

Quality and Productivity Commission
34th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Leading with Excellence”

2021 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: REMOTE COURT PHONE OPERATORS

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: JUNE 30, 2020

(Must have been fully implemented for a minimum of at least one year - on or before July 1, 2020)

CHECK HERE IF THIS PROJECT IS BEING SUBMITTED FOR THE COVID-19 IMPACT AWARD ONLY. (Projects must be implemented on or before December 31, 2020. **Note:** Projects implemented less than one year ago will not be eligible for any other PQA awards. In addition, once a project is submitted, you cannot submit the same project for awards consideration in subsequent years).

PROJECT STATUS: Ongoing One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 Remote Court Phone Operators (RCPO) is an extension of the Superior Court of
 2 California, County of Los Angeles (Court) – Here for You | Safe for You (HFYSFY)
 3 initiative. Both the project and the initiative focus on providing a safe courthouse
 4 environment while offering services that allow court business to be conducted remotely.
 5 California’s COVID-19 stay-at-home orders required a creative re-working of the
 6 Court’s technology, in this case, Cisco Jabber . To provide safe services in an official
 7 capacity the Court’s Technology Services Department (CTS) expanded Jabber’s
 8 capabilities to enable Court staff to respond to public calls remotely. In this way,
 9 community member and employee exposure to COVID was eliminated entirely.
 10 RCPO represents a significant shift in technology and service away from delimited
 11 physical offices and toward a more wide-ranging remote access. RCPO extends this
 12 resource to any location equipped with basic telephone connectivity: homes,
 13 businesses, public agencies, etc. Since March 2020 RCPO facilitated a 500% increase
 14 in court call volume. Calls received from RCPO users now account for approximately
 15 14% of total Court calls, and averages about 21,000 calls a week.

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles 111 North Hill Street, Room 105E Los Angeles, CA 90012		TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-633-0126
PROGRAM MANAGER’S NAME Snorri Ogata, Chief Information Officer EMAIL: sogata@lacourt.org		TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-633-0126
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE Sylvia White-Irby, Judicial and Executive Support Director	DATE 06.23.21	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-633-0127 EMAIL SWIRBY@LACOURT.ORG
DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE Sherri R. Carter, Executive Officer/Clerk of Court	DATE 06.23.21	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213-633-0112

****ELECTRONIC, WET, OR SCANNED SIGNATURES ARE ACCEPTABLE****

Quality and Productivity Commission
34th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Leading with Excellence”

2021 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: REMOTE COURT PHONE OPERATORS

1st FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project **to the County**. What quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success **and specify assessment time frame**. Use Arial 12 point font.

Challenge:

California’s COVID stay-at-home orders presented complex challenges to government agencies located throughout the state. This resulted initially in interruption, if not complete cessation, of many public services. The safety of the community and court staff tempered the consideration of any viable options for counteracting operational gridlock. Sacrificing safety for access was not an option. Only a solution capable of fulfilling both priorities was acceptable.

Solution:

Court leadership was determined to provide continued access to justice. They determined that some court services could be conducted over the phone, and therefore remain operational during this health emergency. They expended non-stop days (and often sleepless nights) in redeveloping the Court phone system into a feasible mechanism of service delivery. Through conferences held with CTS it became clear that one software option might offer a solution. To achieve it, it became necessary to extend the Court’s Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) system to the homes of court staff. Utilizing Cisco’s Jabber Clients software could enable staff to respond to public calls and disseminate information with a consistent quality of access. The Court’s VoIP system was tapped to extend internal phone capabilities to a wider and more accessible scope. If successful, this measure would enable both the community and employees to engage in court business remotely...at no physical risk to anyone.

This required a reconfiguration of existing Jabber software for a third of the Court’s staff. The Court’s talented CTS team developed the process needed to support such a shift. Their efforts enable the community to now accomplish a vast array of court business through rerouted communication technology. This seamless transition belies the effort and skill involved in planning and implementing RCPO.

During the height of the pandemic, a third of the Court’s 5,400 employees were permitted to work from home. They communicated through Jabber software installed on laptops and workstations. All case types translated successfully through this program. Through Jabber, interactive voice response technology (IVR) was modified to connect incoming calls to “hunt groups,” that is, specific groups of employees.

Quality and Productivity Commission
34th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Leading with Excellence”

2021 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: REMOTE COURT PHONE OPERATORS

Use Arial 12-point font.

