Quality and Productivity Commission

26th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program

"Investing in a Quality Future"

2012 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces):

NAME OF PROJECT: APD EWORKFLOW

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: **9/2009 TO 8/2010**
(Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before June 30, 2011)

PROJECT STATUS: X Ongoing _____ One-time only

DID YOU SUBMIT THIS PROJECT BEFORE? _____ Yes X No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. Summarize the problem, solution, and benefits of the project in a clear and direct manner

Alternate Public Defender (APD) needed a way to streamline its work request processes for attorneys and support staff and create a system that would allow work to be assigned and tracked regardless of staff location.

APD developed a task based eWorkflow application that processes all work requests from attorney staff to secretaries, investigators, and paralegals, and allows for the completions of tasks by support staff regardless of their physical location within the County.

APD's eWorkflow speeds the processing of task completion by eliminating the step by step movement of physical documents necessary to accomplish the requested task; it allows the APD to assign staff to complete the tasks based upon their availability, wherever they are assigned in the County. When staff is unavailable at the attorney's location, staff at other locations can immediately access and complete the requested task. Staff and supervisors can easily keep track of their assigned tasks through "dashboards" that present their work prioritized by due date. Automatic reminders are sent to staff and supervisors to keep the work on schedule.

(1) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ESTIMATED/ACTUAL ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) TOTAL ESTIMATED/ACTUAL BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
$ 189,000	$ 5000	$ 0	$ 193,000	

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS ALTERNATE PUBLIC DEFENDER 320 West Temple St., Room G-35 Los Angeles, CA 90012	**TELEPHONE NUMBER** 213-974-6621
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME JORDAN YERIAN	**TELEPHONE NUMBER** 213-893-2042 **EMAIL** jyerian@apd.lacounty.gov
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) GARY BAUCUM SIGNATURE ON FILE **DATE** 6/29/2012	**TELEPHONE NUMBER** 213-974-8226 **EMAIL** gbaucum@apd.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE JANICE Y FUKAI SIGNATURE ON FILE **DATE** 6/29/2012	**TELEPHONE NUMBER** 213-974-8163

We Support Plain Language

2012 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces):

NAME OF PROJECT: APD EWORKFLOW

FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project, written in plain language. Include a discussion of the technology and linkage to the County Strategic Plan. The description should identify Performance Measures.

CHALLENGE (suggest ½ to one page)
SOLUTION (suggest ½ to one page)
BENEFITS (suggest 1 to 2 pages)

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN:

GOAL 1, OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
GOAL 2, FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

CHALLENGE

During budget reductions, APD needed to reduce secretarial and investigator staff. APD staffing levels were already thin and these reductions resulted in many locations where APD could not assign a secretary and/or investigator to be onsite to process attorney work requests. APD needed a way to increase productivity of remaining staff to insure that the work needed by the attorneys in preparing their cases could be accomplished in an efficient manner regardless of where support staff was actually physically located. The then current system of processing work requests through paper forms and paper reports was too slow and inefficient to accommodate the needs of the APD. Time would be wasted while paperwork was routed between APD's 29 locations throughout the County, resulting in lost productivity. APD needed a system that could electronically manage its workflow county-wide.

As a law office, APD consumes large amounts of paper. Budget cutbacks also resulted in the need for APD to reduce consumption of basic supplies, including paper. APD set a goal of 20% paper reduction. An eWorkflow system could help APD meet its paper reduction goal by eliminating much of the paperwork associated with case preparation.

APD had successfully implemented a Workload Difficulty Index for attorney staff based upon a "case weighting" approach to workload management which allows APD to measure performance and track and assign workload more equitably. APD wanted to try to duplicate the success achieved in the area of attorney workload management in its management of secretarial, investigative, and paralegal staff workload.

