

National Association for Court Management

2008 Justice Achievement Award

Projects Submitted for Consideration

Colorado Municipal Judge's Association ***Bench Book 2007***

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The CMJA Bench Book was compiled to provide a reference for new and experienced judges to outline the purpose and procedures for the municipal courts of Colorado. Many judges rely on CMJA for their professional training. 10% of municipal judges in the state are non attorney judges. The content includes general information about courts such as jurisdiction, powers, procedures and ethics. Another section includes initiation of prosecution to include summons and complaints, warrants, motions to amend or add joinder of offenses and defendants. Included are bail and arraignments/pleas to include guilty pleas, nolo contendere, Alford Plea, deferred prosecution, deferred judgment and sentence and pleas by mail. Also covered are pretrial issues of discovery, motions, motion to continue, subpoena and subpoena duces tecum. Matters of trial including pro se litigants, trials to court-findings, right to trial, right to a jury trial, jury trial checklist, jury selection, challenge of juror, motion for judgment of acquittal, Curtis Advisement, jury instructions, jury questions, jury deadlock, and setting and enforcing plea deadlines. The section on sentencing includes penalties, factors to consider, alternatives in sentencing, sentencing hearings, revocation of probation or deferred judgment and extending probation. General issues of appeals and appeal bonds are also covered. Attorneys and right to counsel, withdrawal of counsel and representing co-defendants, as well as contempt, definitions, sanctions, contempt of court, not contempt of judge, proceedings, hearing and trial sanctions, sentencing and examples are also illustrated. The section dealing with records and release of information is helpful to administrative staff and includes records protected from public access, adult records, sealing of records, juvenile records, juvenile expungement, and the court's authority to limit public access. Miscellaneous matters that are covered include speedy trial, publicity, interpreters, recusal of judges, retainers, oaths, domestic violence issues and statute of limitations. Judges can choose to perform weddings and the parameters outlining this service include sources of information for ceremonies, weddings as a business, reporting requirements, chief justice directives, scheduling weddings, interpreter needs, same sex marriage, and safety matters. The final section includes over 80 pages of forms such as advisements, summons, pleas forms, speedy trial waivers, stay orders, probation orders, bench warrants, search warrants, juror notebooks, jury trial checklists, and stock jury instructions plus many more. Each Bench Book comes with a CD that contains the electronic version of the materials. All things considered, this provides a comprehensive handbook for judges and staff.

Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County ***Operation Fugitive Safe Surrender***

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Fugitives wanted for non-violent crimes and with no history of violence were encouraged through a media campaign to turn themselves in at a neutral site in exchange for favorable consideration at sentencing. During Operation Fugitive Safe Surrender over 1,300 fugitives voluntarily came forward over four days to resolve their outstanding warrants, with less cost to the public and reduced danger to law officers. All the necessary organizations participated, allowing cases to be efficiently processed on the same day the fugitives surrendered. Court Technology Services set up computer equipment and system connections at the church so information was immediately accessible and cases were processed without paper files. Pretrial service officers interviewed defendants after they checked in. Sheriff's Office personnel verified outstanding warrants. Public defenders counseled defendants on their legal rights and their situation. Deputy county attorneys reviewed the cases and

made plea offers to defendants. Superior Court commissioners adjudicated cases in three classrooms turned courtrooms. Adult probation officers made sentencing recommendations and took supervision of the defendants if they were placed on probation. Clerks Office staff ensured paperwork was complete and forwarded to the appropriate location to resolve cases. Deputy sheriffs and U.S. marshals provided security. Many defendants brought family members to the operation who were very supportive. In this venture, government agencies and the faith-based community carved out their respective roles and found a truly good fit. Operation Fugitive Safe Surrender provided an important and innovative service to the public and demonstrated exceptional communication and cooperation within departments of the court and with the community and other branches of government.

Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County
Trial Courts
Self-Help Workshop Program

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Family Court Administration implemented the Self-Help Workshop program effective January 2007 in an effort to further provide the public with the knowledge and resources that facilitate efficient and expeditious access to the judicial system. In an effort to reach a growing number of self-represented litigants, Family Court has created and implemented a self help workshop to assist litigants with completing frequently utilized documents. The first workshop topic was the Petition to Stop or Change Order of Assignment. Traditionally these petitions are commonly misfiled by litigants. The feedback we received from our judicial officers, court staff and public indicated an overall confusion surrounding when it may be appropriate to use these forms. The workshops were designed to inform and instruct the public on these facts and ensure they are filing the appropriate forms for the relief they are seeking.

Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County
Court Technology Services
Pre-Booking and Initial Appearance System

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The Pre-Booking and Initial Appearance (IA) automated system and data exchange utilized within Maricopa County provides tremendous benefits to Justice and Law Enforcement agencies by allowing for increased efficiency, accuracy, and consistency in actions associated with arresting a person, checking that person into jail and preparing court documents. This solution replaced severely dated procedures that included completing handwritten forms, using typewriters to complete forms, copying those forms, and hand carrying forms to various agencies only to have the data manually entered into disparate Case Management Systems (CMS) or Record Management Systems (RMS). The Pre-Booking and IA automated solution was derived through the successful collaboration of business and technology leaders in Justice and Law Enforcement agencies including the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (ICJIS), and Court Technology Services (CTS).

**Oakland County Clerk's
Sixth Judicial Circuit Court
Electronic Document Filing Project**

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The Oakland County Clerk's Office, in conjunction with the Sixth Judicial Circuit Court and the County's IT Department, initiated what is believed to be the first program of its kind in the state – an e-filing service that requires attorneys to file documents electronically for designated case types. While e-filing technology was being utilized in the Federal District Court and in U.S. Bankruptcy Court, no other Circuit Court/Clerk's Office in the state had ventured so deeply into the e-filing arena, working toward a truly "paperless" court. The pilot program, which began with a single judge in August 2007, was expanded in to three additional members of the bench in January 2008. To date, nearly 10,000 filings have been received electronically, more than 2,500 attorneys and legal support staff members have been trained on the e-filing system and nearly 1,800 cases are designated as "e-filing cases." To put it in context, we expect 34,000 documents to be e-filed this year. What's more, the program has allowed us to make use of technology to provide improved, more convenient service, giving us the ability to more effectively manage workload/case filings and been environmentally friendly by saving paper. Other results are more profound, but less tangible – the joint project has brought the Clerk's Office, the County's IT Department, the Circuit Court, the local bar association and the legal community closer together and promoted cooperation and team spirit.

**Superior Court of California, Stanislaus County
Biometrics**

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Biometrics – A new approach to improving security by replacing the need for user-entered passwords with a simple touch of a finger, eliminating exposure, liability, vulnerabilities and costs of a network's weakness. This application is a client-server fingerprint-based authentication solution for enterprises. It provides central administration and is scalable for any environment. Users can conveniently log onto Windows computers, Windows networks and password-protected case management systems and Web sites using just their fingerprints.

**Superior Court of California, Stanislaus County
Court Audio/Visual System**

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In order to better serve the public the Court was provided funding to construct two new courtrooms. It was decided at the onset of the project that the Court would leverage all known technology to produce a technologically advanced courtroom to provide a robust audio/visual system to those who would use the services of the Court. With a total of 35 screens and 70 speakers between the two courtrooms, in addition to an assisted listening system, evidence carts and smart boards; the Court has provided a system that will allow those that seek justice the opportunity to present their cases in a way that can be seen and heard by all.

Superior Court of California, Stanislaus County
RFID

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Every day, courts face the challenge of locating and retrieving records. No one really knows how much time is spent searching for case files. RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) provides an integrated, configurable web-based system for tracking, labeling, archiving, retention and management of our court's records. The implementation of RFID has resulted in the virtual elimination of frustrating, time consuming, labor intensive manual searches for misplaced files. Staff have the ability to track file locations as files move. There has also been a marked reduction in the number of broadcast e-mails sent daily searching for files. Custom designed color coded labels are now printed on demand by staff, saving time in creation of multiple volumes. A complete simultaneous manual auditing of all of our file records was not previously practicable and therefore had not been done. RFID enables staff to complete a court-wide audit of files in a few hours. An added benefit is the ability to generate reports which can be used to monitor file activity, by division, and labor costs. Implementation of RFID has also facilitated the storage and retrieval of files to and from archives. Orders from our storage vendor for files can be consolidated across the organization which represents a reduction in costs. Inventory lists are automatically generated. Implementation of RFID in the Stanislaus County Superior Court has given us a valuable tool to meet the challenges we face today in the area of court records management.

