

**EDWARD BRYNE JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM, FY 2018**  
**CDEFA #16.738**  
**COURT DELAY REDUCTION PROJECT, PHASE XI**

**3. PROGRAM NARRATIVE**

**Description of the Issues:**

The focus of the Thurston County FY2018 Edward Byrne (JAG) grant is purchasing interfaces for law and justice case management systems for efficiency in accessing and sharing common records for the benefit of Pretrial Services, Public Defense, Prosecuting Attorney, Sheriff, Clerk, Superior Court and District Court. Interfaces between the case management systems will reduce redundancies, reduce court delays and provide additional efficiencies within the court system.

In previous and current JAG awards, Thurston County Public Defense, Prosecuting Attorney, and Pretrial Services have been working together to implement case management systems. Thurston County Information Technology experts continue to work with the law and justice work group to assist with a comprehensive approach.

Beginning in 2010, the focus of the Thurston County Edward Byrne (JAG) grants have been on technology improvement. Thurston County law and justice agencies have been working together to: 1) reduce delays in court proceedings related to a lack of timely information provided to defense or prosecuting attorneys and/or judges; 2) reduce the number and size of paper files maintained by all parties in the county's criminal justice system; 3) increase coordination, efficiencies and professionalism in information exchanges during pre-trial, trial, sentencing and other court proceedings; and 4) reduce redundancies in data entry and duplication of efforts.

During this time, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and Public Defense have been working on upgrading their electronic case management systems. The vendor of the DAMION case management system currently used by the Prosecuting Attorney's Office and the Public Defense, created a consortium group to make a custom-built system. Unfortunately, the vendor's progress towards a system called JWorks was delayed significantly, and ultimately, an RFP was developed by Thurston County Information Technology (IT), Public Defense and Prosecuting Attorney for a new vendor. The RFP was released on July 16, 2018 with a request for proposals to be received by no later than August 31, 2018. The County expects to fully implement the selected case management system by or before June 30, 2019. It is anticipated that the new case management system will perform all business processes of both organizational units, integrate the existing County jail management system and the Pretrial Services system.

In the meantime, Thurston County IT's Project Manager has been assisting with researching case management systems that will meet the needs for our law and justice partners, including significant conversations about interfacing with police agencies, courts or other law and justice partners. The goals are to 1) streamline court functions, 2) reduce duplication of resources, and 3) reduce costs associated with delays due to lack of timely information.

The project goals of FY 2017 Phase X are to implement a case management system for Pretrial Services to increase communication and information available to courts, prosecution, and defense counsel. Pretrial Services completed the RFP process in early 2018 and are in the process of implementing a new case management system. Pretrial Services' case management system will need to interface with the current case management system for the Sheriff, and the new case management system for the Prosecuting Attorney and Public Defense when implemented.

During the many phases of this project, the Clerk's office implemented a web-based software application, Odyssey, which allows access to Superior Court case data and court documents. Odyssey also allows e-filing which has been especially helpful for staff in County satellite offices. E-filing eliminates the need to hand deliver the documents to the courthouse and has streamlined the process for the Clerk when receiving filed documents. Odyssey also has a module for e-forms which, if purchased, would allow the implementation of an advanced in-court document processing system designed to meet the needs of all the law and justice partners.

The IT Project Manager is also working with the Sheriff's office to implement a case management system for the jail. The system will interface with Pretrial Services, Public Defense and the Prosecuting Attorney's office to share vital records relating to new arrests. Accuracy, consistency and accessibility of this information is critical to the efficiency of the daily preliminary appearance process.

Laserfiche is the enterprise content management system used by Thurston County. Laserfiche will need to interface with the case management systems for the Prosecuting Attorney and Public Defense for document retention purposes. Documents for open cases will be managed within the case management systems and documents in closed cases will be moved to Laserfiche and be managed based on the state's retention policies. The capability of transmitting e-documents to all law and justice partners, via Laserfiche, is a feature that will make court-related processes extremely efficient.

Judicial Information Systems (JIS) and Judicial Access Browser Systems (JABS) have been integrated with Laserfiche in the District Court environment to allow quick access to court files. It is anticipated that the Prosecuting Attorney and Public Defense will be able to integrate/interface with JIS and JABS as well, which will significantly increase the efficiency of attorneys in the courtroom.

