

# Product Requirements Document (PRD)

*Product:* Next Chapter—Layoff Recovery & Re-employment App *Last updated:* 08 Jul 2025

## 1. Purpose & Vision

Help recently laid-off professionals regain stability and secure their next role within 90 days by combining a structured 30-day Bounce Plan, AI coaching, and targeted job-search utilities.

**North-star outcome:** 50 % of active users report securing at least one interview within 30 days of onboarding.

## 2. Problem Statement

- 1. **Fragmented resources:** Benefits, legal, job boards, and mental-health tools live in silos.
- 2. **Decision paralysis:** Users don't know what to prioritise in the chaotic first weeks post-layoff.
- 3. **Loneliness + shame:** Social stigma reduces help-seeking; motivation drops quickly.
- 4. **Cost barriers:** Traditional outplacement services are expensive and employer-centred, not user-centred.

## 3. Goals & Non-Goals (MVP)

Goals (v0.1)	Non-Goals
Provide a clear first-48-hour checklist	Full legal advice engine
Deliver a 30-day guided plan with daily 10-min tasks	Complex multi-year career coaching
Offer AI chat coach for on-demand tactical help	Synchronous live-human coaching
Simplify job-search tooling (resume scan, tracker)	Fully automated job-matching algorithm
Capture feedback + metrics to iterate	White-label employer portal

## 4. Target Users & Personas

Persona	Context	Top Pain	Key JTBD
<b>Layoff Lisa</b> (Marketing, 35)	Laid off 5 days ago from mid-size SaaS	Overwhelm	"Figure out my next steps without melting down."

Persona	Context	Top Pain	Key JTBD
<b>Pivot Peter (Engineer, 28)</b>	Wants to leave shrinking ad-tech; laid off 2 weeks ago	Skill gap anxiety	"Identify skills + prep for interviews in new domain."
<b>Budget Brenda (Ops, 42)</b>	Sole earner, family of four	Cash-flow stress	"Create survival budget + file benefits fast."

## 5. User Journey (MVP scope)

1. **Trigger:** Receives layoff email → installs app via friend link.
2. **Onboarding Wizard** <3 min: date, state, role, goal.
3. **Day 0–2:** Completes Immediate Relief checklist (UI filing, COBRA review, budget draft).
4. **Day 3–7:** Moves through Reclaim tasks; Chat Coach rewrites LinkedIn.
5. **Day 8–15:** Uses Resume Scanner; applies to 1st 3 jobs.
6. **Day 16–30:** Continues Bounce Plan, logs mood + budget; secures first interview.

## 6. Core Requirements

### 6.1 Functional

- **F-1** Onboarding wizard must collect 5 data points (layoff date, role, state, goal, **elapsed time since layoff**) and generate personalised deadlines and plan length.
- **F-2** Bounce Plan engine surfaces one task per UTC day, with complete / skip states and progressive disclosure of advanced features.
- **F-3** Coach chat (single empathetic tone) must respond within 5 s P90, support at least 10 free messages per day; multi-tone presets postponed to v1.1.
- **F-4** Application Tracker must allow create / edit / drag between stages.
- **F-5** Budget Snapshot calculates runway based on user income + expenses and incorporates state-level unemployment benefit estimator and COBRA cost lookup.
- **F-6** Peer Connect: optional matching by industry + location for 1:1 coffee chat (opt-in, asynchronous DM link).
- **F-7** Guided Mental-Health micro-tools: 2-min breathing exercise, sleep hygiene tips, crisis hotline link.
- **F-8** Offline-first: Users can view/complete tasks, edit resume text fields, and update tracker while offline; data syncs on reconnect.
- **F-9** Push notifications: daily task reminder at user's local 9 am unless changed and inactivity nudge after 3 idle days.

### 6.2 Non-Functional

- **NF-1** P95 screen-to-API latency < 300 ms.
- **NF-2** Compliance with GDPR + CCPA; **local encryption** of financial and employment data; one-tap account + data deletion.