Among these groups, calls are routed among employees until an available representative is available. If at such times as peak hours, no one is available to answer the call immediately, the caller is forwarded to a voicemail option. Pending additional immediate incoming calls, employees from each group could then access the voicemail and return saved calls automatically.

As of April 2020, the public was required to call, and if necessary, to schedule an appointment, prior to visiting courthouses within Los Angeles County. That time is required to uphold COVID-19 safety requirements. As is the case with other government agencies, the Court installed COVID-19 preventative measures such as temperature checks, masks, plexiglass barriers, and six-foot distance requirements that transformed even the simplest of business to a protracted near-crawl. RCPO frees the pace of government by offering free-time interaction over the phone with an efficiency and ease never before available. Community members can obtain information about court matters remotely through RCPO. Scheduling services are also accessible when in-person appointments are required to access on-site services. Since initiation of State health orders, public call volume increased by 500%. Approximately 21,000 calls a week are routed through RCPO.

Benefits:

RCPO achieved several quality and productivity-related outcomes. The public saves time and money they would otherwise expend in traveling, parking, and missing work or paying for childcare. Beyond safety measures ensured through HFYSFY, members of the public continue to receive access to court services. RCPO enables them to obtain answers and resolutions to a variety of issues from the convenience of a familiar environment. They are spared the time, energy and expense associated with in-person appearances.

Cost savings occurred in this way, to the benefit of the community, rather than as a direct, specific amount recouped by the Court. Additionally, not just local but national interests are served through RCPO. The continued employment of thousands of employees eliminates the need for government aid or compensation. This frees funding for redirection to less fortunate people impacted more directly by COVID-19.

COVID-19 restrictions continue to ease across most parts of the country. However, capacities and services diversified and increased through RCPO were implemented to continue well beyond the pandemic. The technological advancement gained through RCPO illustrates the adage of growth through adversity.

Quality and Productivity Commission
34th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Leading with Excellence”

2021 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: REMOTE COURT PHONE OPERATORS

Benefits (Continued.):

The ongoing and diversified applications of RCPO can be developed across multiple, more specified service types, as evinced through the Court’s new [Centralized Traffic Call Center](#) (enclosed). The Center replicates RCPO’s basic operating system in a hybrid on-site/remote traffic workplace and telephone service. Continued expansion of this technology is planned for other areas of the Court.

Linkage to the County Strategic Plan – 1 page only. Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12-point font.

RCPO aligns with the Los Angeles County Strategic Plan in several ways. The project links to Goal I **“Making Investments That Transforms Lives,”** by transferring the Court’s investment in Cisco Jabber technology into call capability that is applicable to whatever devices are available to the community, including desktops, laptops, and mobile phones. The project operates remotely and at no cost to callers, simultaneously protecting the health and enhancing the economics of the community.

RCPO links to Goal II **“Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities”** by positioning the Court as a networking hub to support vibrant communities. It illustrates that investment in the lives of County residents are sustainable only when grounded in strong communities. RCPO maintains the economic and workforce development of both court staff administering the project, as well as, that of the community members that utilize the project features. In both cases employment security is enhanced remotely by preventing the spread of COVID-19 while decreasing incidences of illness and absence. RCPO supports the wellness of the community in this manner while advancing environmental stability through decreases in traffic (and vehicle emissions), fuel consumption and time. RCPO promotes environmental sustainability as a daily reality.

Finally, RCPO links to Goal III – **“Realize Tomorrow’s Government Today,”** by motivating the community to participate in government services despite repellent factors – such as COVID. RCPO also unites County Goal III with Court’s mission to serve the community by providing equal access to justice through the fair, timely and efficient resolutions of court matters. The project leverages technology to enhance business operations, improve delivery of government services, and protect the health of the community.

Quality and Productivity Commission
34th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Leading with Excellence”

2021 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: REMOTE COURT PHONE OPERATORS

COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12-point font

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County or to other entities.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County or by other entities.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL= 12 MONTHS ONLY

The project achieves cost savings that apply more directly to members of the community than to the Court. Additionally, many justice partners also utilize the project to connect to court services at no cost, thus enhancing their viability and availability to the community. These partners include entities such as the District Attorney, Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, City Attorney, Probation Department, County Counsel, Department of Children and Family Services, Los Angeles Dependency Lawyers, Children’s Law Center, and the Los Angeles City Police.

Quality and Productivity Commission
34th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Leading with Excellence”

2021 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: REMOTE COURT PHONE OPERATORS

FOR COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS ONLY

(For single department submissions, do not include this page)

DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 6 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 7 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____