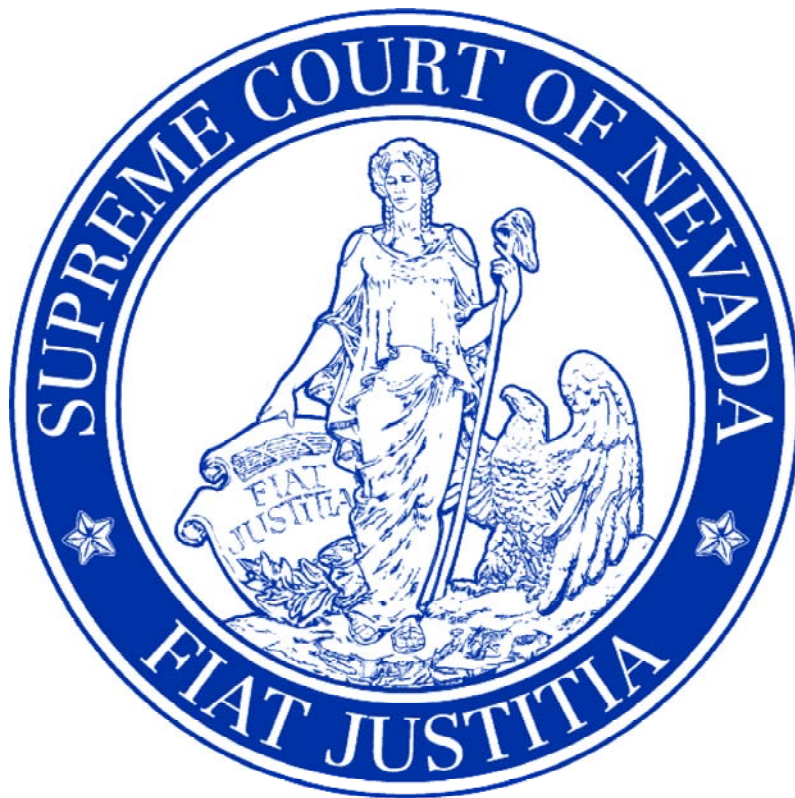
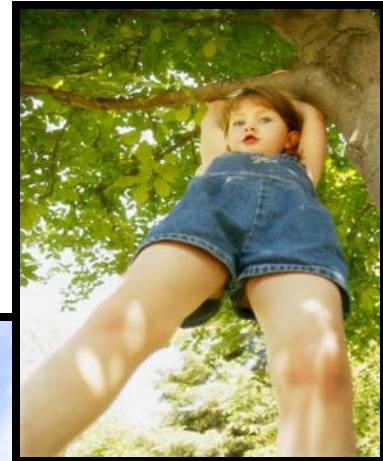


NEVADA'S
COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
FOR THE PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY
OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN

ANNUAL DATA ASSESSMENT REPORT
DECEMBER 2010



NEVADA SUPREME COURT
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS



COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM MISSION, PURPOSE, AND GOALS STATEMENT

"The Court Improvement Program is a multidisciplinary project which seeks improvement of interrelated systems that serve children and families who enter the child welfare system. The program operates through team-oriented court and agency initiatives. The goal of the CIP is to make the systems more effective."

NEVADA'S COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM ANNUAL DATA ASSESSMENT REPORT DECEMBER 2010

The Nevada Court Improvement Program (CIP) is pleased to submit this 2010 Program Assessment Report for the Basic CIP Grant for the period October 1, 2009, to September 30, 2010.

The State Court Improvement Program was created as part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993. The grants were designed to help state courts assess their foster care and adoption laws and judicial processes, and to develop and implement a plan for system improvements. Since then, the CIP has been reauthorized three times: in 1997, under the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) reauthorized through 2001; in 2001, under the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-133) reauthorized through 2006; in 2006, under the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-288) reauthorized through FY 2011.

CIP has existed in Nevada since 1995 and is overseen by the multi-disciplinary CIP Select Committee (Committee), which is chaired by Supreme Court Justice Nancy Saitta. This group is comprised of family court judges, a tribal court judge, the three child welfare agency administrators, a deputy state attorney general, a legislator, the director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, a public defender active in child welfare, several attorneys who actively represent neglected and abused children, and the executive director of the Nevada CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Association, Inc. As a standing committee of the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada, the Committee serves in an advisory capacity.

