



How Time, Attendance & Scheduling Solutions Boost Transparency In Government & Public Safety





How Time, Attendance & Scheduling Technology Boosts Transparency In Government & Public Safety

In state and local government, you must answer to a broad range of stakeholders. You have **constituents** who want quality services and evidence that their tax dollars are being spent responsibly. You also have to comply with reporting and other requirements set by **regulatory bodies** at the state and federal level. And, lastly, to ensure you have the people you need to perform government services, you need to meet the needs and expectations of your **employees**.

Increasing transparency with your many stakeholders isn't just a matter of speaking with honesty and being responsive to questions and concerns as they arise. You also need the tools required to gather, store, and report data, making it more accessible to those who need it.

Time, attendance, and scheduling software provides you with the capability to manage critical information for time tracking and employee scheduling. It also offers greater visibility into the drivers of labor costs, enabling better decision making around scheduling, overtime, and overall staffing levels.

In this eBook, discover how important transparency is to the effective running of your government operations, and how time, attendance, and scheduling technology provides the data you need to offer true transparency expected from your agency.

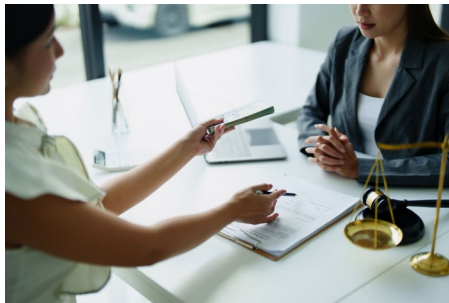




The Importance of Transparency in Government

Transparency is essential in any kind of relationship, whether it's between an organization and its customers, between the government and voters, or between individuals. Transparency builds trust, confidence, and accountability. In government, there are two kinds of transparency critical to helping you serve your community of constituents—internal transparency (between employees and managers) and external transparency (with constituents and taxpayers).

Here's how internal and external transparency differ, and why they're so important to the effective operation of state and local governments:



Transparency with constituents

Given that taxpayers fund state and local government services, it makes sense that they expect transparency in how their tax dollars are being spent. And in many cases, governments are making an effort to meet those expectations. A 2022 OpenGov survey of local government leaders found that 67% said they were working to make capital planning [more transparent and collaborative](#).

Keeping organized records and using efficient methods for tracking spending helps to keep constituents informed. It also ensures accuracy in reporting. By providing accurate and timely information about everything from the cost of labor to staffing levels across departments, you can maintain transparent communications with the necessary parties.

Transparency between employees and managers

Transparent communication of policies and workplace practices is critical to the employee experience. It helps employees feel secure in their roles and creates opportunities for the honest, two-way dialogue many employees seek in their employee experience. According to a Glassdoor survey, at least one in three employees [wants more transparency](#) from their employer.

Transparency in the workplace also helps promote an environment of fairness, which can improve employee engagement and commitment. For example, providing clarity about time off policies and ensuring they are applied equitably assures employees they are treated fairly. As a result, they may be less likely to leave out of frustration. This is particularly valuable given how challenging it is to find and keep good employees. According to the Center for American Progress, state and local government employment has [fallen below pre-pandemic levels](#) in all but one state.



5 Ways Time Tracking and Employee Scheduling Solutions Boost Transparency

Despite the need for transparency in communications with employees and constituents, it can still be challenging for many state and local governments to achieve. A combination of strained budgets and heavy employee workloads can make it difficult to make the jump from the old way of doing things to something new. However, by adopting modern time, attendance, and scheduling technology, you can not only improve transparency for your employees and constituents; you'll also save time, money, and the frustration that comes with manual, paper-based processes.

Here are some of the key benefits you can expect:

- **Automated workflows:** Instead of working with spreadsheets and paper forms that rely on manual inputs, you can automate processes like scheduling and time tracking, so you can spend time on other priorities. You no longer have to do every calculation and enter every piece of information; the software does it for you.
- **Fewer errors:** When you have an automated system for time tracking and payroll calculations, you have greater accuracy and less opportunity for mistakes caused by human error.
- **Simplified scheduling:** Tools for building and maintaining schedules allow you to keep every shift fully staffed. Additionally, scheduling police and fire employees, who require complex, 24/7 shift scheduling, becomes less cumbersome and time-consuming with a [tech solution designed especially for public safety](#).
- **Satisfied employees and constituents:** Time, attendance, and scheduling software can help you meet the increasingly universal expectation that state and local government is staying current by using secure, modern, digital solutions for critical operations.
- **Better regulatory compliance:** With easily accessible digital records, you can comply with reporting requirements and [remain prepared in the event of an audit](#).
- **Integration potential:** Instead of managing business processes with multiple systems, you can integrate time, attendance, and scheduling technology with the platforms you already use, including your enterprise resource planning (ERP), HR, and payroll systems.





