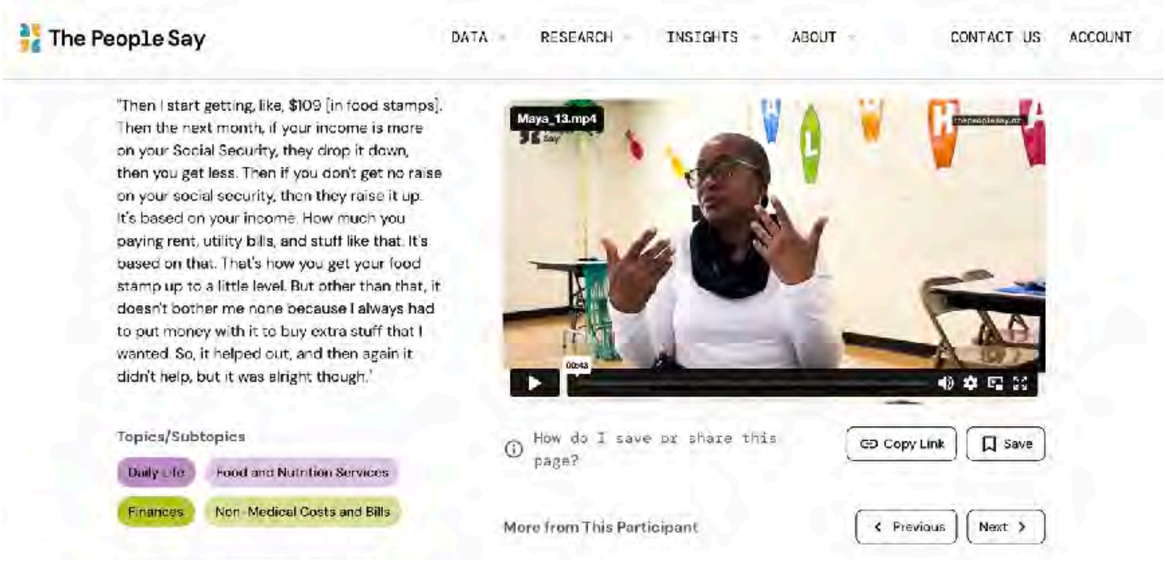
He described his insurance enrollment process as "just filling out a bunch of papers." His carrier has three different levels of insurance plans. When he was going through cancer, he was o...

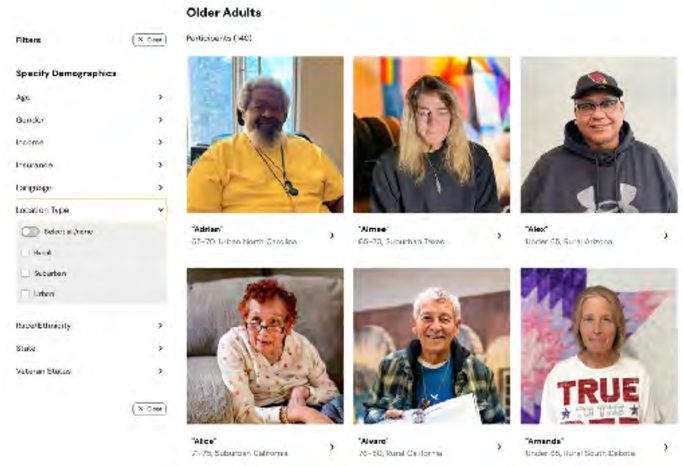
Health Insurance: Healthcare Costs, Medicare;

## HOW TO USE THE PEOPLE SAY

- Conduct keyword searches or filter by 100+ tags.
- Filter by specific programs, such as Social Security and Medicaid.
- Filter by sociodemographics and location (including congressional district).
- Review distilled insights from research plus related policy opportunities.
- Embed videos and quotes directly into reports and presentations.

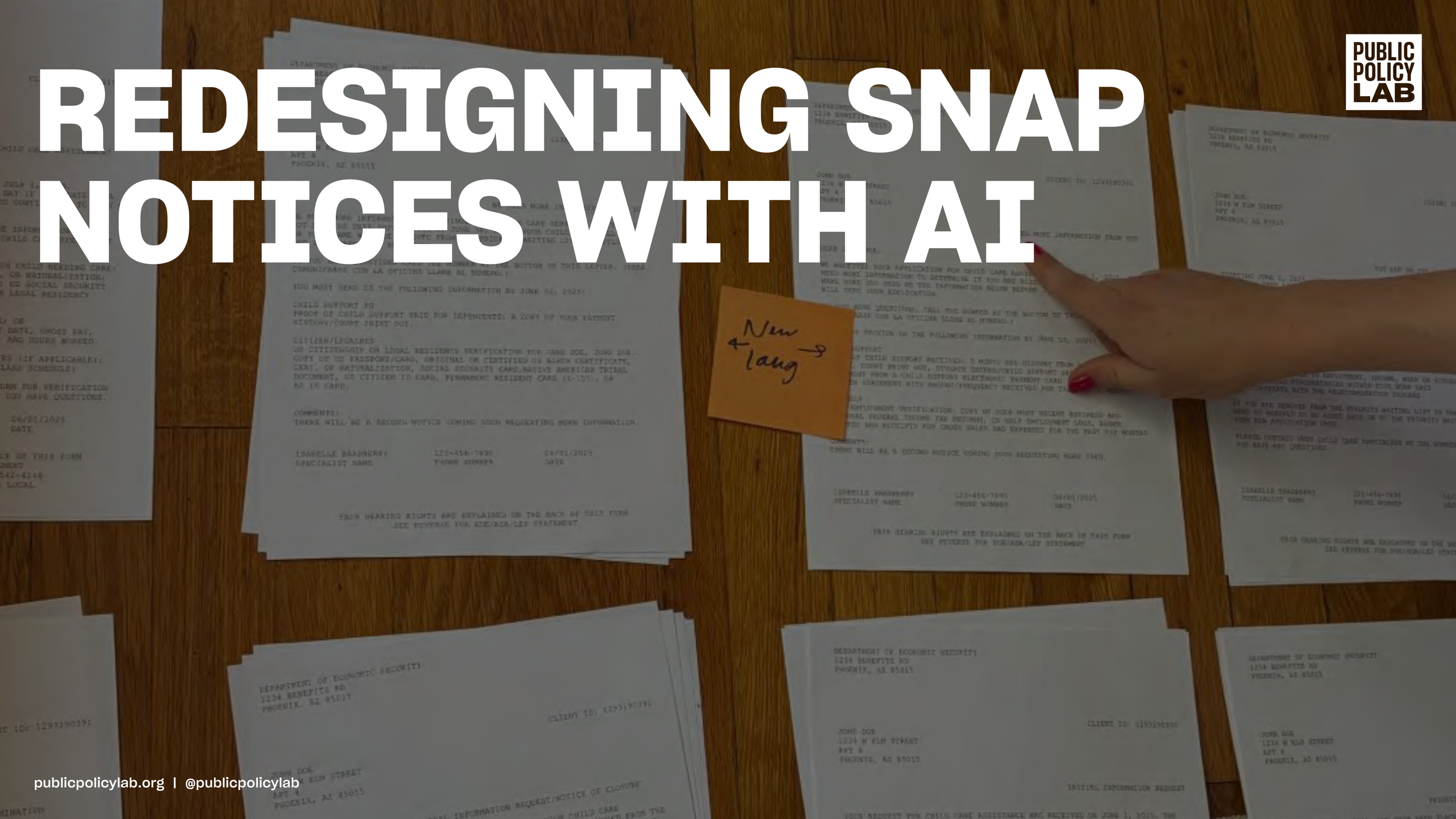




# QUESTIONS?

# REDESIGNING SNAP NOTICES WITH AI



The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides a monthly payment, solely for food expenses, to eligible U.S. households earning 130% or less than the federal poverty level – currently ~£23,870 for a family of four.