- **NF-3** Accessibility WCAG 2.1 AA plus stress-friendly UX (larger touch targets, reduced cognitive load mode).
  - **NF-4** Offline caching for all core flows (tasks, tracker, coach history  $\leq 25$  msgs).
  - **NF-5** Progressive disclosure: advanced budget and analytics unlock after basic setup (Checklist + first 3 tasks). Non-Functional
  - **NF-1** P95 screen-to-API latency  $< 300$  ms.
  - **NF-2** Compliance with GDPR + CCPA; user can delete data.
  - **NF-3** Accessibility WCAG 2.1 AA.
  - **NF-4** Offline caching for Bounce Plan + Coach history (last 25 msgs).
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## 7. User Stories & Flows (MVP Scope)

### Additional Flow: Adaptive Daily Nudge

1. User logs mood and budget in the app. *(SHOULD)*
2. Bounce Plan task is completed or skipped. *(MUST)*
3. Coach generates a nudge based on pattern of these inputs. *(MUST)*

Example: "You've made great progress and logged stable mood scores. Want to tackle a resume refresh today?"

Below are user stories converted into linear flows with MoSCoW prioritization:

### User Flow: Onboarding & Setup

1. User installs app and opens it.
2. Completes onboarding wizard (layoff date, role, state, goal). *(MUST)*
3. App calculates benefits deadlines (UI, COBRA). *(MUST)*
4. User lands on Day 1 of the Bounce Plan. *(MUST)*

### User Flow: Immediate Relief & Triage

1. App surfaces Day 0 checklist. *(MUST)*
2. User marks off UI claim, COBRA review, severance read-through. *(SHOULD)*
3. Optional: User views tips on severance clauses. *(COULD)*

### User Flow: Daily Bounce Plan

1. User receives daily push notification. *(MUST)*
2. Taps in to complete task in 10 minutes or less. *(MUST)*
3. Task is marked done and next task queued for next day. *(MUST)*
4. Option to skip/snooze task. *(SHOULD)*
5. Streaks or gamification elements surface. *(COULD)*

### User Flow: Coach Chat

1. User opens Coach from nav bar. *(MUST)*

2. Asks a career-related question or pastes a snippet. *(MUST)*
3. Coach replies with relevant, on-tone response. *(MUST)*
4. User optionally toggles tone. *(SHOULD)*
5. Coach proactively nudges when tasks are skipped. *(COULD)*

### User Flow: Resume Optimization

1. User uploads resume or pastes text. *(MUST)*
2. App scans for missing keywords against selected job. *(MUST)*
3. Highlights gaps and offers Coach-assisted rewrite. *(SHOULD)*
4. Suggests template if resume missing. *(COULD)*

### User Flow: Job Application Tracking

1. User adds a job manually. *(MUST)*
2. Categorizes as Applied / Interviewing / Offer. *(MUST)*
3. Edits status, adds notes. *(SHOULD)*
4. Filters or searches application list. *(COULD)*

### User Flow: Budget & Runway

1. User opens Budget tool. *(MUST)*
2. Inputs monthly income and expenses. *(MUST)*
3. Sees visual of cash runway. *(MUST)*
4. Adjusts budget to include severance or UI. *(SHOULD)*

### User Flow: Mood Tracking

1. User opens Wellness tab. *(SHOULD)*
2. Logs mood via emoji slider. *(SHOULD)*
3. Mood trends chart shown over time. *(COULD)*

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### MoSCoW Summary Table

Feature Area	MUST	SHOULD	COULD
Onboarding & Setup	Wizard, Deadline calc	-	-
Immediate Relief	Checklist display	Mark tasks complete	Clause tips
Bounce Plan	Push, Daily task engine	Skip/snooze	Streak UI
Coach Chat	Pull mode, respond in 5s	Tone toggle	Nudges
Resume	Upload/scan, keyword match	AI rewrite	Templates
Tracker	Add/edit apps	Notes	Filters
Budget	Input + runway calc	UI + severance edits	-

Feature Area	MUST	SHOULD	COULD
Mood	-	Log mood	Mood chart

(MUST = MVP ship blockers, SHOULD = value-adding improvements, COULD = polish or stretch goals)

**Onboarding Wizard** - As a new user, I want to complete onboarding in under 3 minutes so I can get started quickly. - As a user in distress, I want the app to calculate benefits deadlines automatically so I don't miss anything important.