Modern time, attendance, and scheduling technology promotes transparency by making your people policies and practices clearer and more accessible. The software accomplishes this goal in the following ways:

1. Improves labor reporting

When you're using paper and spreadsheets to manage time keeping, leave management, and other labor calculations for employees, you can spend innumerable hours keeping track of it all and running the necessary reports. According to Deloitte research, "documenting and recording information" is the most time-consuming activity for state government workers, accounting for 10 percent of all working hours, or around 108 million hours per year.

By shifting time, attendance, and scheduling activities to a software solution, you can produce accurate reports with a few clicks, and draw insights from your time tracking and employee scheduling data that would have been impossible with a spreadsheet. For example, time, attendance, and scheduling software allows you to run real-time reports detailing everything from employee regular hours and overtime to late clock-ins and paid time off (PTO) totals. Time tracking software also enables [labor tracking and job costing](#), which improves transparency by allowing you to accurately report hours and labor costs associated with specific duties and projects. As a result, you can accurately report how taxpayer dollars are spent on labor for municipal and state projects.

With more transparent reporting, you have new opportunities to earn the trust and respect of your constituents. Members of the public already have [more trust in state government when they have a positive digital experience with it](#), according to a Deloitte survey. Therefore, it stands to reason that they would also be glad to know that their local government is managing its workforce and tracking labor costs with modern, time-saving tools.

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2. Enables fair and efficient scheduling

When managers and employees are on the same page and have broad access to the scheduling information they need to plan their personal and work lives, there's less opportunity for claims of unfairness or bias. Employee scheduling software not only creates a digital record of employee hours and overtime, but it makes it easy for managers to fairly assign overtime and shift assignments without showing favoritism.

With employee scheduling technology, you no longer have to manually create new work schedules every pay period. You'll spend less time building schedules, considering employee requests, and handling last minute availability changes. Instead, you can rely on the software to build accessible recurring schedules that automatically slot in employees based on their availability and eligibility for overtime. And when you need a new schedule to accommodate new hires, one-off projects, and community events, you can customize shifts and create a new schedule that conforms to your parameters.

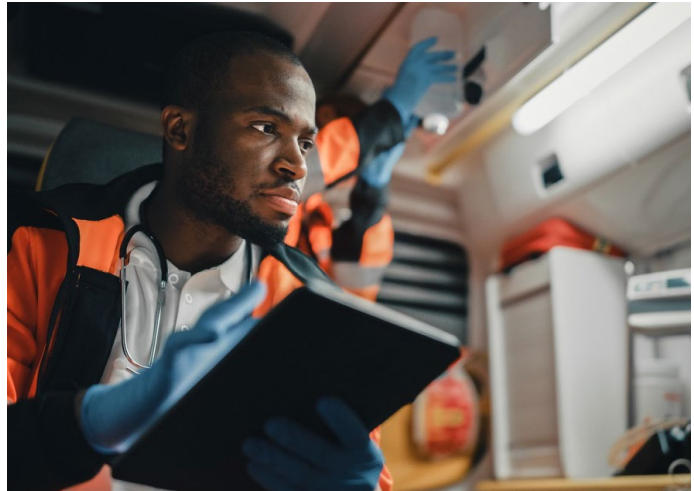
Technology makes it easier to manage schedules and communicate updates. For example, you can:

- [Create police and firefighter schedules](#) populated with the correct tenure, rank, and qualifications for each shift.
- Configure the software to send customized update reports to managers.
- Automatically staff each shift with the [optimal number of employees to match anticipated demand](#).
- Create schedules that align with internal policies and union contract requirements.
- Manage more complex scheduling scenarios such as seasonal schedules and shift differentials.