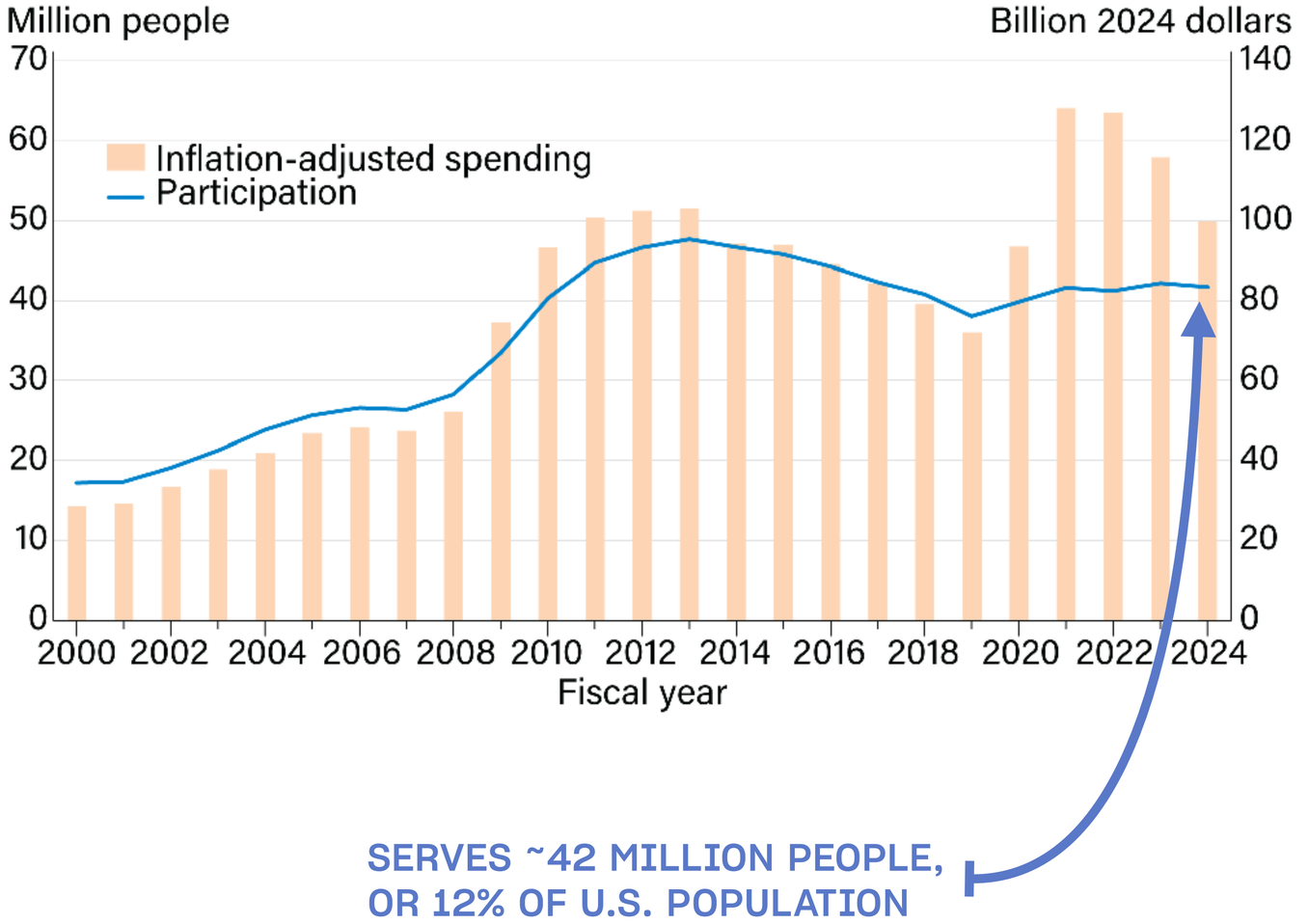





Chart credit: US Dept. of Agriculture

The program is federally funded, but state administered. In Fiscal Year 2024, the percent of state residents receiving SNAP ranged from a high of 21.2% in New Mexico to a low of 4.8% in Utah.