**Immediate Relief Checklist** - As a user overwhelmed by admin, I want a simple checklist for filing benefits. - As a user confused by severance, I want a resource that explains legal terms in plain language.

**Bounce Plan Tasks** - As a laid-off user, I want to complete a short task each day so I feel consistent progress. - As a user who skipped days, I want to resume where I left off without losing my streak. - As a busy parent, I want to snooze tasks on days I can't engage.

**Coach Chat** - As a user confused about severance, I want to paste text and get a plain-language explanation. - As a nervous applicant, I want to ask for a confidence boost without judgment. - As a non-native English speaker, I want help rewriting emails in professional tone. - As a user who's demotivated, I want the Coach to challenge me constructively.

**Resume Scanner** - As a jobseeker, I want to scan my resume against a job description and fix weak areas. - As a user without a resume, I want a template to start from.

**Job Tracker** - As a user applying to jobs, I want to drag entries between "Applied," "Interviewing," and "Offer." - As someone with lots of applications, I want to filter by date or status.

**Budget Tool** - As a cash-strapped user, I want to enter income and expenses to see how long my savings last. - As a user receiving severance, I want to account for lump sum income. - As someone applying for UI, I want to simulate impact on runway.

**Mood Tracker** - As a user under stress, I want to log my mood in under 10 seconds. - As someone noticing patterns, I want to see how mood trends over time. **Bounce Plan Tasks** - As a laid-off user, I want to complete a short task each day so I feel consistent progress. - As a user who skipped days, I want to resume where I left off without losing my streak.

**Coach Chat** - As a user confused about severance, I want to paste text and get a plain-language explanation. - As a nervous applicant, I want to ask for a confidence boost without judgment.

**Resume Scanner** - As a jobseeker, I want to scan my resume against a job description and fix weak areas.

**Job Tracker** - As a user applying to jobs, I want to drag entries between "Applied," "Interviewing," and "Offer."

**Budget Tool** - As a cash-strapped user, I want to enter income and expenses to see how long my savings last.

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## 8. UX Edge Cases & Flows

- Empty states: supportive language + CTA (e.g. "No jobs tracked yet. Want help finding some?")
  - First-run defaults: pre-skip weekends in Bounce Plan; Coach gives onboarding hint
  - Error handling: if Resume Scanner fails, fallback to "Ask Coach for help"
  - Reactivation: Bounce Plan resumes where user left off; push reminder after 7-day inactivity
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## 9. State Management Rules

- Bounce Plan: users may revisit or re-do previous tasks; cannot fast-forward future days
  - Coach Chat: users can delete their side of messages, not system prompts
  - Budget: editable anytime, changes recalculate runway in real-time
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## 10. Analytics Instrumentation Plan

Event	Properties
user_signed_up	{ method: 'email' }
task_completed	{ task_id, day_index, skipped }
coach_message_sent	{ mode: 'pull' }
resume_uploaded	{ keywords_matched, suggested }
application_added	{ stage: 'applied' }
mood_logged	{ emoji, valence_score }
budget_saved	{ income, expenses, runway_months }

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## 11. Risk Mitigation Plan

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
OpenAI cost overrun	High	Cap daily messages; use summarisation cache
State benefits link rot	Medium	Weekly validation job; alert fallback UI
Coach gives bad advice	High	Include disclaimers; enforce tone & factual guardrails

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Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Resume scan fails	Med	Fallback to Coach rewrite, prompt clarification
Community toxicity	Low (future)	Flag/report system; start invite-only

## 12. Feature-Specific Acceptance Criteria

**Resume Scanner** - Can upload PDF or paste text - Extracts content with  $\geq 80\%$  accuracy - Identifies 5+ keywords missing - Triggers AI suggestion via Coach in  $<6s$  P90

**Budget Snapshot** - Fields for income and expenses - Auto-calculates months of runway - Alert if runway  $<60$  days

**Bounce Plan** - Task available at 9am local - Completion updates progress bar - Push notification fires each new day

**Coach Chat** - Responds  $<5s$  for 90% of prompts - Allows 10+ messages/day for free tier - Switches tone via toggle

## 13. Readiness Checklists

**Beta Launch Checklist** - ☐ Onboarding works on iOS + Android - ☐ Bounce Plan tracks progress correctly - ☐ Resume scan accepts 3+ file types - ☐ Coach Pull handles 5+ prompt types - ☐ Push notifications received daily by 90%+ test users

