INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Plain Language with DWD and Resultant

May 2025

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Unemployment Insurance at a Glance

- 475 people on the team
- 40% (176) investigate claims
- 20,000+ claims for benefits received each week
- Week ending May 10, 2025: 21,337 claims, $7 million paid
- Peak season: More than 30,000 weekly claims
- The customers that DWD serves are employers who pay wages in Indiana and unemployed workers.
- 750 distinct documents in our system

Identify the challenge. Identify the solution.

- The challenge facing the Unemployment Division of DWD is the need to clearly communicate complex information to audiences of varying backgrounds.
  - 750 documents - most read at high school or college level
  - Documents include specific legal language that must be included
  - UI Claimants:
    - 10 percent do not have HSE
    - 50 percent have not had education beyond high school
- The solution is to create documentation that is accessible to customers of all backgrounds
- Manually changing nearly 750 documents to plain language would have taken 14 years.
- A technological tool needed to be identified and implemented

What is Plain Language?

- Clear
- Concise
- Easy to understand

Instead of:

(1) the individual has earned remuneration in employment in at least eight (8) weeks

Use:

Earned money in at least 8 weeks

Risk Assessment

- Consequences of no solution
  - People don't engage
  - Call centers get bogged down
  - Incorrect filings
  - Fraud flags
  - Efficiencies built in (reduced CC volume, reduced improper payments

- Upon identification, we worked with Resultant to identify and develop a tool that could efficiently respond to these gaps in our customer service experience.

Introduce Plain Language Tool

- Performed journey mapping to understand where customers are having issues
    - Journey mapping involves tracking the claimant and employer experiences when trying to navigate the Indiana Unemployment Insurance system
- Journey mapping allows for identification of pain points in process, including particularly complicated documents and web site information.

Customer Journey

1 **Separates from Employer**

2 **Files for Unemployment**

Confused by the Claimant Handbook

3 **Submits Weekly Request to be Paid** (Voucher)

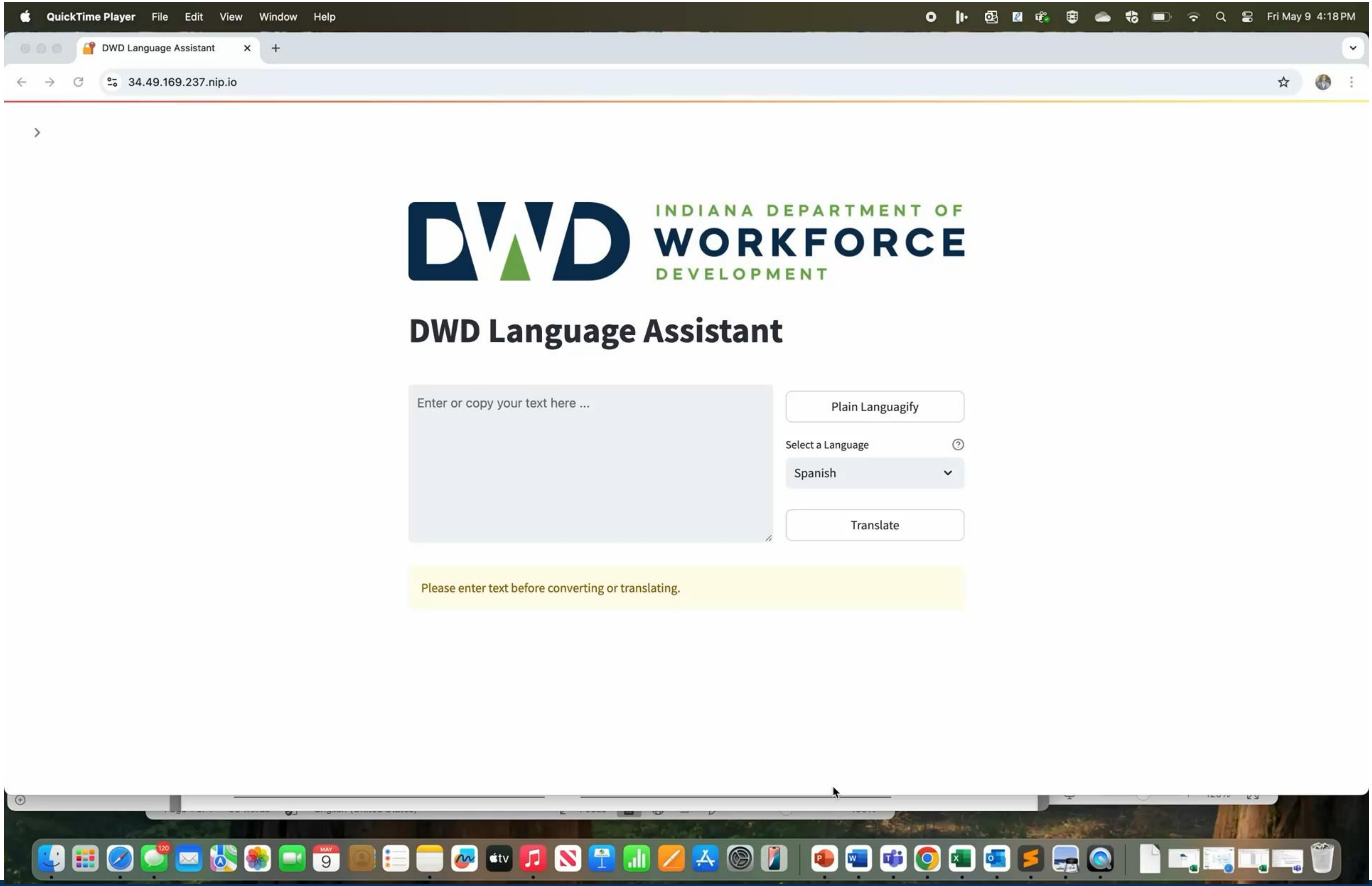
Voucher questions are not clear or concise