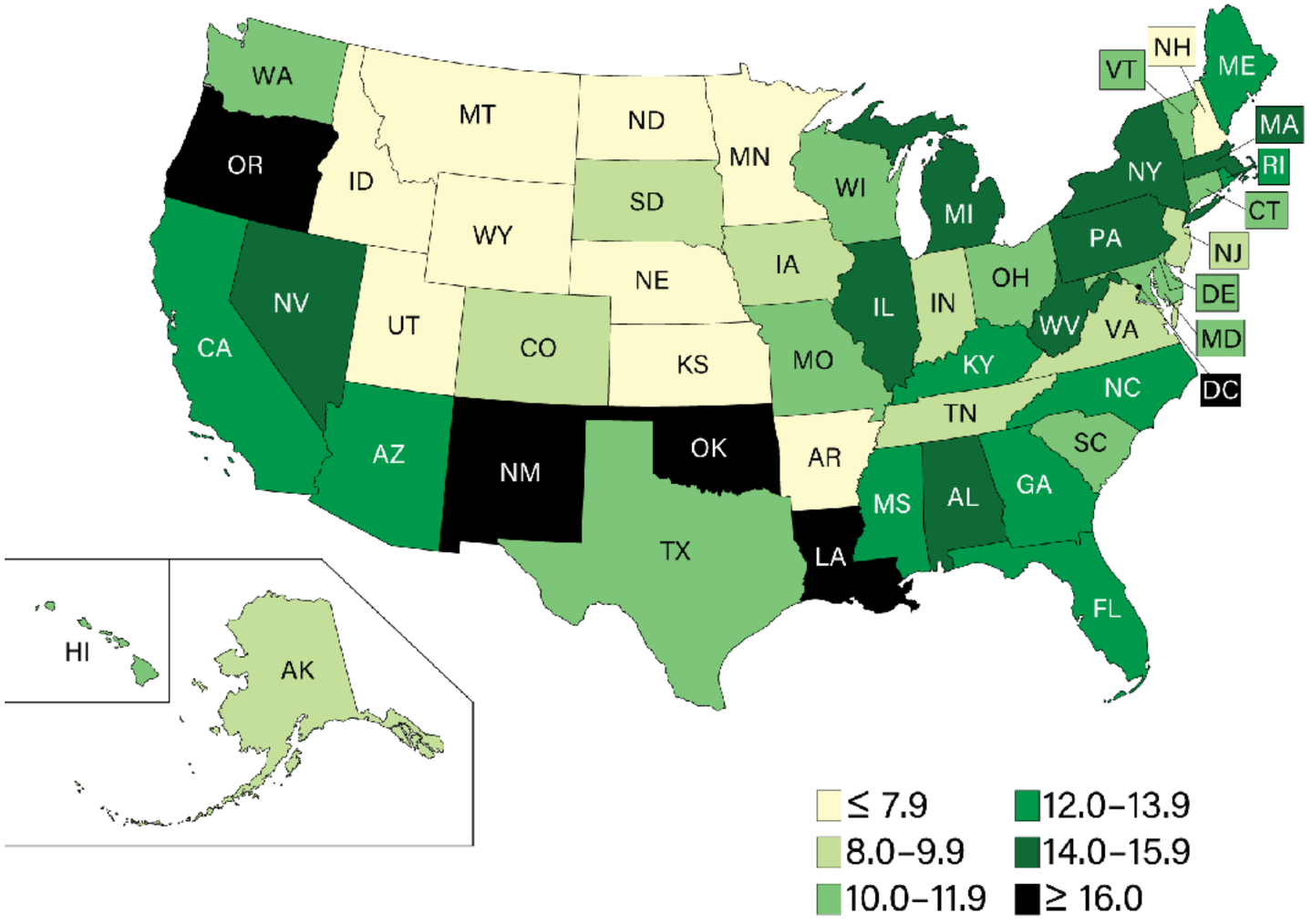





Chart credit: US Dept. of Agriculture

ARIZONA

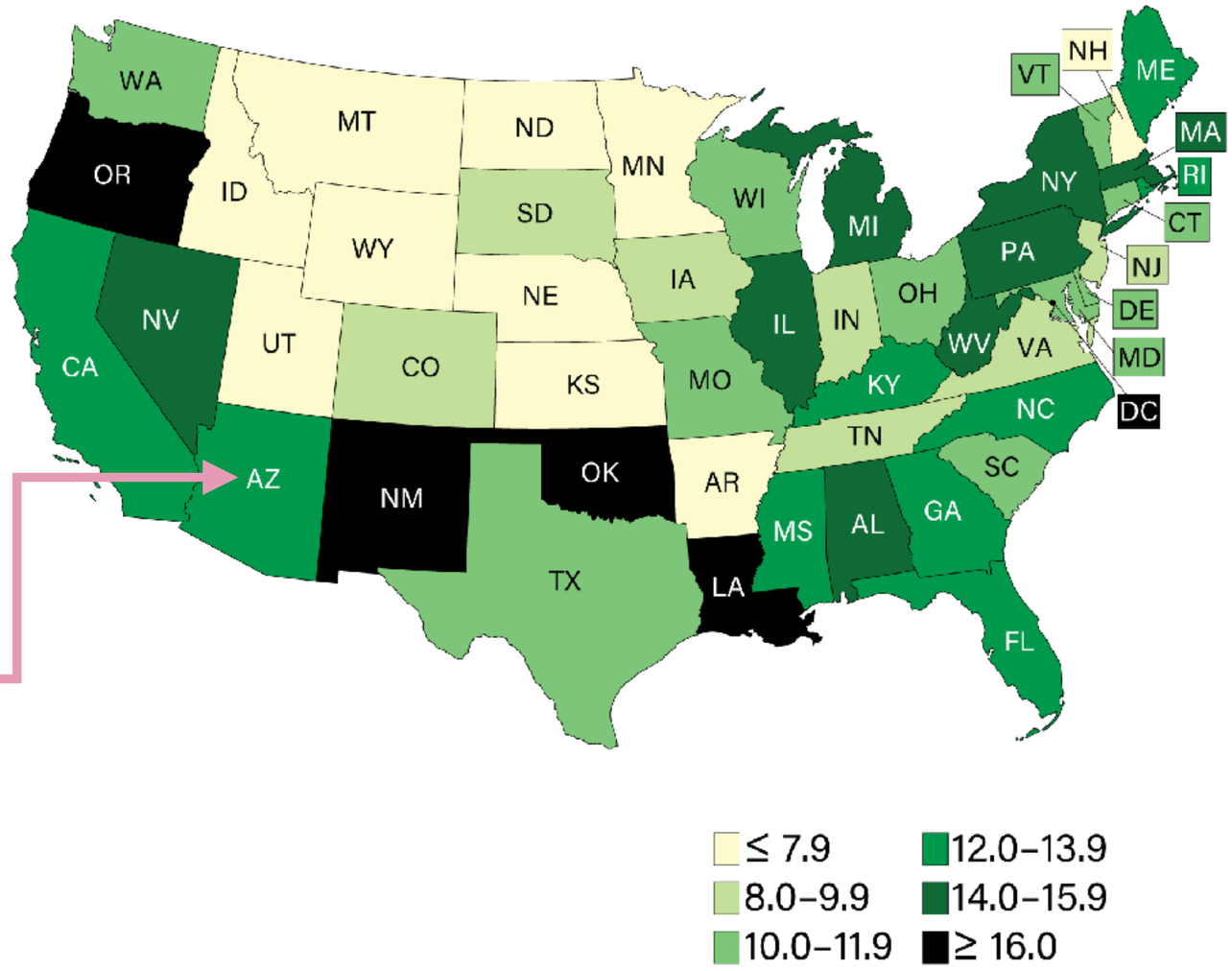





Chart credit: US Dept. of Agriculture

ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC SECURITY

Department of Economic Security
Family Assistance Administration
P.O. Box 19009
Phoenix, AZ 85005

Case Number: **12345**
Notice Number: F011
Notice Date: Month Day, yyyy
Program: Nutrition Assistance (NA)