Harris County District Clerk
e-Courts...After 4,000 Years, a New Approach

Fred King
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Tangible files, whether paper or clay tablets, are easily lost or destroyed. In a huge court system like that of Harris County, Texas, those files take up many miles of shelf space and require many people to find and move the files. Today, digital files can be backed up and secured so they are safer than paper and far easier and cheaper to manage and store. The Harris County District Clerk's Office has proven its "paper on demand" approach in 15 State District Courts that handle civil matters. Every two months, we add another "e-court." We have 44 more Civil, Family, Juvenile and Criminal (felony) District Courts to go. In our e-courts, the answer to "Where's the file?" is "At your fingertips." Getting there has taken much more than vision and hardware. Collaboration with our customers and mapping our business processes were as important. This entry tells how we developed a system that saves time, trouble and taxes.

Harris County District Clerk
Barcoding...Low Tech, High Impact

Fred King
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The District Clerk's Office in Harris County, the largest county in Texas, completes more than 200,000 service documents annually. Entering data, handwriting signatures and stamping papers used to be time consuming, but now takes only a fraction of the time thanks to the use of barcode scanners. Today, employees save 20 keystrokes per document by scanning barcodes that identify date, tracking number, and the identification number of the clerk entering the information. This entry tells how common grocery store devices like barcode scanners also save the Harris County District Clerk's more than 4 million keystrokes per year.

Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois
Free E-Mail Case Tracking & Monitoring Notification for Attorneys

The Honorable Dorothy Brown
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The Honorable Dorothy Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, researched and implemented a system that allows registered attorneys to setup tracking and monitoring services that provide automatic email notification when case activity events occur with regard to their court case files. The tracking and monitoring services are offered at no cost through the Clerk's Office website (www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org). Services include Case Monitoring (daily notification of changes in a case), Attorney Tracker (daily notification of any new court settings for a specific attorney and user set reminder emails), and Black Line Trial Call monitoring. The Clerk's Office was able to provide this service for free through leveraging a unique public/private business partnership arrangement. The availability of this service provides attorneys with a valuable backup for keeping abreast of their caseloads as they move through the justice system.

Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois
Summons Integration Project

The Honorable Dorothy Brown
Clerk of the Circuit Court
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Chicago, IL 60602
312-603-5071

The Honorable Dorothy Brown, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, in collaboration with the Cook County Sheriff's Department, created and launched an automated summons system that eliminates the redundant entry of data between the two agencies and expedites the flow of accurate information to judges. The former summons system, which required eight manual procedures and two to three days of input by both agencies, has been automated to upload data in two easy steps in one day. Since its inception, the new automated system has helped to alleviate the lag time of information and duplication of efforts between the two agencies. In addition, it has reduced the occurrence of data errors, ensuring that the information on each docket is accurate for a judge's decision.

Gila Corporation d/b/a Municipal Services Bureau
Warrant Round-Up Project 2008

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Every year, the state of Texas conducts an annual Warrant Round Up and MSB offers to facilitate the project for out clients in the participating area. MSB is recognized as an expert in recovering court fines and fees, many types of debt, as well as toll road and red light violations. We have highlighted our "Warrant Round Up" project from earlier this year as a specific example of our efforts to enhance the administration of justice throughout the state of Texas. MSB saw a 163% increase in revenue collections for all of our Texas court clients during the 1st quarter of 2008 as compared to that of 2007. Our campaign in place which contributed to our overall success for the first quarter was the Warrant Round Up.

New York State Unified Court System
Automation and Oversight of Court Interpreting Services

Honorable Ann Pfau, Chief Administrative Judge
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New York State courts provide interpreting services to not only criminal defendants but also parties in civil cases, witnesses, and crime victims. As of the 2000 census, 168 distinct languages are spoken by New Yorkers; over two million New Yorkers are not fluent in English at all. As a result, significant numbers of New Yorkers require and seek interpretation services, particularly in court. The combination of New York's many languages and commitment to maximize access to justice makes the task of providing effective interpreting services in the New York courts perhaps the most complex among the nation's judiciaries. To manage this task, the Office of Court Interpreting Services has developed and implemented an online, electronic scheduling database by which courts throughout the state can secure the services of qualified interpreters in a timely and efficient manner. In addition, the Office has introduced Remote Interpreting – by videoconference or telephone -- to courts that are unable to secure an "in-person" appearance of a qualified interpreter. These technological tools have served to modernize and standardize the way in which interpreting services are obtained and provided to courts in hundreds of locations throughout the state.