## 14. Success Metrics (MVP)

Metric	Definition	Target
<b>Activation</b>	% completing Day-2 checklist	$\geq 60\%$
<b>Checklist Conversion</b>	% completing 48-hour crisis checklist	$\geq 65\%$
<b>Engagement</b>	WAU / MAU ratio	$\geq 45\%$
<b>Task Adherence</b>	Avg tasks completed per active user in 30 days	$\geq 17$
<b>Interview Progress</b>	Users logging $\geq 1$ interview OR recruiter convo within 60 days	$\geq 25\%$
<b>Meaningful Progress</b>	Users completing $\geq 1$ of: resume updated, $\geq 5$ applications, $\geq 1$ networking call in 30 days	$\geq 60\%$

Metric	Definition	Target
<b>Upgrade Rate</b>	Free → Pro within 30 days	≥ 5 %
<b>NPS</b>	Survey on Day 30	≥ +25

## 15. Dependencies & Risks. Dependencies & Risks

Area	Dependency	Mitigation
AI costs	OpenAI token pricing	Cap messages + cache summarised prompts
Benefit links	State sites change URLs	Weekly cron checker, 404 alert
Mobile builds	App-store review delays	Parallel web-PWA fallback

## 16. Open Questions

1. Which tone presets for Coach will resonate most? (Test Hype vs Pragmatist vs Tough-Love.)
2. What's the minimum viable Resume Scanner accuracy acceptable to users?
3. Should daily tasks be snoozable or forced? Measure friction vs retention.
4. How soon do we add LinkedIn OAuth to auto-fetch contacts?

## 17. Timeline (high-level)

Phase	Sprint(s)	Key Deliverable
Extended Discovery	S-0 – S-2	10 in-depth interviews + diary study; persona validation
Design & IA	S-3 – S-4	UX flows, wireframes, usability test
Build Alpha	S-5 – S-8	Onboarding, Bounce Plan engine, basic Coach, Tracker, Offline infra
Private Beta (50 users)	S-9 – S-10	Metrics & feedback; iterate
Public Beta	S-11 – S-12	App Store + Play Store launch (core flows only)
v1.1	Post-Beta	Resume Scanner, multi-tone Coach, advanced budget
v1.2	TBD	Community rooms, peer leaderboard, video interview AI
Phase	Sprint(s)	Key Deliverable
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Discovery / Design	S-0–S-2	UX flows, wireframes, usability test



Phase	Sprint(s)	Key Deliverable
Build Alpha	S-3-S-6	Onboarding, Bounce Plan, Coach Pull
Private Beta (100 users)	S-7-S-8	Metrics + feedback report
Public Beta	S-9-S-10	App Store + Play Store launch

## 18. Market & Research Insights (July 2025)

### 18.1 Tone-Driven Coach Requirements (from Layoff Themes Study)

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- **Default Tone:** *Pragmatist* for first response; Coach must switch to *Hype* or *Tough-Love* based on detected emotional cues (anger keywords, despair sentiment score).
- **Theme Detection:** Benefits confusion → *Pragmatist*; Confidence crash → *Hype*; Anger/betrayal → empathic then *Tough-Love*.
- **Acceptance Criteria Add-on:** ≥ 85 % of moderated test prompts receive correct tone tag.

### 18.2 Competitive White-Space Validation filecite turn0file1 L25-L55

- No leading product offers a **48-hour crisis checklist** or **budget + mood analytics**, confirming our differentiator.
- Price gap identified between Teal (HQ free) and LinkedIn Premium (\$30/mo); MVP Pro tier stays at **\$9.99 USD**.
- Emphasise “habit-building Bounce Plan” as unique moat vs. Teal reminders.

### 18.3 Updated Risks & Mitigations

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Resume/Tracker commoditisation	Medium	Lean into daily task engine + mood/budget analytics, consider Teal API partnership.
AI coach arms race	High	Leverage proprietary emotional-theme detection; file provisional patent on adaptive tone switching.
Incumbent down-market shift	Medium	Focus on user-paid positioning first; prepare SMB white-label in v1.2.