4 **Receives Eligibility Decision** (Determination Letter)

Confusion on wording of the decision

How is the Tool Used?

Video – how it is used
Before and after examples


QuickTime Player File Edit View Window Help
Fri May 9 4:18 PM
DWD Language Assistant
34.49.169.237.nip.io
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DWD Language Assistant
Enter or copy your text here ...
Plain Languagify
Select a Language
Spanish
Translate
Please enter text before converting or translating.

Original text (DWD)	Simplified text
Regarding an individual's most recent separation from employment before filing an initial or additional claim for benefits, an individual who voluntarily left the employment without good cause in connection with the work or was discharged from the employment for just cause is ineligible for waiting period or benefit rights for the week in which the disqualifying separation occurred and until: (1) the individual has earned remuneration in employment in at least eight (8) weeks; and (2) the remuneration earned equals or exceeds the product of the weekly benefit amount multiplied by eight (8).	If an individual quit their job without good cause or was fired for just cause, they're ineligible for benefits for the week they were fired and until they have: * Earned money in at least 8 weeks * Earned an amount equal to or more than 8 times their weekly benefit amount

Readability Improvement Report

Metric	Input Text	Output Text
Flesch Reading Ease	22.03	68.49
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	17.97	7.93
Sentence Length	Very long and complex sentence with multiple clauses.	Shorter sentences, broken down into an introductory sentence and bullet points.
Word Choice	Uses formal and legalistic vocabulary such as remuneration, disqualifying separation, and ineligible.	Uses simpler, more common words like money, fired, and benefits.
Structure	Single paragraph with a numbered list.	Broken into two parts using an introductory sentence and bullet points.
Active vs. Passive Voice	Contains both active and passive voice, with a tendency towards passive constructions (was discharged).	Primarily uses active voice (quit, was fired, earned).
Clarity	Difficult to understand due to complex sentence structure and legal jargon.	Easier to understand due to simpler language and a clearer structure.