Because the software is cloud-based and accessible on any device, it offers built-in transparency that allows every employee to see schedules in advance, submit shift requests, and even swap schedules and hours with coworkers according to your policies. This anytime-access also keeps managers informed when employees call out sick, arrive late to a shift, or request more overtime.



A digital scheduling solution also provides the transparency you need to manage different types of employee schedules, whether employees are out in the community providing public safety services, on-site, or on a hybrid schedule. For most governments, this kind of scheduling flexibility is a must. In a 2022 MissionSquare survey, the majority of state and local governments said they offered some type of [flexible scheduling for eligible positions](#), including hybrid scheduling (54%) and flexible scheduling and hours (51%).

3. Helps to identify rising labor costs

As one of your largest expenses, labor costs can often make or break your budget. And given that local and state governments need to manage costs without causing a budget shortfall, it makes perfect sense to have the right tools for understanding when labor costs are beginning to soar.

Time and attendance software doesn't just improve visibility via dashboards and detailed reports; it also helps you be [more proactive in managing rising labor costs](#). You have more clarity about labor expenses in real time instead of waiting until the end of the pay period or month to find out your overtime costs are out of control. For example, time tracking analytics help you identify all of the following scenarios:

- **Excessive overtime:** Measure increases in unscheduled overtime.
- **Early clock-ins and late clock-outs:** Track the frequency of employees working more (or fewer) hours than scheduled.
- **Time off exceeds accrual:** Get alerts when employees request time off that hasn't yet accrued.
- **Meal and rest breaks:** Determine if employee break times comply with applicable state laws.



As mentioned earlier, [labor tracking and job costing](#) solutions enable more detailed time tracking for projects and departments. They can also tell you if employee productivity is falling, for example, if a public works road crew takes longer to complete a sewer project than usual. More hours translates to higher labor expenses, but by having this information, you can take action before it becomes a trend.

4. Creates a reliable digital paper trail

As public employers, state and local governments must adhere to many of the same labor laws as private employers, including the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and many others. As a result, it's necessary to comply with all [record-keeping requirements](#) and complete accurate regulatory filings. Time, attendance, and scheduling technology automatically stores and retains key data, keeping the information easily accessible for compliance reporting and potential audits. You can also utilize [document management tools](#) to securely store other sensitive employee data and files, including:

- Offer letters and onboarding documents
- Payroll records
- Performance reviews
- Benefits elections and withholdings
- Termination paperwork

5. Brings clarity to leave policies and practices

Unlike the private sector, where there are exceptions for employers with less than 50 employees, state and local government employers must offer FMLA leave, [regardless of the number of employees](#). In addition to FMLA leaves, at any time you can have employees out on disability leave, sick leave, vacation, and jury duty. Time, attendance, and scheduling technology tracks all leaves, and keeps everyone—HR, managers, and employees—well-informed about who's working and who's not.

State and local government employers must offer FMLA leave, [regardless of the number of employees](#).

Here are just a few ways [automated leave management](#) can bring more clarity to your leave management processes:

- Empower managers with calendars and reporting to keep better track of time-off requests and approvals.
- Set leave blackout dates, and hour limits on leaves for specific "brownout" dates.
- Manage accruals and get alerts when employees approach time-off limits.
- Track FMLA and other federal and state-mandated leaves for compliance.
- [Automate leave bidding processes](#) and create standby lists for extra time off.

Boost Your Time, Attendance, and Scheduling Effectiveness

Managing the modern government workforce takes modern solutions that improve your efficiency and productivity. You may already know how much time it takes to manage time, attendance, and employee scheduling manually. And even if you can find the time to get it all done, you've still got to deal with potential errors, employee misunderstandings, and last-minute changes that can leave departments short-staffed.

Time, attendance, and scheduling technology eliminates those headaches by automating key processes and empowering employees and managers to communicate and access the information they need, anytime, on any device.

TCP Software automates and streamlines time, attendance, and employee scheduling with flexible solutions matched to each government department's needs. As a result, every government is equipped to retire outdated and costly processes that frustrate employees and drain taxpayer dollars and move to efficient workflows that improve business outcomes, mitigate compliance risk, and bolster employee satisfaction.

To learn more, reach out to [talk to an expert](#) about how we can help you streamline daily processes and deliver more transparency to your employees and constituents.



Want to learn more? Let's talk.

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