John Doe
1234 W Elm Street
Phoenix, AZ 85015

## More information Needed - Nutrition Assistance (NA)

Dear John Doe,

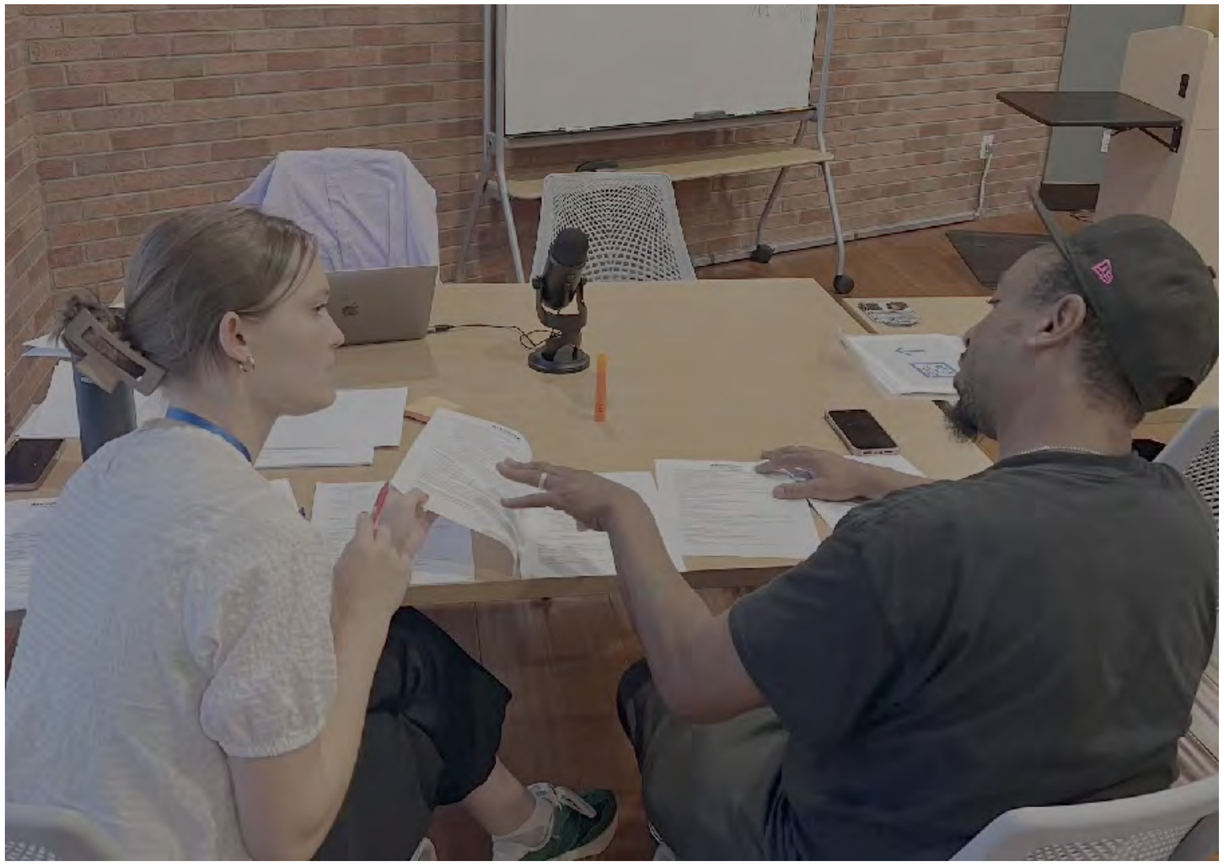
We need more information to determine if you are eligible for Nutrition Assistance (NA) benefits.

**IMPORTANT- YOUR IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS**

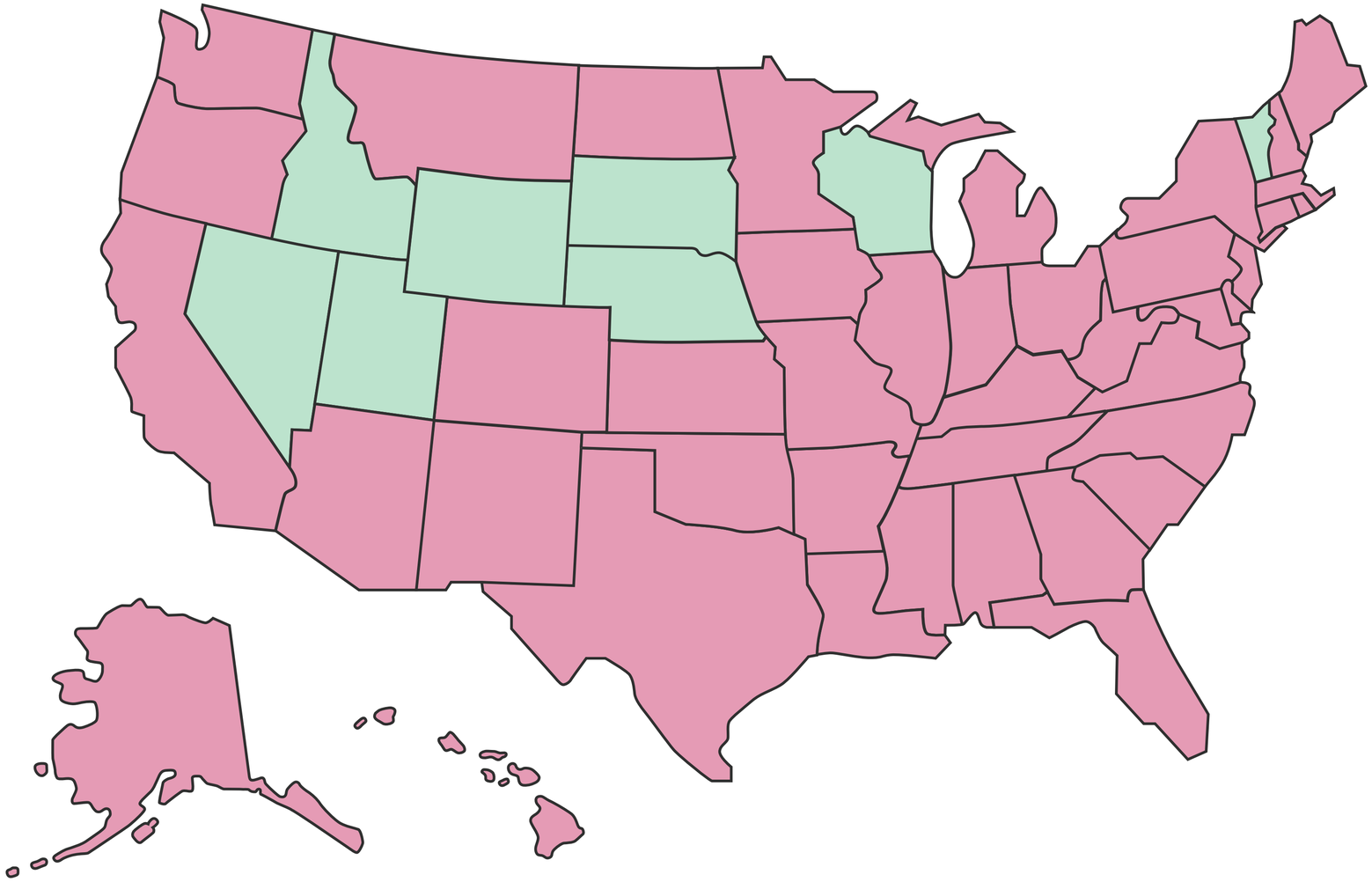
|##| * Proof that ################################ is no longer getting benefits from the State of ###################. This includes the last month benefits were received.