Original text (DWD)	Simplified text
To File an Appeal Online: 1.A new Issue History section will be displayed on your Claimant Homepage. Click on the Issue History section to view the issues created on your claim(s). You are able to file an appeal online to most “Disqualified” issues that are preventing you from receiving benefits. 2.Click on the “Disqualified” hyperlink to view your Determination of Eligibility. Please note the deadline to file an appeal when viewing your Determination. If you disagree with your Determination, click on the “File Appeal” hyperlink to start your online appeal. 3.Please confirm on the Claimant Information screen that your contact information is correct. If your contact information is not correct, please follow the directions to update your contact information. 4.Please complete the questions on the Appeal /Hearing Information screen. 5.Please confirm that all information is correct on the Appeal Filing screen, add your signature, and click, “Submit my appeal.” 6.When your Appeal has been successfully submitted, you will be taken to the Appeal Filing-Post Submission Instructions screen, and you will receive an Appeal ID. Please reference this Appeal ID if you have any questions about the status of your appeal. *Please note you are not able to file an appeal online to your Claimant Monetary Determination, Determination of Waiver Eligibility, or claims against your State Tax Refund. Please view those Determinations in the Correspondence History section of your Claimant Homepage and file an appeal by mail, fax, or in person delivery.	To Appeal Online: 1. Overview: A new Issue History section will be displayed on your Claimant Homepage. Click on the Issue History section to view the issues created on your claim(s). You can appeal most "Disqualified" issues that stop you from getting benefits. 2. View Determination of Eligibility: Click on the "Disqualified" hyperlink to view your Decision. The deadline to appeal is listed on your Decision. If you disagree with your Decision, click on the "File Appeal" link to start your appeal. 3. Confirm Contact Information: Make sure your contact information is correct. If not, update it. 4. Answer Questions: Fill out the questions on the Appeal / Hearing Information screen. 5. Review and Submit Appeal: Confirm all information is correct, add your signature, and click "Submit my appeal." 6. View Confirmation: You will see your Appeal ID after submitting your appeal. Please reference this ID if you have questions about your appeal. NOTE: You cannot appeal online for your Claimant Monetary Decision, Determination of Waiver Eligibility, or claims against your State Tax Refund. Instead, view those decisions in the Correspondence History section of your Claimant Homepage and appeal by mail, fax, or in person.

Readability Improvement Report

Metric	Input Text	Output Text
Flesch Reading Ease	55.5	59.2
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	8.46	6.73
Sentence Length	Sentences are generally long, averaging 20-25 words.	Sentences are shorter and more concise, averaging 10-15 words.
Word Choice	Uses formal and technical language like "Claimant Homepage," "Determination of Eligibility," and "Monetary Determination."	Uses simpler and more common terms like "Homepage," "Decision," and "Monetary Decision."
Structure	The original text is presented as a numbered list with supplementary notes, but some sentences are complex.	The revised text uses clear headings and numbered lists to break down the information into manageable steps and includes a NOTE section.
Active vs. Passive Voice	Contains instances of passive voice, such as "will be displayed" and "you will be taken."	Primarily uses active voice, such as "Click on the Issue History section" and "Make sure your contact information is correct."
Clarity	The original text may be difficult for someone unfamiliar with the claims process to understand.	The revised text is easier to understand due to the simpler language and structure.

Original text (DOR)