Los Angeles Superior Court
The Dependent Youth Substance Abuse Protocol

John A. Clarke, Executive Officer/Clerk
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Include a one-paragraph description of the project that will appear in the Justice Achievement Award section of the NACM annual conference notebook. Please limit your description of the project to the bottom half of the cover page. The Dependent Youth Substance Abuse Protocol has been created to identify dependent youth in LA County who may have substance abuse issues. The Protocol provides a systematic process for youths thus identified to be screened, receive a complete assessment and obtain appropriate voluntary, non-punitive treatment. The Court, attorneys, social workers, caregivers and providers work together to encourage dependent youth with substance abuse issues to participate for their own well-being. The Protocol also reduces their chances of coming into contact with the Juvenile Delinquency system.

Los Angeles Superior Court
Elder Law Clinic

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The Elder Law Clinic (ELC) has been developed to provide assessment and legal assistance at the courthouse for self-represented parties in elder abuse and conservatorship cases. ELC applies a case evaluation method to determine whether the involved party is a victim of, or at risk of becoming a victim of, elder abuse or self-neglect. Seniors, the disabled, and their families are then assisted with the preparation of documents to file for Elder Abuse Temporary Restraining Orders, and when appropriate to petition for conservatorship. This project is particularly important for elderly and disabled self-represented litigants, as their access is rendered uniquely difficult due to their age and disabilities, as well as to the complexity of the court forms and procedures necessary to protect them.

**Superior Court of California, County of Solano
Implementation of the Family Court Case Tracking System
(FACCTS) into Courtroom Operations**

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The Family Court Case Tracking System (FACCTS) is a software application designed to improve and enhance the administration of justice by capturing information in the courtroom and generating protective orders that are available to all parties immediately. Due to limited resources, many courts are forced to require the protected person to be responsible for preparing the order, ensuring that the judicial officer signs it, and filing it with the clerk's office. Courts lack the resources needed to provide staff in the courtroom who can write orders onto the required forms for the litigants. FACCTS allows the court to provide every party with a signed and filed order of protection at the time of the hearing. Using the FACCTS program, the courtroom clerk can prepare and print the restraining order on the mandatory forms and prepare the minute order simultaneously. The order can then be submitted directly to the judge for signing, and the signed original filed. Both parties leave the courtroom with a signed and filed Restraining Order After Hearing. The ability of FACCTS to produce a court order on the required forms from the same data input as required for the production of a minute order results in courtroom efficiency and greatly enhanced service to the public. In addition to its other efficient and timesaving functions, FACCTS has the ability to "re-write" the minutes onto the required forms automatically. In summary, FACCTS will enable the Court to provide an efficient, seamless, smooth process for producing orders, minute orders, and tracking data.

**Superior Court in Yuma County
Yuma County Court Television LIVE**

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Yuma County Court Television LIVE is a joint venture of Superior Court in Yuma County, a general jurisdiction court located in Yuma, Arizona and the Yuma county Government Channel 77. Yuma County Court Television LIVE takes advantage of the audio/visual system existing in the courtrooms, and a newly installed fiber network that sends the feed to Channel 77. The collaborative effort produces a live television feed from the courtroom that is broadcast live on Channel 77 and on the internet.

**State of New Mexico
Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court
Enhancing Positive Outcomes with First Offenders
Convicted of Driving While Intoxicated (DWI)**

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The Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court developed the "DWI First Offender Enhanced Supervision Program" (DWI-FOP) in collaboration with the New Mexico Department of Health, Department of Transportation's Traffic Safety Bureau and Office of the Governor to increase compliance with court ordered sanctions and interventions, and decrease recidivism of true first offenders thereby improving public safety. A profile of the characteristics of first time DWI offenders most likely to be rearrested for DWI was developed based on a statistical analysis of the state's database of DWI offenders by Department of Health epidemiologists. Based on this profile, criteria to determine "high risk" offenders was established and adopted by this Court's Judges. Those offenders meeting the high risk criteria were placed in a program of supervision requiring increased

monitoring, face-to-face and telephonic probation contacts, alcohol and other drug screening, counseling as appropriate and rapid response to violations and non-compliance with court orders. Funding for the pilot project was provided from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration through the Traffic Safety Bureau and subsequently appropriated by the New Mexico Legislature on a recurring basis institutionalizing the program. In-program period re-arrest for DWI was reduced fifty percent (50%) by gross comparison to the prior year's first offender group. Program staff provides continuing information and training to jurisdictions throughout the state and nationally regarding implementation, obstacles and solutions with DWI offenders, ignition interlock and compliance.