|##| * Proof of identity for:
################################.
You may give us any of the items listed below as proof of your identity:
Driver's License
Identification Card
United States Passport
Any other document that verifies your identity

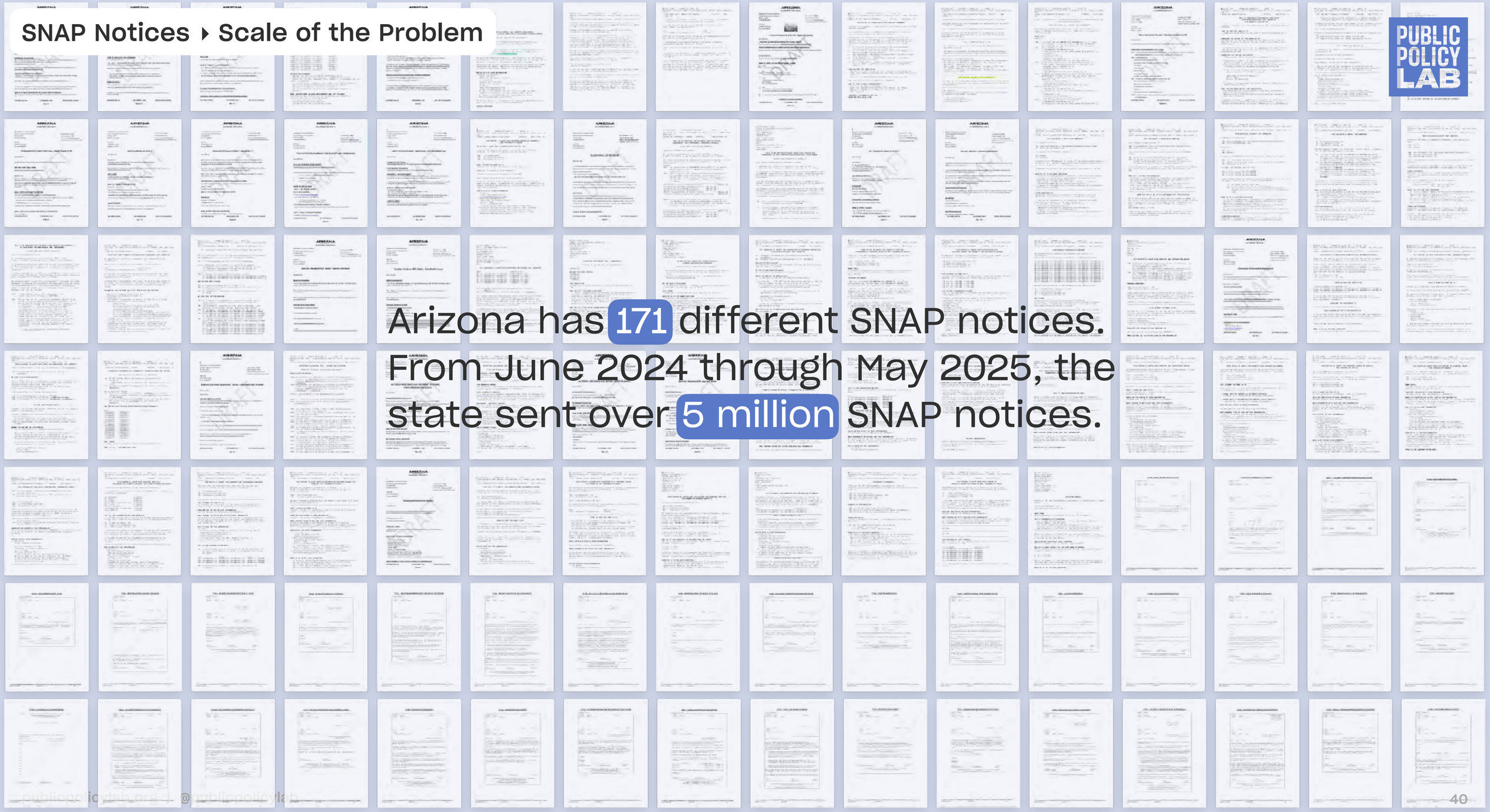
|##| * Proof of the address where you live. You may give us any of the items listed below as proof of where you live:



▲ The PPL team co-designing SNAP notices with beneficiaries in Arizona.

