

**JUDICIAL BRANCH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Report to Law and Justice Interim Committee**

**Submitted by Office of Court Administrator
Montana Supreme Court
June 2014**

This report is submitted in compliance with section 3-1-702, MCA, which requires the court administrator to report to the Law and Justice Interim Committee on the status of development and procurement of information technology (IT) within the Judicial Branch. The report provides a Judicial Branch IT profile and a progress report on recent IT projects.

Judicial Branch IT Profile

The Office of Court Administrator (OCA) provides technology services through the Court Technology Program to nearly 1,000 users within the Supreme Court, the Water Court, 56 District Courts, 9 Municipal Courts, 63 Justice Courts, and 87 City Courts. This support includes the purchase, installation, networking, and maintenance of computers and office software and the deployment, training, and maintenance of court case management systems. In addition, the OCA provides support for courtroom technology, including interactive video, court reporting and recording equipment, sound systems, and other technologies found in the courtroom.

The Supreme Court's Commission on Technology provides guidance and oversight to the court technology program. The Commission prepares the information technology strategic plan and monitors performance of the plan throughout the year. The current plan is available at: <http://www.courts.mt.gov/cao/technology/default.mcp.x>.

The following table lists the major IT projects for the Judicial Branch during the 2015 biennium.

Judicial Branch IT Projects and Accomplishments – 2015 Biennium

<p>strategic Goal Courtroom Technology & Interactive Video</p>	<p>In addition to the interactive video conferencing added in 2011 and the 10 previously installed sites that were provided upgraded Polycom and television equipment, in 2013 and 2014 an economized video conferencing solution was installed in Petroleum, Golden Valley, Daniels and Liberty Counties.</p> <p>In FY 2013 and FY 2014 a new portable audio system was installed in McCone County. New full-scale audio systems were installed in Rosebud, Mineral, Jefferson, Powell, Lake, and 2 courtrooms in Gallatin Counties. In addition, courtrooms were upgraded in Ravalli and Lewis & Clark Counties.</p> <p>Court reporting equipment was upgraded or replaced for 7 Court Reporters in various counties.</p>
<p>strategic Goal Justice Integration</p>	<p>Working together with the Departments of Justice, Corrections and Transportation, projects continue to improve the electronic exchange of information (e.g., citations, dispositions, hearings and other court orders) between justice agencies.</p> <p>Completion of Department of Justice/Montana Highway Patrol citation data and image exchange to the Justice Courts FullCourt case management systems was 100% complete in 2012. In addition, the OCA worked with Montana Interactive and the Montana Highway Patrol to implement Roadside Payments (credit card payments in the patrol car) in 90% of the courts accepting electronic MHP citations. The implementation and training was completed in June 2013. The remaining 10% of the courts will not implement Roadside Payments due to court layout or database configuration.</p> <p>As of August 1, 2013 the OCA began electronic delivery of a monthly statewide assessment and collection data report to the Office of the Public Defender.</p> <p>Work continues with DOJ Criminal History Records to provide daily electronic case data assisting them with making stronger records matches and providing more accurate data elements for records in the Criminal History Records System.</p> <p>Work continues with the MDT National Highway Traffic Safety Program and DUI Task Forces to provide quarterly electronic data for DUI, MIP and seatbelt violations.</p> <p>Work continues with the Self Help Program to provide electronic data regarding Self-Represented Litigants.</p>

strategic Goal
Court Case Management

The initial rollout of the FullCourt case management system for courts of limited jurisdiction and district courts was completed in April 2009. Since that time, Court IT staff work with the Automation Committees of the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction and Clerks of District Court to improve and standardize jury, documents, reporting and case management processes in Montana courts.

CitePay – statewide implementation of an online payment system to all Courts of Limited Jurisdiction allowing defendants to make fine and fee payments online.

Designed and piloting an online payment functionality allowing defendants, or representatives of, to pay bonds on warrants and bond defendants out of jail using CitePay.

In 2014 completed a standardization project for the Courts of Limited Jurisdiction. There are 189 COLJ databases containing over 3,000 distinct entries in the Register of Actions table. Upon completion, all 189 databases were converted to 166 standard Register of Action entries.

Implementation of an Inactivity Dismissal process in each of the 56 District Courts. The process manages the courts caseloads by retrieving cases for notice of inactivity and potentially automatic dismissal.

A central reporting system was deployed for drug court personnel to report and conduct program evaluations. A project is underway for coordinators to more efficiently track recidivism of clients either entering or discharging from a drug court program.

The Juvenile Case Tracking System was updated to a new, modern platform through federal grant dollars. The update was focused on a new technology but includes program updates that will allow better tracking of program effectiveness and additional reporting capabilities for local planning.

<p>strategic Goal Electronic Filing</p>	<p>In September of 2012 the E-Filing contract was awarded to LT Court Tech and in January of 2013 contract negotiations were finalized. Throughout 2013 the OCA worked with the vendor on project plans, as well as design and development of the Montana E-Filing system. In addition to the Montana design and development work, the vendor was upgrading their core E-Filing product. In early 2014 the OCA began hands on testing of the Montana system and working with the vendor on system changes and minor fixes. It is anticipated that the pilot implementation at the Supreme Court will take place in mid-summer 2014 and a pilot implementation in the trial courts will take place in late 2014.</p> <p>The project will initially involve government to government files and cases (i.e. criminal and traffic cases, child abuse and neglect cases and involuntary commitment cases). The e-filing system is the second largest IT project undertaken by the Judicial Branch. Full implementation will take several years as it involves private attorneys and self-represented litigants.</p>
<p>strategic Goal Public Access</p>	<p>The Clerk of the Supreme Court led an effort to provide public access to the Supreme Court’s docket through the Judicial Branch website. The docket includes the full public docket and associated documents for Supreme Court cases dating back to 2006. The Judicial Branch website was redesigned with the objective of providing a cleaner access to court information for litigants and the public.</p>