

Priority: Safety
Program Offer Type: New Program
Related Programs:
Frameworks:

Lead Agency: Local Public Safety
Program Contact: Judy Shiprack

Executive Summary

The Court Appearance Notification System is a collaborative multi-jurisdictional project to reduce the county's high rate of court failure to appear (FTA) through the use of an automated telephone reminder. The telephone notification works in multiple languages to remind defendants of an upcoming court hearing date, its time and location, and their defense attorney and court contact information. Among other savings, this system has been shown to cost-effectively reduce FTA. Regardless of the size of the criminal justice system, this program makes it run more efficiently.

Program Description

Services for this program are provided by vendor contract. The vendor will provide telephone notification for all criminal case hearings for defendants who are not in custody. Various preliminary analyses for the Local Public Coordinating Council and the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee have identified that about 30% of criminal cases have people failing to appear (FTA) for their court hearings, typically for low-level offenses. These FTAs add substantial costs to the various enforcement agencies for re-arrest, re-booking and additional jailing, additional prosecution, and increased matrix releases and issued warrant backlogs. This program is based on a proven King County (Seattle) model which reduced the number of people failing to appear for court hearings. Independent research in King County found: people that FTA were twice as likely to go to jail and spent twice the amount of time in jail compared to those that did not FTA for the same crime; a 10% reduction in the FTA rate translated into a 3.5% reduction in jail bed utilization; a significant reduction in the number of warrants issued due to FTA occurred after the program; and a cost-benefit analysis showed that the program more than paid for itself.

Program Justification

This new program meets several selection strategies by being fair and equitable, and evidence based; it holds offenders responsible; and it's a collaborative safety system response. Because FTA is a crime, reducing the number of FTAs will reduce the number of additional crimes; if it reduces the need for jail beds, then matrixes will decrease, likely increasing the citizens' perception of safety. This program is a collaboration between the state courts and multiple county public safety agencies. The Local Public Safety Coordinating Council will provide the contract management with the vendor, the District Attorney's Office will provide police training for various jurisdictions, the State Courts will provide project management and IT support, and the Budget Office will provide evaluation.

Performance Measures

Total cases, calls, and comparative FTA rates will be reported (new measures).

Summary of last year's program results and this year's expected results

As this will be the first year of the project, a six month report should compare baseline FTA rates. While baseline data on rates for both target groups has not yet been compiled, historical information suggests that the criminal citation group fail to appear 27% of the time.

Program Mandate: 4 Program and Funding Level Choice

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
	2005	2005	2006	2006
Program Expenses				
Contracts	\$0	\$0	\$40,000	\$0
Subtotal: Direct Exps:	\$0	\$0	\$40,000	\$0
Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Program Support	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal: Other Exps:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total GF/non-GF:	\$0	\$0	\$40,000	\$0
Program Total:	\$0		\$40,000	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Program Revenues				
Program Revenue for Admin	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Explanation of Revenues

Significant Program Changes