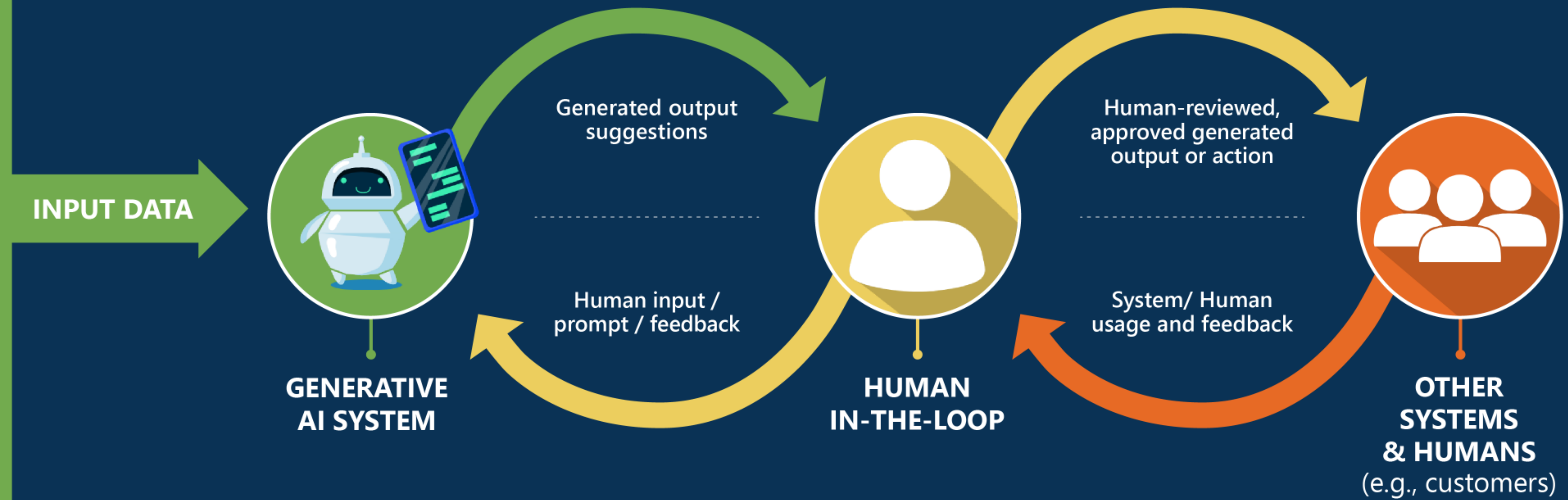
Dear TAXPAYER NAME:
The Letter of Findings referenced above was written based on a protest of proposed tax assessments against the taxpayer.
Please see the enclosed NOTICE for requesting redaction of information prior to the publication of the Letter of Findings.
If the taxpayer’s protest has not been sustained (approved) in total, the taxpayer may request a rehearing under IC § 6-8.1-5-1.
Rehearings are granted only under unusual circumstances, which are typically the existence of facts previously unknown that would have caused a different result if submitted prior to issuance of the Letter of Findings.
If a request for rehearing is made, it must be made within 30 days from the issue date of the taxpayer’s Letter of Findings and should be sent to:
Indiana Department of Revenue Legal
Division, MS 102
100 N. Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Upon receipt of the rehearing request, DOR will review the respective file and the rehearing request to determine if the new information presented will suffice to warrant a rehearing. DOR will then notify you in writing with a decision on whether or not a rehearing has been granted. If a rehearing is granted, you will be notified of the rehearing date.
If the rehearing request is denied, you may appeal the decision to the tax court. The period of time in which the taxpayer may appeal the decision to the tax court is governed by IC § 6-8.1-5-1.
Indiana Department of Revenue Legal
Division