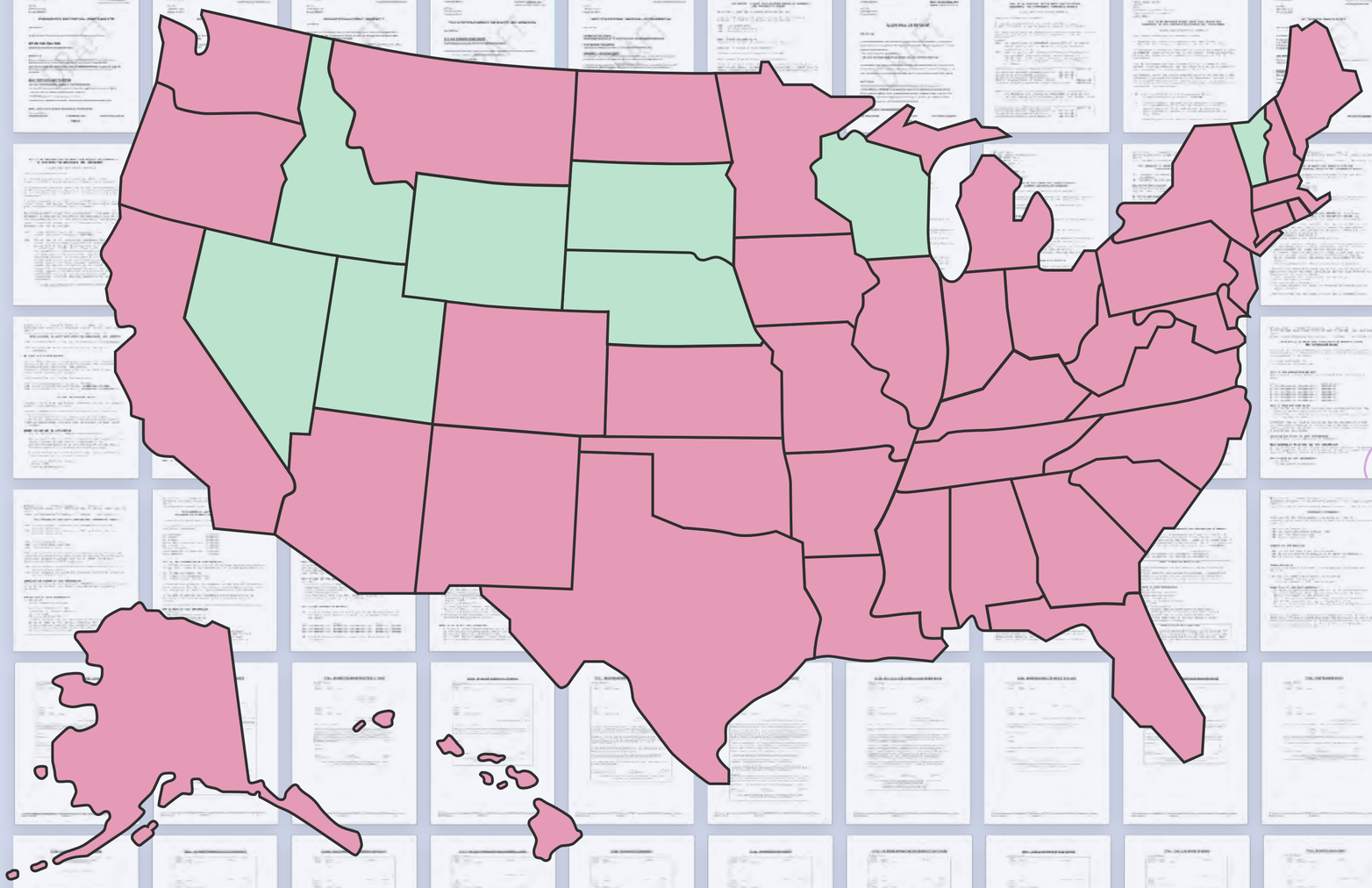


42 states have program error rates over 6%. They'll be required to pay a share of federal costs – in some cases, hundreds of millions of dollars – if they cannot reduce error rates by 2028.



Arizona has 171 different SNAP notices.
From June 2024 through May 2025, the state sent over 5 million SNAP notices.

