

# **iCIS AUTOMATION SUPPORT FOR JUSTICE COURTS OF MARICOPA COUNTY: A TRIAL COURTS INTEGRATION PROJECT**

5/20/2004

## **Background:**

Maricopa County is co-locating Justice and Superior Courts at new regional court sites (Attachment 1). This approach is to provide cost-effective customer service, supporting a projected population of 4.7 million residents by the year 2015 ("Court's Master Space Plan," May 2004). Opening in July 2005, two new regional sites (Northeast and Northwest) are to house Superior Court judges, justices of the peace and shared support services, e.g., Self-Service Center, Domestic Violence Prevention Center, Jury Commission, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Security and Electronic Recording (Attachments 2 & 3). Business processes are being re-engineered to provide consolidated staff support of the Justice Courts, with coordination through Trial Courts Administration (see Supreme Court Administrative Order #2000-067 and related correspondence dated June 11, 2002).

It would be exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, for shared court staff and co-located judicial officers to use two separate automation systems: iCIS (for Superior Court) and the Justice Courts Case Management System. Further, the Justice Courts' legacy system dates back to 1988. This system is difficult to maintain, it is hard to find programming staff for enhancements and the system cannot support on-line public access via the Internet.

Through the Court Automation Coordinating Committee (CACC), court business and technology staff have examined vendor "packages" and the possibility of system transfers from other courts. These options are unfeasible due to high initial costs and ongoing software license fees, particularly given the large number of court and justice system agencies using the Justice Courts Case Management System.

## **Proposed Solution:**

Subject to approval from the Commission on Technology, the Trial Courts proposes replacement of the Justice Courts Case/Cash Management System with new additional modules developed in iCIS.<sup>i</sup> This solution would provide a fully integrated, court-wide system to support 23 Justice Courts, Superior Court and court-wide support functions in the new regional centers.

Depending on planning directions established by the Commission on Technology and Administrative Office of the Courts, the project can be expanded to encompass municipal court needs in Maricopa County.

**Benefits:**

- 1) A single user interface for judges and court staff, allowing shared staffing and cross-coverage of duty stations.
- 2) Data sharing with the Administrative Office of the Courts' data warehouse, justice agencies and the FARE program, using established linkages with iCIS and the Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (iCJIS) project.
- 3) Public access to court records, calendars, court forms and other services via a single portal: the court's website ([www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov](http://www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov)).
- 4) Court-wide management reports, including case aging information (e.g., DUI cases) and collections data.
- 5) Reduced training and implementation costs, supporting a single integrated information system.
- 6) Fully integrated staffing of a single case management system, improving service and system support in the most cost effective manner.
- 7) Rapid system enhancements to meet changing business needs, drawing on current staff skill sets.
- 8) Seamless movement of cases from the Justice Courts to the Superior Court for Lower Court Appeals (LCA), using a common database.
- 9) A minimum risk strategy; leveraging the stable iCIS database, application tools and network architecture. Note: The iCIS database and code structure can be used for approximately 70% of the new Justice Court modules, e.g., civil and misdemeanor criminal.
- 10) Economies of scale in disaster preparedness with a remote "hot site" backup system for iCIS.
- 11) Cost avoidance in alleviating the need for a costly upgrade to the Justice Courts' legacy system or purchase of a new system with on-going licensing fees.

**Assessment:**

iCIS as used today is a general jurisdiction system comprised of several modules, including civil and criminal case processing, leveraging a common infrastructure and standards (database structure, look and feel, and standard routines, lookups, security, etc.). To support justice courts there will be several changes to both functionality and flow. Below is an assessment of the current need and estimated percentage of overlap, along with a summary of the changes required in each major area.

**Civil: 75%**

Justice Courts handle specific types of high volume civil matters. These processes are integrated with receipting of filing fees and many of these cases go uncontested, so the court needs specific process flows to aid in handling the processes and volumes. The Domestic Violence / Order of Protection module should be exactly the same as what is used in iCIS today and there are NO filing fees on these matters.

The database is approximately 80 – 85% the same.

**Criminal: 85%**

In Maricopa County, the Justice Courts only have jurisdiction over misdemeanor criminal offenses. These are filed via both short forms and long forms, so MI case processing support is required in both areas. Misdemeanor processing is very similar to what iCIS supports today, so the system should be a good fit.

Warrants (FTA, FTP, Search), summons, subpoenas, and *restitution* would be very similar and likely would need only some minor changes to process flow.

The database is about 85 – 90% the same.

**Traffic: 15%**

Traffic case processing is unique to limited jurisdiction courts so much of this would need to be built, drawing from models in other courts. Because the majority of our data will be loaded via a vendor provided file, ACS Citation Entry project, less emphasis will be put on the data entry screen although it will be structured to follow the paper document.

New data structures and supporting tables for ARS codes, bond schedules and FARE fees, and various validation tables are needed.

**Accounting & Collections: 0%**

The Justice Courts accounting needs are simple and very straightforward. The current system is transaction based with each transaction broken down into accounting codes (funds), which records how monies are to be distributed. The system will support both accounts receivable and payment processing, and handle both non-financial compliance and payments “in-lieu”. Full FARE transactional support and interfaces to outside collection agencies will be included.

New database tables will be constructed to support the financial and accounting data.

**Calendar: 75%**

The justice court calendaring needs include auto-calendaring and master calendar planning/scheduling. The current iCIS calendar does much more than justice courts requires, so this module will be trimmed and streamlined to more closely support current needs.

**Infrastructure & Tools: 95%**

This is the largest subset of the entire system and includes things like: coding standards and tools, the development process and procedures, the basic structure common components of the system, all of the common data files and tables (Party, Address, Charging, validation and cross reference tables, etc).

**Projected Timetable For iCIS Implementation in Justice Courts:**

July 2005                      Concurrent with opening of new Northeast and Northwest  
Regional Courts

**Fiscal Considerations:**

The project will draw heavily on existing staff and data center resources of the Trial Court's Court Technology Services (CTS). Three additional programmers will augment existing staff to complete the development over a one-year period. Existing hardware and software will be used to implement these modules. A detailed project budget will be provided, addressing on-going licensing and system maintenance, training costs and other expenses. Preliminary cost information:

	<u>Cost</u>
Three Programmers including fringe benefits cost (For a one-year period)	\$197,000
Contingency funding (May or may not be used)	<u>\$100,000</u>
Total	\$297,000

Local JCEF grant monies and local user fee revenues will provide all project funding. No state funds will be required.

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Respectfully submitted by Trial Courts Administration,  
Trial Courts of Arizona in Maricopa County

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<sup>i</sup> Arizona Code of Judicial Administration, Section 1-501 provides that courts petitioning for state authorized systems "shall prepare a functional needs justification and perform a business case analysis of both the state and local return on investment." Included in this process is the requirement to "submit needs and investment analysis documents to COT." This document and attached supporting documents comply with these requirements. Attachments include:

1. Map showing consolidated regional courts.
2. Floor plans for Justice/Superior Regional Courts (Northeast).
3. Floor plans for Justice/Superior Regional Courts (Northwest).
4. Project Plan