Clerk of Circuit Court & County Comptroller
Sarasota, Florida
e-Docket

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e-Docket is an electronic version of a court docket, listing all cases scheduled for that event, and paper case file.

Orleans Parish Criminal District Court
Electronic Monitoring Court

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Electronic Monitoring Court was created to enforce conditions of electronic monitoring as set forth by a provider. Prior to its implementation, a monitoring company had no way of enforcing violations. Electronic Monitoring Court gives credibility to the monitoring company, and the stroke necessary to enforce penalties for violations. When abiding by regulations, defendants can address education, employment and mental health issues thereby maintaining a safe environment for the community. The addition of Electronic Monitoring Court completes the missing pieces of electronic monitoring as used by itself. The defendants clearly recognize the instant response of the court where violations are concerned. It also provides communication between the defendant and the Judge. The client can ask pertinent questions about the progress of his or her case. This system of rewards and sanctions in the court setting underscore the fact electronic monitoring is a tool of the criminal justice system where the defendant is still responsible to the court.

12th Judicial District Court
Courts To Schools

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Courts-to-Schools is a judicial education program for high school students. The program was designed as an educational partnership between the court and local school districts in Jackson County. The program consists of two-phases. The first phase consists of educating students about the court system through the traditional style of classroom instruction. The second phase consists of vicarious learning where students observe actual court proceedings being held at their school.

**Superior Court in Yuma County
Emergency Notification System**

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The new Yuma County Justice Center was dedicated in September, 2005. A deficiency in the notification system was identified by Court Security. The Director of Court Security and Court Administration obtained funding for the purchase and installation of an Emergency Notification System. The design is unique. The system can provide instantaneous notification among the secure corridors of all 4 floors of the Justice Center. The system is a combination of visual and audio alerts that describe the type of emergency. Instructions are broadcast throughout the building to facilitate an evacuation of the building, a lock-down or an all-clear.

**Superior Court of California
Counties of Butte, Glenn and Tehama
Self-Help Assistance and Referral Program (S.H.A.R.P.)**

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The Self-Help Assistance and Referral Program (S.H.A.R.P.) is a collaborative program between the Superior Court of California- Counties of Glenn, Butte, and Tehama. This court-sponsored, grant-based program provides procedural assistance and legal information to self-represented litigants through weekly workshops, resource binders, one-on-one appointments with program attorneys, telephone contact, walk-in assistance, and publications. If unable to assist a particular litigant, S.H.A.R.P. provides community based referrals to agencies and other organizations to further help people access the legal information that they may need. This tri-county court collaboration utilizes videoconferencing technology and staff at four centers operating in or near courthouses in Willows (Glenn County); Red Bluff (Tehama County); Chico and Oroville (Butte County). Given the rural, geographically expansive area that the program encompasses—coupled with the challenges self-represented litigants face with lack of transportation, economic funds, and knowledge of public resources--- the S.H.A.R.P. program has been able to assist a multitude of people with accessing the court system. In 2007, the program had contact with and helped provide access to justice to 25,820 self-represented litigants in rural Northern California. In 2004-2005, the S.H.A.R.P. program received the prestigious Ralph N. Kleps Award from the Administrative Office of the Courts, recognizing the program's innovation in utilizing videoconferencing in geographically remote California.

**San Joaquin County Superior Court
Santa Clara County Superior Court
Orange County Superior Court
Court Community Leadership**

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The Superior Courts in the California counties of San Joaquin, Santa Clara and Orange have implemented a program to establish a network of knowledgeable liaisons in community based organizations that serve minority, immigrant, and disabled communities. The program provides a means for multi-lateral communication involving the court, other justice system agencies, and communities that historically have had access and fairness concerns about the court. The program began in San Joaquin County in 2000 and was thereafter replicated in Santa Clara in 2004 and Orange County in 2007. In 2002, the program received the Ralph N. Kleps Award, an award given by the California Judicial Council for innovative court programs. The program was also recently featured in *Innovations in California Courts: Strengthening the Judicial Branch*, a publication of the California Judicial Council. The central component of the program is the Leadership Academy. Participants attend interactive classes on various justice system topics taught by judges, court personnel, and other justice system professionals. They also go on field trips to points of interest, including the trial courts, the intermediate appellate court, and the county jail. After graduation from the Academy, participants serve as liaisons between the court and the community. Liaisons are able to answer questions of those they serve in the community or connect them with the appropriate justice system agency personnel. The liaisons also keep the court connected with the community by attending meetings with the court and/or providing information to the court about community concerns.