# 19. Technical Addendum

## 19.1 Architecture Overview

Layer	Stack	Notes
Mobile App	React Native + Expo	Core app with push + offline capability
Backend API	Node.js + Express (Vercel Edge)	Stateless functions for task serving, Coach requests, data sync
Database	Supabase (PostgreSQL)	Row-level auth, encrypted fields for sensitive data
Storage	LocalStorage + SQLite (via WatermelonDB)	Sync-safe offline task + tracker cache
AI Layer	GPT-4o via OpenAI API	Configurable prompt templates; fallback caching layer

## 19.2 Data Model (Simplified)

- **User:** id, email, layoff\_date, goal, location, onboarding\_stage
- **TaskCompletion:** user\_id, task\_id, status, timestamp
- **MoodEntry:** emoji, valence, note, created\_at
- **Application:** title, company, status, notes, last\_updated
- **CoachLog:** user\_id, tone, message\_id, token\_count, flagged

## 19.3 AI/LLM Prompt Engineering & Guardrails

- System prompts defined per tone (Hype, Pragmatist, Tough-Love)
- Initial prompt seed + emotional category tag + last 3 messages passed
- Content moderation: OpenAI “moderation” API run on user input + AI output
- Rate limit: max 10 messages/day free; cap tokens/session
- Logging: all prompts + completions stored with feedback flag

## 19.4 Security Implementation

- Data encrypted at rest (PostgreSQL row encryption) and in transit (TLS 1.3)
- Financial & benefit fields hashed client-side (SHA256) and never passed to LLM
- Full account + data deletion in-app; action is irreversible and logged

## 19.5 Offline-First Behavior

Feature	Offline Behavior	Sync Logic
Bounce Plan	Cached tasks locally; track completion	One-way push on reconnect
Resume Draft	Stored in device SQLite	Overwrite-on-sync unless remote is newer

Feature	Offline Behavior	Sync Logic
Application Tracker	Local edit + reorder	Conflict resolution on timestamp
Coach	Read-only past history; no new queries	Alert user to go online

Limits: Local cache max 25MB; Coach unavailable offline. Alert user when limit is hit.

## 20. Business Model & Monetization Strategy

### 20.1 Free vs Pro Tiers

Feature	Free	Pro (\$9.99/month)
Daily Bounce Plan	✓	✓
Resume Scanner	✗	✓ (GPT rewrite + keyword match)
Coach Messages	10/day	Unlimited
Mood/Budget Trends	7-day	Full timeline & export
Warm Intros Tool	✗	✓
Peer Connect	1 match/month	Unlimited

### 20.2 Funnel Expectations

Funnel Stage	Target Conversion
Day 2 Activation	60%
Bounce Task Day 5	40%
Upgrade to Pro (30d)	5–8%

### 20.3 Unit Economics (Estimates)

- Avg GPT-4o prompt (Coach): 500 tokens × \$0.003/1k = ~\$0.0015
- Daily free usage cap: \$0.015/user/day × 30 = \$0.45/month ceiling
- Paid users: break-even ≈ 4–5% conversion

## 21. Coach Quality & Safety Metrics

Metric	Target
Avg conversation rating (user feedback)	$\geq 4.2/5$
Flagged messages (inappropriate)	$\leq 1\%$ of total
False tone detection rate (moderated)	$\leq 10\%$
Response latency (P90)	$\leq 5$ sec

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## 22. Accessibility Commitments

- Font sizes: Minimum 16pt body, 20pt headlines
- UI: High-contrast dark/light modes; all CTAs  $\geq 48 \times 48$ dp
- Optional “reduced decision” mode for onboarding: fewer choices, delayed config
- Emotional UX: Calming copy, no red alert states unless critical

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## 23. Feature Roadmap Reconciliation

**Note:** Peer Connect is *included* in MVP (limited to 1/month, async opt-in), while broader Community Rooms remain deferred to v1.2.

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### Appendix A — Out-of-Scope Features

Community rooms, Plaid sync, Video Interview AI, Employer dashboard.

### Appendix B — Event Tracking (v0)

As defined above (user\_signed\_up, task\_completed, etc.)