SOLUTION

APD implemented a custom, "task" based, eWorkflow system designed to meet the exact needs of APD's workflow processes. eWorkflow replaces the existing paper-based system used to process all requests for service from attorneys to secretarial, investigative, and paralegal staff. The new system was implemented over one year in

three phases: phase one was completed in September 2009 with secretarial tasks; phase two was completed in April 2010 with the inclusion of investigative tasks; and phase 3 was completed in August 2010 with inclusion of paralegal tasks.

eWorkflow allows attorneys to simply complete an online form to request one of over 40 different task types to be performed by support staff. The task is then either automatically assigned by the system, or reviewed and assigned by a supervisor. Each task is given a due date, which allows staff to prioritize the completion of assigned work and triggers automatic email reminders to staff and supervisors when a due date is near, or has passed. Once staff has access to a task, they can perform much of the necessary work within the eWorkflow system, which is then immediately accessible to the attorney.

Investigators and paralegals also enter their case file "logs" in the same system. Logs document the underlying efforts necessary to complete the task. These are also immediately available to the attorney, so they can quickly see what has been done, and what still needs to be done to complete their requested task.

eWorkflow also provides "Dashboards" for staff that present a quick view of all of their pending tasks in the system, prioritized by due date, which can be immediately accessed with the click of a mouse. Staff can also easily find tasks assigned to others by simply looking in a Branch Office In-Box.

All work generated in the eWorkflow system is quickly and easily saved into APD's CASE360 Electronic Document Storage System, which is the repository for all case file documents. Staff is not required to print and separately scan the documents into the storage system.

eWorkflow automatically assigns a weighted value to a task based upon its relative difficulty. The weighting of task allows the system to track the relative difficulty of each staff members assigned workload.

BENEFITS

APD's eWorkflow system allows APD to process all requests for services from attorneys to all support staff and the resulting work product entirely by electronic means.

eWorkflow speeds the processing, and completion of tasks, by eliminating human bottlenecks in the process, providing dashboard based prioritization of tasks, and electronic reminders.

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eWorkflow has generated $189,000 in cost avoidance based on workload balancing and saved work hours (see below). The efficiencies generated specifically resulted in APD not having to hire one investigator and one secretary (salary and benefits).

eWorkflow enables supervisors to balance workload by quickly reassigning tasks when staff members are unavailable due to absence or a high volume of their pending tasks. Reassignments can be made regardless of the physical location of staff, which allows supervisors to make immediate use of those staff members with lighter workloads. Workload balancing insures that all tasks are completed within the intended due date. In addition, workload balancing results in positive staff morale because workload is seen to be distributed fairly among all staff.

APD has processed over:

- 40,000 secretarial tasks since implementation saving over 3,000 work hours.
- 21,000 investigator tasks, over 18,000 investigator reports, and over 114,000 investigator log entries since implementation, saving over 3,700 work hours.
- 1,800 paralegal tasks, over 1,400 paralegal reports, and over 10,000 paralegal log entries since implementation, saving over 200 work hours.

All of the above saved hours have been redirected into more efficient uses of time contributing to overall unit productivity.

eWorkflow's electronic logs increase the information available to attorneys on progress made by support staff in completion of tasks, insuring that everyone associated with a task has a clear understanding of its status.

eWorkflow is a key component in APD reaching its goal of a 20% paper consumption reduction and an annual cost savings of approximately $5,000.

eWorkflow supports the County Strategic Plan, Goal 1: Operational Effectiveness by maximizing the effectiveness of APD's internal processes, structure and operations to support timely delivery of efficient public services. Implementation of eWorkflow has allowed APD to continue to provide high quality services to its clients and the courts during a period of budgetary constraint that reduced the staff available for the preparation of cases litigated by APD attorneys.

eWorkflow supports the County Strategic Plan, Goal 2: Fiscal Sustainability by enhancing APD's ability to sustain essential services during a period of fiscal restraint due to budget reductions.

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFIT): Use this page to provide a breakdown of the estimated/actual costs benefits. As a suggestion, work with your fiscal staff.

Cost Avoidance: Anticipated costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes.

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
$ 189,00	**$5,000**	**$**	**$ 194,000**	☐

ANNUAL= 12 MONTHS ONLY

Cost Avoidance: $189,000 (Workload Balancing)
Cost Savings: 5,000 (Reduced paper consumption)
$194,000