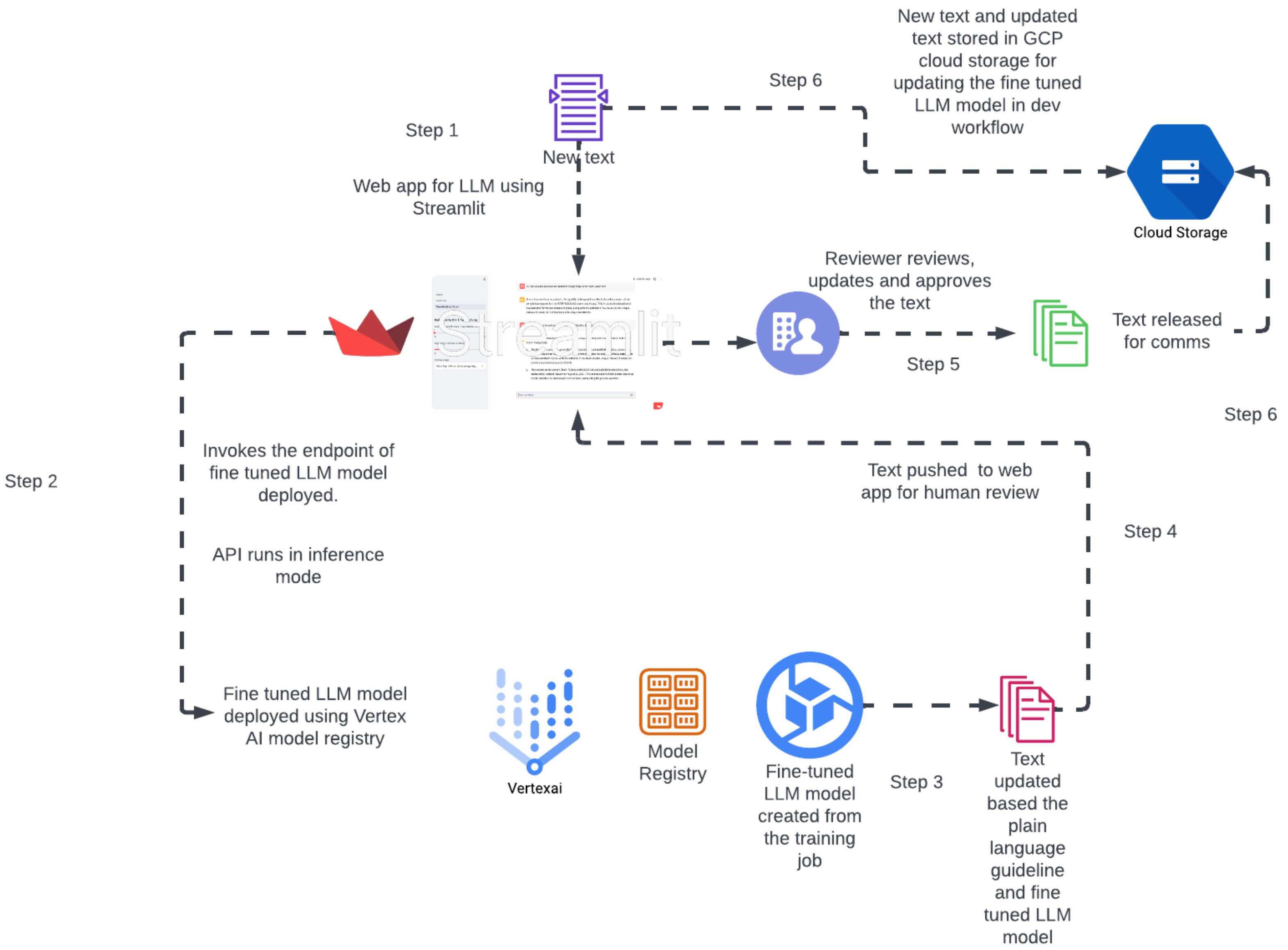
Simplified text

Dear "TAXPAYER NAME":
The Letter of Findings for you was written after you protested proposed tax assessments.
Check the NOTICE included with this letter if you want to redact information before it's made public.
If your protest wasn't approved in full, you can ask for a rehearing under IC § 6-8.1-5-1. Rehearings are granted only in unusual circumstances, such as if there are new facts that would have changed the outcome if they were submitted before the Letter of Findings was issued.
If you want a rehearing, send your request within 30 days of the Letter of Findings issue date to:
Indiana Department of Revenue Legal
Division, MS 102
100 N. Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46204
We'll look over your file and request to decide if the new information warrants a rehearing. We'll notify you in writing about our decision.
If we grant a rehearing, you'll be notified of the date.
If your request is denied, you can appeal to tax court. The timeframe for appeal is governed by IC § 6-8.1-5-1.
"Indiana Department of Revenue Legal
Division

Readability Improvement Report

Metric	Input Text	Output Text
Flesch Reading Ease	54.36	65.13
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	9.83	7.3
Sentence Length	Sentences are relatively long and complex, containing multiple clauses and conditional statements.	Sentences are shorter and more direct, focusing on one idea per sentence.
Word Choice	Uses formal and legalistic language such as "Letter of Findings," "proposed tax assessments," "sustained," "rehearing under IC \u00a7 6-8.1-5-1," and "warrant a rehearing."	Uses simpler and more common language such as "protested tax assessments," "approved in full," "ask for a rehearing," and "warrants a rehearing."
Structure	Text is presented in paragraphs, with important information sometimes embedded within longer sentences.	Text is broken down into shorter paragraphs with clear topic sentences and bullet points.
Active vs. Passive Voice	Mix of active and passive voice, with some sentences using passive constructions like "was written based on a protest" and "Rehearings are granted."	Primarily uses active voice, making the instructions clearer and more direct.
Clarity	Potentially difficult to understand for someone unfamiliar with legal or tax terminology and processes.	Easier to understand due to simpler language and more direct explanations of the process.


INPUT DATA
Generated output suggestions
Human input / prompt / feedback
GENERATIVE AI SYSTEM
Human-reviewed, approved generated output or action
System/ Human usage and feedback
HUMAN IN-THE-LOOP
OTHER SYSTEMS & HUMANS
(e.g., customers)



The Plain Language Tool

- An application leveraging large language models (LLMs) and generative AI to simplify complex text.
- Built using Gemini pro 2.0 model fine-tuned with DWD data for domain-specific clarity.
- Users enter text, an API is invoked, and the tool in real-time translates the content into easy-to-understand language.

Questions Welcome

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