

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: CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES CASE MANAGEMENT TOOL

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

PROJECT STATUS: Ongoing One-time only

DID YOU SUBMIT THIS PROJECT BEFORE? Yes 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

1 How do you sort and organize more than 400,000 cases to initiate appropriate action to
 2 collect child support for families? If the new computer system doesn't include a feature
 3 to effectively sort, organize and prioritize, you develop a software application to handle
 4 this monumental task. In October 2008, the Los Angeles County Child Support
 5 Department (CSSD) transitioned onto California's statewide child support automation
 6 system (CSE). CSE automatically performs many routine child support enforcement
 7 activities, such as employment searches and database matches. Even so, many critical
 8 steps to establish paternity and enforce support rely on employee directed action. In
 9 CSE, caseworkers must manually review individual cases to determine what action is
 10 needed. To address this problem, a complex software application was developed and
 11 named the Case Management Tool (CMT). The CMT organized cases in CSE by office
 12 locations, team, and worker. As a direct result of implementing the CMT, for the first
 13 time in the department's history, CSSD's annual performance not only met but
 14 exceeded goals for current support and arrears established by the State of California.
 15 Families benefit from this tool by receiving more support than they have in the past.

(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
\$	\$	\$	\$	X

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Child Support Services Department 5770 South Eastern Avenue Commerce, Ca 90040	TELEPHONE NUMBER 323 889-2976
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PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME David Kilgore	TELEPHONE NUMBER 323 889-3405
	EMAIL David_Kilgore@cssd.lacounty.gov

PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) Jennifer Coultas 	DATE 7/2/12	TELEPHONE NUMBER 213 639-2727
		EMAIL Jennifer_Coultas@cssd.lacounty.gov

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Dr. Steven J. Golightly 	DATE 7-2-2012	TELEPHONE NUMBER 323 889-3400
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CHALLENGE

The Los Angeles County Child Support Services Department (CSSD) has engaged in focused strategies and efforts over the last several years aimed at achieving marked improvement in the program results gauged by the federal performance measures.

In October 2008, CSSD underwent a massive conversion from its former county-based automation system to California's new statewide child support automation system, known as CSE.

Successful conversion to a new and significantly different automation system on a scale as large as that involving Los Angeles County might have been challenge enough, however in CSSD's case, it marked a starting point for efforts to improve performance. Within a year of conversion, CSSD implemented a change from an organizational model based on functional case handling, in which staff specialized in either establishment or enforcement responsibilities, to a "case ownership" model in which caseworkers assumed responsibility for all aspects of case management following case opening. Caseworkers, who are each responsible for as many as 1000 cases, had to manually review cases to determine what enforcement action was needed. This made it impossible to prioritize the management of their caseload or filter through their caseload and pinpoint cases with immediate needs.

SOLUTION

One of the most innovative initiatives to promote CSSD's performance improvement was the development and implementation of the Case Management Tool. The Tool is a software application that organizes cases in the statewide automation system, CSE, by office location, team, and worker. It permits users to query CSE data to identify, analyze, and take timely action in cases needing attention.

BENEFITS

The Case Management Tool improves efficiency and responsiveness on two levels. First, from a management standpoint, the Case Management Tool supports setting and monitoring priorities for the entire Department, as well as for each office location and team. It enables managers to identify when, where and how caseworkers should direct their efforts, in alignment with goals set by the Department, to meet federal and state performance measures. It enables the Department to meet county strategic goals. The capability provided by the Case Management Tool to target cases for action and avoid time consuming, hit-or-miss case reviews is both highly efficient and especially valuable

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in a time of reduced staffing and hiring freezes. The Tool also provides workers with their “scores” on the federal performance measure alongside those for their team and for their division office.

Second, from a customer standpoint, the Case Management Tool helps staff to identify and react more quickly to critical changes in day-to-day circumstances. Parents who become unemployed or disabled may no longer be able to meet their financial obligations. Using the Case Management Tool, caseworkers can target those cases to modify court orders in keeping with changed reality, avoiding the accumulation of uncollectable debt.

From an organizational perspective, the Case Management Tool provides management with the means to analyze the characteristics of the entire Department’s caseload. It provides a means to develop, implement, and assess targeted and strategic work approaches that best serve the needs of the Department’s customers. For managers and supervisors, the Case Management Tool permits them to evaluate the caseload of their office as well as the employee teams within their office. It supports them in evaluating staff performance and helps them hold staff accountable for achieving measurable outcomes. Caseworkers benefit, too, because the Tool provides them with unprecedented oversight and control of their case assignments, allowing them to sort and prioritize their cases and to track the results of their efforts.

While the Case Management Tool was originally devised as means of assisting in the management of Los Angeles County’s caseload, its value has been readily recognized statewide. Other counties experienced the same challenge with the new statewide system. Staff throughout California was unable to easily sort and prioritize their caseload with the new comprehensive computer system. Without question, the greatest evidence of the CMT’s value as a means to achieve organizational effectiveness and enhance customer service is the fact that nearly all 58 counties have adopted the tool for use in their own child support operations. Families throughout the state of California now benefit from more timely, accurate and responsive case enforcement as a result of the Case Management Tool.

Since implementation of the Case Management Tool, productivity in the key federal performance measures of current support and arrears collection markedly improved as follows:

1. Collections on Current Support

- FFY 2008: 48.3%
- FFY 2009: 50.8%
- FFY 2010 53.8%
- FFY 2011: 56.0%

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- FFY 2012 57.5% (through May 31)

2. Collections on Past-due Support

- FFY 2008: 49.6%
- FFY 2009: 53.5%
- FFY 2010: 56.4%
- FFY 2011: 58.6%
- FFY 2012 56.3% [through May 31, 2012 (compared to 54.4% as of May 31, 2011)]

This improved performance is particularly noteworthy given the economic recession in effect since 2008. The families relying upon the services of the CSSD for regular and consistent child support payments were disproportionately affected by the economic recession and suffered a greater unemployment rate than the overall population. CSSD's ability to improve performance during the worst recession since the great depression can be linked directly to the enhanced ability of staff to appropriately work their caseload by utilizing the CMT.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN:

Organizational Effectiveness

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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
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL= 12 MONTHS ONLY