Strategy D1: Keep Current on National Trends/Requirements in Data Collection

D1.1 was accomplished. Five representatives, two from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), one from the Administrative Office of the Courts Information Technology (AOC/IT), one from the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and one from Washoe County Department of Social Services Information Technology (DSS/IT), were sent to the Child Welfare Data and Technology Conference in July 2010.

Strategy D2: Identify Performance Measures for Courts in Child Welfare Cases

D2.1, modified in April 2010 to: perform business analysis to determine best practices and implementation plan for data sharing and integration among agencies to obtain outcome measures. This task was accomplished under the guidance of our contractor, Aaron Gorrell from

Waterhole Software, Inc. and AOC Statistics staff Hans Jessup and Sheldon Steele. The business analysis and consideration of leading practices was the foundation for building the roadmap for the 2nd Judicial District's electronic data exchange that took place throughout the summer and fall of 2010.

D2.2, include outcome measures in Uniform System for Judicial Records (USJR) model where applicable, is in the process of being accomplished by AOC Statistics staff Hans Jessep and Sheldon Steele. The family and juvenile statistics gathering was expanded, based upon the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) statistical model, to include measures to help our courts begin to track timelines. It is now in the approval process before implementation. The Judicial Council of the State of Nevada (JCSN) is expected to give its final approval in the spring or summer of 2011.

D2.3, develop procedures for collecting, analyzing, and publishing outcome measures statewide, was partially accomplished with the compilation of the data profiles for each judicial district (September 2010). The remainder will be accomplished in a year or so after D2.2 has been finalized. This will, necessarily, include training.

Strategy D3: Develop Data Exchange Requirements

D3.1, review of the National Exchange Model and prioritize implementation order in exchanges in Nevada, has been accomplished. In September 2008, the requirements development workshops for the Service Plans and Court Reports were hosted by Nevada CIP.

NIEM 2.1 was released in October 2009, and for the first time included data elements that address the data needs of the dependency and neglect community. These data elements were captured in the Family Services domain and include: dependency petition, court findings order, service plan, court report, hearing notification, placement change notification and representation notification. These elements were included in the Information Exchange Package Definition (IEPD) developed for the data exchange project in the 2nd Judicial District in August 2010.

This is a much larger undertaking than originally anticipated. With the preliminary work completed in the 2nd Judicial District, CIP will continue this effort as we identify jurisdictions with not only the interest, but the resources.

D3.2, assist courts and partner agencies with hardware or software necessary to exchange, share, and store data and information digitally or electronically, was accomplished with the Clark County District Attorneys' Office.

Early Resolution Program South Facilitated Petition Pilot Program

The Clark County District Attorney's Office received a grant of \$1,304.37 to support the Early Resolution Program (ERP) South Facilitated Petition Pilot Program. Specifically the grant was given to allow the office to purchase a scanner and electronic editing equipment, so that the discovery process could be expedited and, as a result, cases could be processed through the program more quickly.

Due to procedural hurdles in accepting the grant, the commencement of the program was significantly delayed. However, they facilitated their first case on September 29, 2010. Between September 29 and December 2, 2010, four cases were assigned to the pilot group and four were assigned to the control group.

Of the cases assigned to the control group, the average number of days for discovery was 14.67. Of the cases assigned to the pilot, the average number of days for discovery was 12. This is a reduction in the number of days for discovery of 2.67 days or 18.2%. The small number of cases involved makes it difficult to draw conclusions. However, at this juncture, it appears that the cases in the pilot group have reduced number of days to process discovery.

The program has also shown promising results in terms of the number of days to resolution in child welfare cases. Of the cases in the pilot group, every case has been resolved and the average number of days to resolution is 23.66. Of the cases in the control group, none of the cases are resolved and currently all are set for trial. The average number of days that the children have been in care is 38.75 and counting. Some of the cases in the control group are not set for adjudicatory hearing until January 2011.

The potential for this program is very exciting. The number of days to process discovery in the pilot group is significantly reduced. In addition, the number of days to resolution is dramatically different between the two groups.

Strategy D4: Identify Court Child Welfare Case Management Systems Requirements

D4.1, D4.2, D4.3, D4.4, D4.5, developing a roadmap for electronic data exchange in the 2nd Judicial District was accomplished throughout the spring, summer, and fall of 2010 under a contract with Aaron Gorrell, Waterhole Software, Inc.

Electronic Data Exchange in the 2nd Judicial District

A 17-member committee composed of stakeholders from the 2nd Judicial District Court, the Washoe County Department of Social Services, the

State of Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, and the Nevada Administrative Office of the Courts met several times as a group and individually with Mr. Gorrell. The first meetings focused on documenting current business practices from first removal of the child from the home through either reunification or termination of parental rights.