The infrastructure that the Laserfiche currently resides on needs improvement. We need to move to a 24/7 – 99.9% accessibility platform. Moving the law and justice Laserfiche environment to the cloud will give us 1) improved 24/7 application availability for the Sheriff and Corrections; 2) improved accessibility and reliability for satellite locations, including Sheriff, Corrections, Prosecuting Attorney, Public Defense, Courts, and outside law enforcement and legal professionals and better control of the life expectancy of the data. We would need to partner with professional consultants, specifically a Laserfiche certified partner, to migrate the existing law and justice environment into the cloud, and set up all protocols for the security in that environment and to adhere to all state and federal retention laws

### **Project Goals and Proposed Program Activities:**

The goals of Phase XI of the Court Delay Reduction Project are to:

- 1) Improve data collection and sharing of information for all law and justice data systems by installing interfaces; and
- 2) Migrate law and justice Laserfiche environment to the cloud to improve infrastructure.

Phase XI of the Court Delay Reduction Project will include the following activities:

- Purchase of interfaces to communicate with various case management systems in the law and justice group;
- Collaboration with law and justice partners for court management system needs;
- Acquire interfaces for communication with the case management systems;
- Implement interfaces for the case management systems;
- Complete training for all departments with viewing capabilities, increase communication and information available to courts, prosecution, and defense counsel.
- Migration of the existing law and justice Laserfiche environment to a designated repository in the cloud by a Laserfiche certified partner.

### **Strategic Planning/Project Design and Implementation/Coordination:**

Thurston County adopted a Strategic Plan on July 17, 2018, which included a plan to leverage technology to provide efficient, effective, and timely services. The plan strives to achieve robust communications and secure information technology systems to connect offices and departments across the County. Specifically, an initiative was included to make strategic investments in information technology systems and infrastructure—achieving effective county governance and effective county organization.

Thurston County has an existing Information Technology Committee which reviews technology needs and recommends technology improvements and upgrades to the Board of County Commissioners. The Committee has a representative from each Elected official's office and each County department. Central Services has an IT Project Manager who oversees all IT-related projects. In addition, there is a weekly criminal management meeting which includes Superior Court, Clerk of the Superior Court, Pretrial Services, Public Defense, Prosecuting Attorney, Corrections from Sheriff's Office and IT as needed. Discussion topics include technology and efficiencies in the courtroom. Together these groups will continue to guide the technology needs and ensure coordination and completion of the technology activities.

In addition, Thurston County Central Services IT staff communicate with County and State agencies as part of their planning/coordination efforts. Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys meet several times during the year and frequently exchange technology information.

### **Timeline:**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Time Period</b>
Coordinate process and review interfaces for case management systems	Central Services IT, Prosecuting Attorney, Public Defense, Pretrial Services and other law and justice members	October 2018 December 2020
Select interfaces and coordinate with vendor	Thurston County Central Services IT	June 2019 – June 2020
Purchase interfaces for case management systems	Thurston County Central Services	June 2019 – June 2020
Retain consultant for law and justice Laserfiche migration	Thurston County Central Services IT Project Manager	January 2019 – June 2019

**Performance Measures:**

The success of the Thurston County Court Delay Reduction Project, Phase XI will be measured by:

1. Reduction of case continuances;
2. Increase in timely transfer of information between the Prosecuting Attorney, Public Defense, Superior Court, Clerk of the Superior Court, District Court;
3. Continued reduction in court delays related to requests for continuances in Superior Court;
4. Implementation of interfaces between law and justice case management systems; and
5. Improvement of Laserfiche infrastructure for law and justice.

Performance measure data will be collected from the case management systems, the Clerk of Superior Court’s Odyssey file management system, and Washington Administrative Offices of the Courts’ caseload reports to monitor court efficiencies, in addition to sharing of information among law and justice technology-related departments.

**Project Identifiers:**

1. Court Delay Reduction
2. Computer Hardware and Software
3. Case Management
4. Justice Information Sharing
5. Privacy and Information Sharing