PUBLIC POLICY LAB



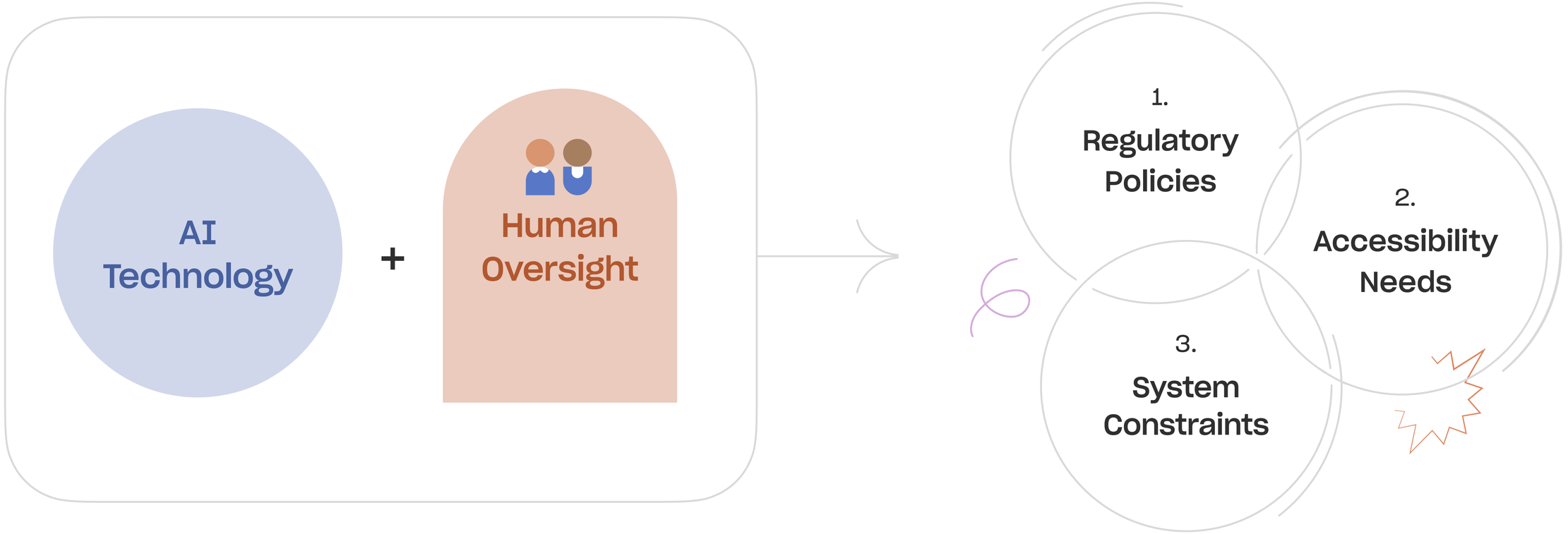
1. Regulatory Policies

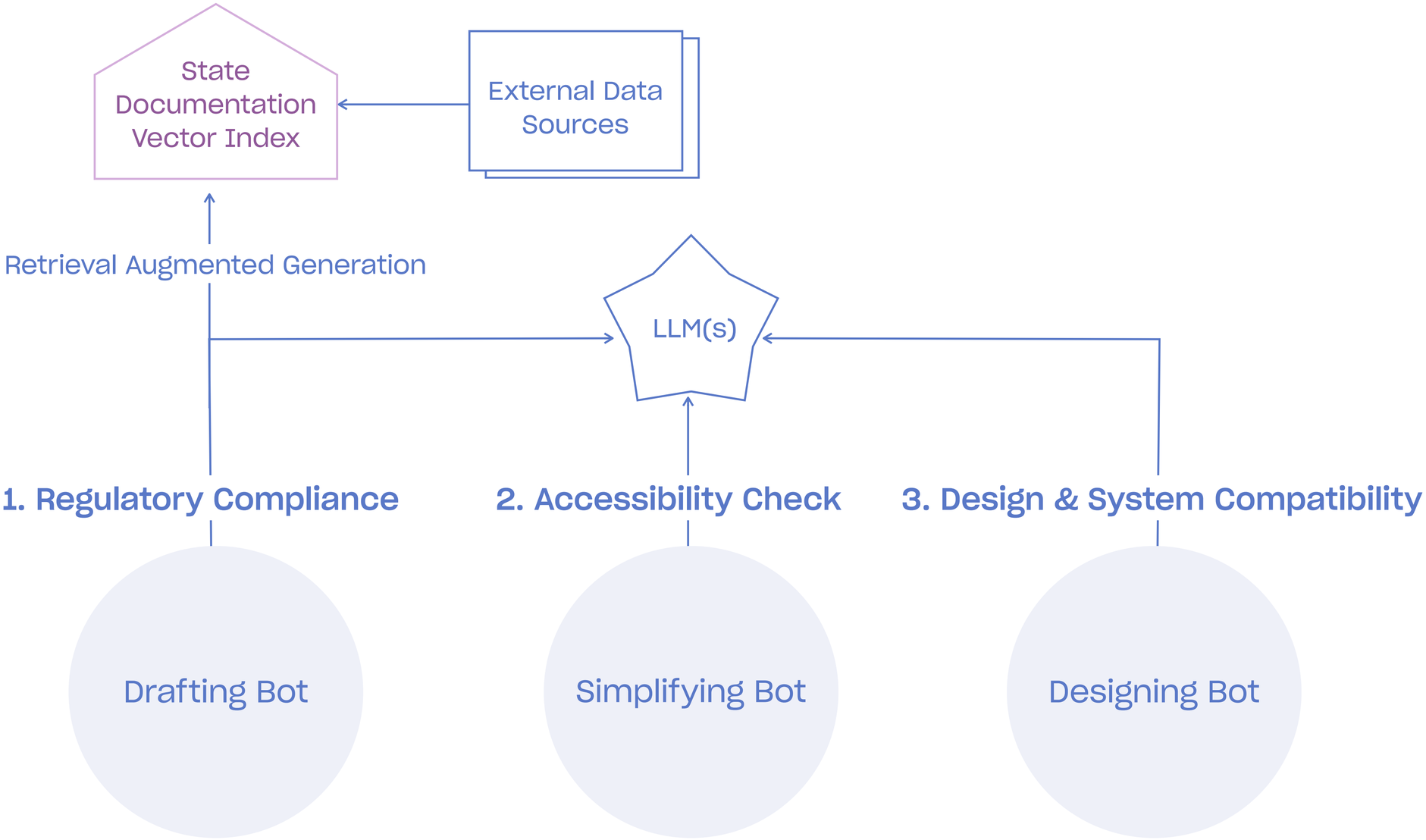
2. Accessibility Needs

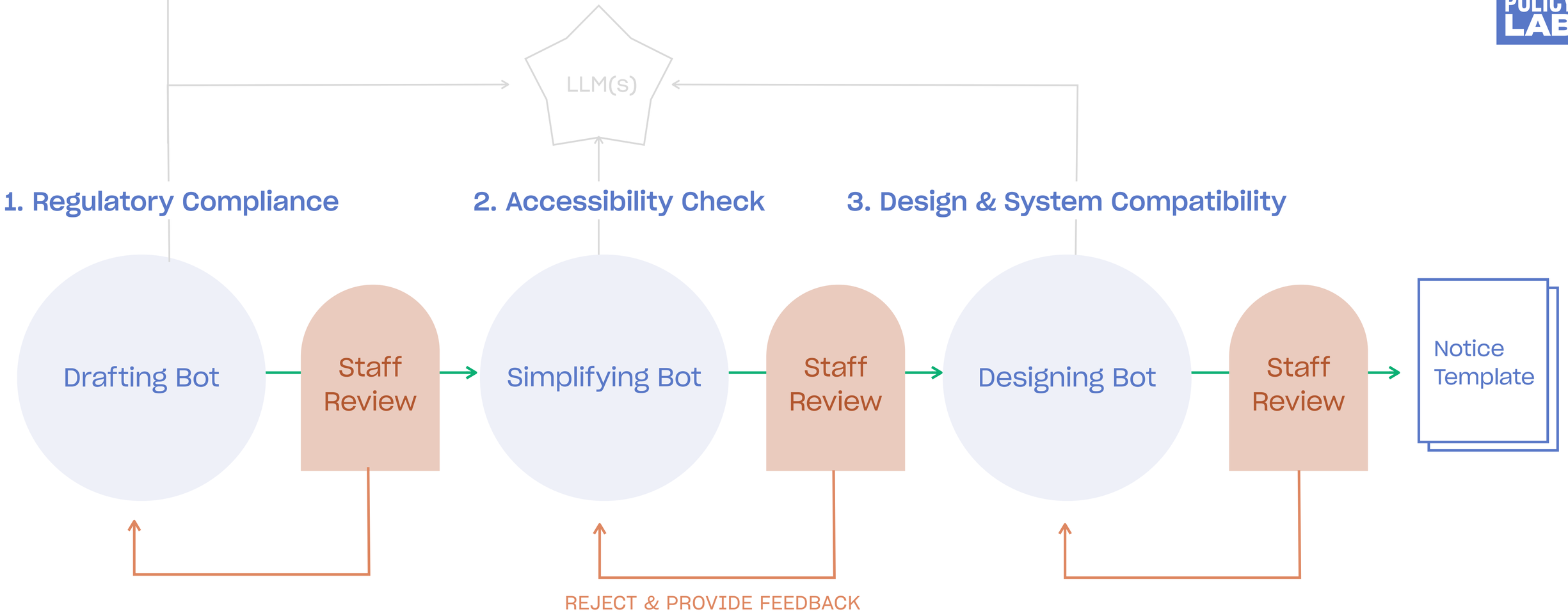
3. System Constraints

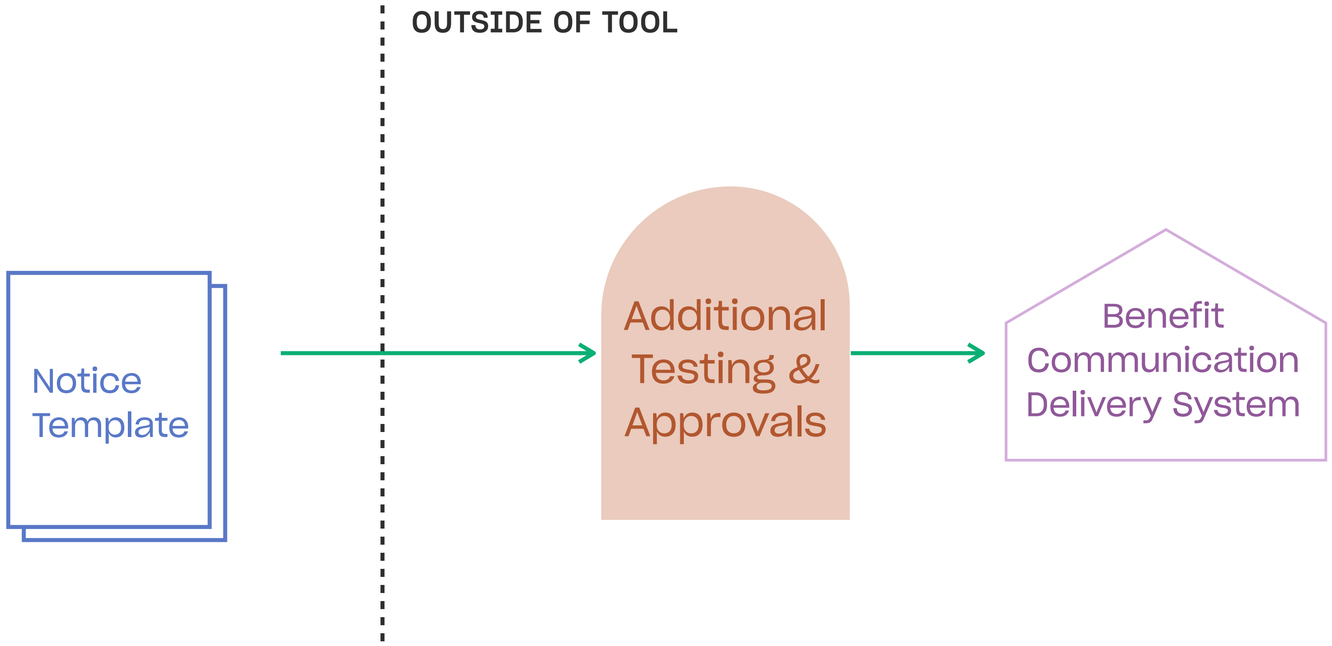
1. We are developing an AI-powered tool that generates compliant, accessible SNAP notice templates compatible with pilot states' benefit-communication delivery systems.