The ultimate goal of Washoe County is to share the dependency petition electronically between the agency and the Court. The analysis of the business process and technology currently in place indicates that this goal is achievable. However, given the significant adjustment and resources, it was agreed that this will require a balanced approach that leverages existing capabilities while methodically advancing Washoe County toward electronic integration. This carefully orchestrated approach seeks to achieve a number of benefits:

- **Incremental Development:** Integration is a complex process that must simultaneously align multiple aspects including organizational culture, business processes, and technological capabilities. The roadmap focuses on identifying intermediate steps (initiatives) that can be taken while maintaining and progressing toward the petition exchange goal. Each of these initiatives positively impacts these aspects and will gradually move Washoe County toward electronic data sharing.
- **Leverage Existing Resources:** Washoe County (both court and agency) and the State of Nevada have spent considerable resources on developing a number of technological capabilities. The roadmap seeks to leverage each of these capabilities by incorporating their benefits into the recommendations.
- **Prioritization:** Each of the initiatives will be prioritized based on identified dependencies and the technological capabilities that exist today.

The final report will be reviewed by the committee during FY 2011. Upon approval, stakeholders will meet to determine next steps to be taken in the incremental implementation process.

D4.6, D4.7, D4.8, D4.9, replicate the above for the 8th Judicial District, was initiated during discussions with key stakeholders in November 2010. CIP will move forward with this initiative depending upon interest and resources.

D4.10, D4.11, D4.12, D4.13, replicating the data exchange initiative in the rural judicial districts can only begin when the rural district courts have implemented a case management system that can support such exchange. However, the CIP Coordinator did begin preliminary discussions to gauge interest.

Strategy D5: Develop Court Child Welfare Case Management Systems Standards

D5.1, D5.2, D5.3, D5.4, Although D5.3, review national child welfare CMS functionality standards, has been completed; the remaining activities in this strategy are being abandoned due to lack of sufficient staff and resources.

Strategy D6: Implement Child Welfare Data Exchanges

D6.1, D6.2, D6.3, D6.4, all involve the actual implementation of the data exchange discussed in Strategy D4. As explained in Strategy D4, the data exchange roadmap has been written and is being reviewed by the Data Exchange Committee in Washoe County. Implementation will occur incrementally as interest, staffing, and resources are available.

Strategy D7: Implement Court Child Welfare Case Management System Standards

D7.1, D7.2, D7.3, involve implementing the court child welfare case management system standards that were to be developed in Strategy D5, which is abandoned at this time due to lack of sufficient staff and resources.

Strategy D8: Implement Video Conferencing Capabilities in Courts for use in Child Welfare Cases

D8.1, perform business analysis and develop implementation blueprint for video conferencing capabilities, was completed in the fall of 2009.

D8.2, implement video conferencing capabilities in pilot jurisdictions, was completed in December 2009 in Elko, Humboldt, and White Pine Counties.

D8.3, update business analysis and implementation blueprint document, was completed by AOC IT staff in the spring of 2010.

D8.4, develop court guidelines for video conferencing capabilities for child welfare cases, was not completed. We will ask the courts using video conferencing if such a guideline would be helpful to them before proceeding.

D8.5, implement video conferencing capabilities in the remaining jurisdictions, was started in the summer of 2010 and will be completed in December 2010 in Nye, Mineral, and Pershing Counties.

Strategy D9: Provide Project Management Oversight for Data Projects

D9.1, obtain a part-time project manager to oversee identified data projects, has not been accomplished. The need for a project manager will be assessed once the projects are all on-line. We used Aaron Gorrell for the 2nd Judicial District, but did not hire him long term.

On-going Court Improvement Activities

Data grant funding is used to fund portions of the two CIP staff support positions, CIP Coordinator and Assistant. Among the CIP Coordinator activities funded are maintaining and updating the strategic data plan, and implementation of the strategic data plan in collaboration with child welfare and court stakeholders. Much of the Coordinator's time, during the latter part of the fiscal year, has been spent working with the contractor and the committee on developing the roadmap for the data exchange project in Washoe County.

The Coordinator is working to establish statistical measures of progress for the various sub-grants. See the description of the ERP South Facilitated Petition Pilot Program (E3.2) as an example.

The Assistant has developed and utilizes statistical databases and spreadsheets to track a myriad of CIP implementation progress measurements on a daily basis. She also supports the Coordinator in her data development efforts.