

CASE STUDY

The Hidden Cost of Generalization: Why Austin, TX Migrated to an EH-First Platform

Overview

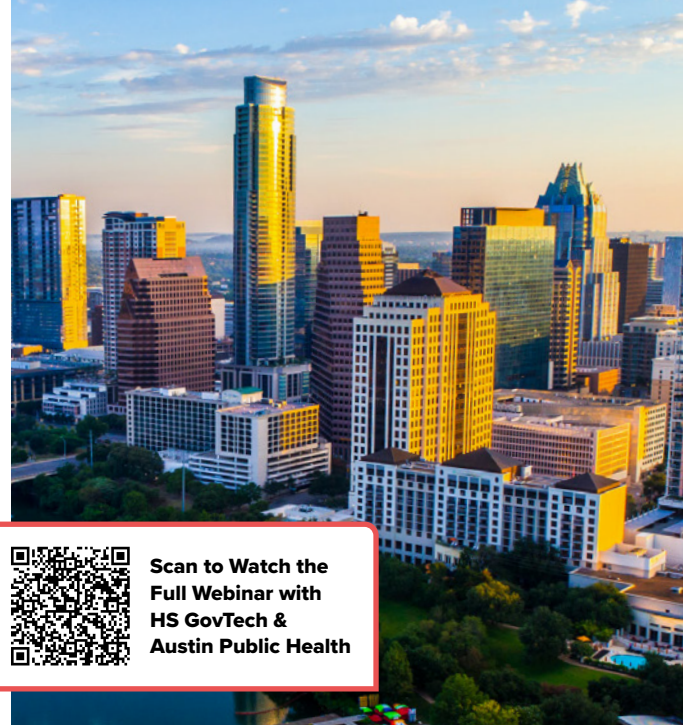
Client:	Austin Public Health (Environmental Health Division)
Legacy Platform:	Digital Health Department (DHD)
Chosen Solution:	HS GovTech (HS Cloud Suite)
Timeline:	11 Months (Mar/24 – Feb/25)

The Challenge: Environmental Health (EH) agencies across the U.S. are facing a forced transition period as legacy platforms sunset. While general government "all-in-one" systems pitch themselves as modernization tools, they frequently force highly specialized EH teams to rely on complex workarounds and rigid configurations.

The Outcome: Austin Public Health rejected the generic workaround. By selecting an EH-first platform, they successfully deployed a highly customizable solution in record time, completely digitizing legal operations, streamlining complex cashiering, and launching an intuitive public self-service portal.

The Status Quo & Challenges

For over six years, the Austin Public Health Environmental Health Services Division utilized a legacy platform (Tyler/DHD). While it shifted them away from manual handwriting, it lacked advanced



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integration capabilities—most notably, an automated online payment and cashiering system.

When rumors surfaced that their legacy platform was sunsetting, the agency proactively secured federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to future-proof their operations. Unlike basic agencies that only require inspection logging, Austin handles a complex ecosystem:

- End-to-end permitting and intake.
- On-site cash, check, and credit card processing.
- Complex local fund-code routing.

Their core challenge was finding a vendor that could seamlessly bridge the gap between administrative intake, financial routing, and field operations without blowing past deadlines or requiring excessive custom coding.

The Turning Point: The 12-Hour "Curveball" Demo

During the final selection phase, the competitive field narrowed down to HS GovTech and two general government vendors. To stress-test the agility of each platform and look past polished sales presentations, Austin's evaluation team threw a major curveball: they gave all three vendors a tight, 12-hour window to build and present specific,

real-world regulatory use cases (handling a payment intake and executing an administrative refund).

The contrast between the vendors was immediate:

- **The Competitors:** Heavily struggled with the rapid turnaround. One vendor flatly complained to the city team that they had not been given enough time to prepare an environment.
- **HS GovTech:** Arrived with the exact live workflows fully built out, demonstrated precisely how the system would perform in daily practice, and immediately won over the selection committee.

The Solution: Why HS GovTech Outperformed The Competitors

"Out-of-the-Box" Cashiering: While competitors offered risky, unbuilt promises ("We can code that for you"), HS GovTech provided a mature, native financial architecture ready to map to Austin's local fund codes immediately.

An EH-First Core & National Network: Instead of forcing generic building-permit software into a public health mold, HS GovTech brought purpose-built workflows and best practices sourced from a nationwide community of Environmental Health peers.

Complete Autonomy (No Vendor Lock-In): Traditional systems require slow support tickets and costly custom programming for minor changes. HS GovTech empowers Austin's internal analysts to modify screens, drop-downs, and data fields instantly on the fly.

The Impact & Results



100% Digital Legal Workflows

Replaced manual photo printing and paper files with a 100% electronic chain of custody. Inspectors now upload, tag, and route evidence instantly from the field.



An Easy-to-Use Public Portal

Eliminated hour-long commutes and lobby lines for business owners. Citizens can now apply for permits, view invoices, and pay securely online in minutes.



Exceeding FDA Food Safety Standards

Upgraded from a 47-point checklist to a rigorous 56-item report, enabling Austin to meet four Voluntary National Retail Food Standards.

Ready To Stop Compromising On Your Agency's Software?

Don't let rigid configurations and endless manual workarounds hold your team back. Whether you are navigating an unexpected software sunset or fighting against an "all-in-one" generic government software retrofit, your agency deserves a platform built specifically for Environmental Health.

Discover how HS GovTech can future-proof your workflows, give you complete system autonomy, and elevate your community service.

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Get In Touch

Our team of public health technology experts is ready to help your agency map out a smooth, low-risk transition blueprint.

Website: www.hsgovtech.com

Email: sales@hsgovtech.com

Phone: (800) 412-2580