1. We are developing an AI-powered tool that generates compliant, accessible SNAP notice templates compatible with pilot states' benefit-communication delivery systems.
2. We are creating an implementation pathway with New Mexico and Oregon, including onboarding supports, national communication standards, and a scaling model to guide future adoption.


AI Technology
+
Human Oversight
1.
Regulatory Policies
2.
Accessibility Needs
3.
System Constraints


State Documentation Vector Index
External Data Sources
Retrieval Augmented Generation
LLM(s)
1. Regulatory Compliance
2. Accessibility Check
3. Design & System Compatibility
Drafting Bot
Simplifying Bot
Designing Bot


LLM(s)
1. Regulatory Compliance
2. Accessibility Check
3. Design & System Compatibility
Drafting Bot
Staff Review
Simplifying Bot
Staff Review
Designing Bot
Staff Review
Notice Template
REJECT & PROVIDE FEEDBACK




## Highlights

- Plug & Play Implementation
- Eliminates use of PII

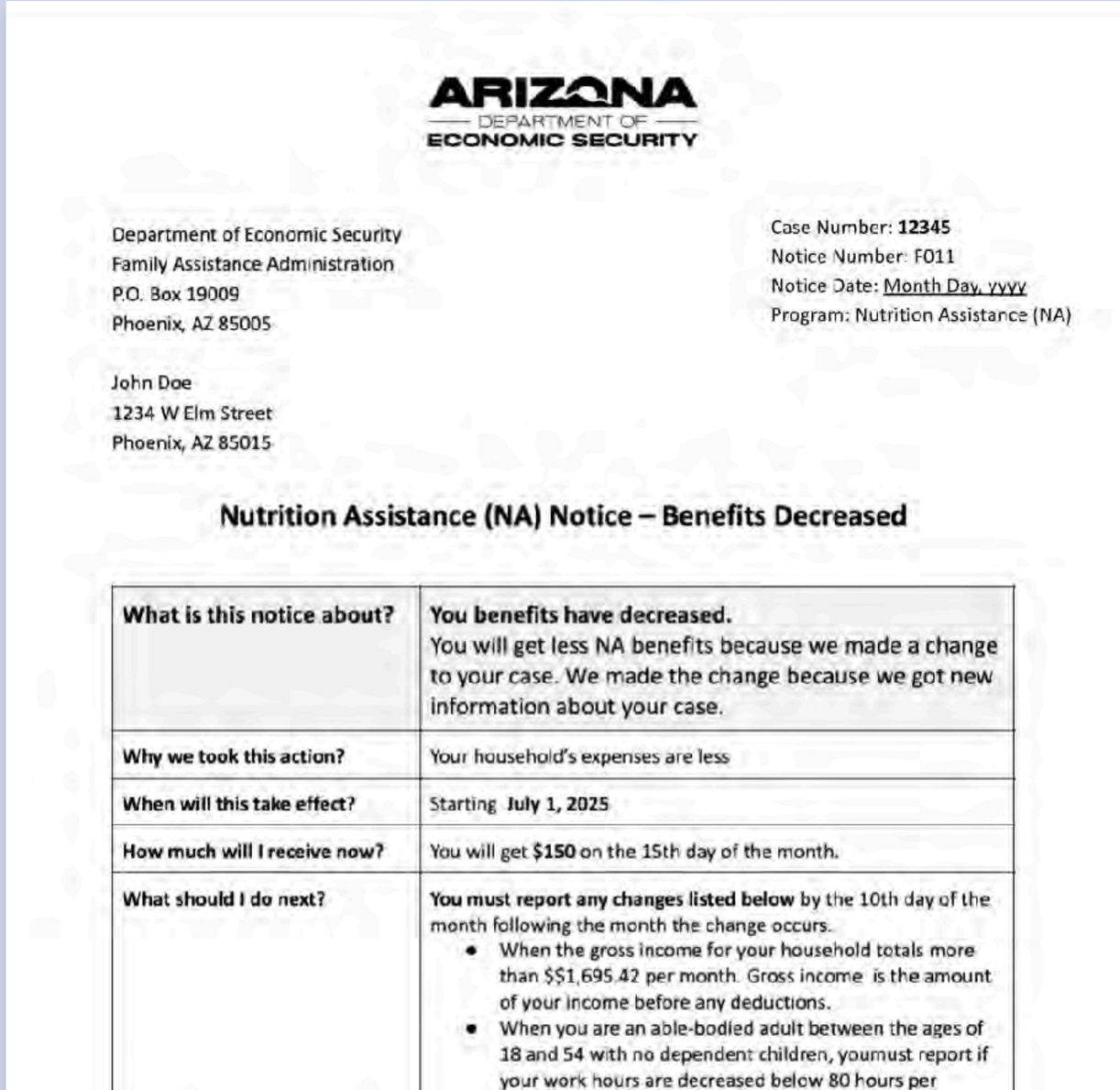
PUBLIC POLICY LAB

## IMMEDIATE

- Reduce SNAP payment errors and improve SNAP delivery experience
- Develop scalable SNAP notice product

## LONGER TERM

- Extend to other benefit notices
- Develop a national framework for benefit communications



ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC SECURITY

Department of Economic Security
Family Assistance Administration
P.O. Box 19009
Phoenix, AZ 85005

Case Number: **12345**
Notice Number: F011
Notice Date: Month Day, yyyy
Program: Nutrition Assistance (NA)

John Doe
1234 W Elm Street
Phoenix, AZ 85015

**Nutrition Assistance (NA) Notice – Benefits Decreased**

| | |
|---|---|
| **What is this notice about?** | **You benefits have decreased.**<br>You will get less NA benefits because we made a change to your case. We made the change because we got new information about your case. |
| **Why we took this action?** | Your household's expenses are less |
| **When will this take effect?** | Starting **July 1, 2025** |
| **How much will I receive now?** | You will get **$150** on the 15th day of the month. |
| **What should I do next?** | **You must report any changes listed below** by the 10th day of the month following the month the change occurs.<br>• When the gross income for your household totals more than $$1,695.42 per month. Gross income is the amount of your income before any deductions.<br>• When you are an able-bodied adult between the ages of 18 and 54 with no dependent children, youmust report if your work hours are decreased below 80 hours per |

# QUESTIONS?

# THANK YOU

Chelsea Mauldin, cmauldin@publicpolicylab.org