

Quality and Productivity Commission
29th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
Champions of Change: Together We Make a Difference

2015 APPLICATION

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

NAME OF PROJECT: WARRANT TRACKING SYSTEM

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: JULY 2012
 (Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before July 1, 2014)

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 The Warrant Tracking System (WTS) is an excellent example of multiple entities coming
 2 together to develop a product which maintains compliance with the law, streamlines the
 3 work to improve productivity, and ultimately contributes to child safety in critical cases
 4 where potential risk to children exists. Prior to development of the web-based WTS, the
 5 entire warrant process was completed manually using email and fax machines to
 6 exchange information and court rulings. The tracking of warrant outcomes was labor
 7 intensive taking several days to complete. The WTS facilitates communication and
 8 sharing of information timely among parties. The social worker completes a Warrant
 9 Consult Request online, the warrant is processed, and the results are entered and
 10 uploaded into the WTS. All staff and County Counsel can access the WTS to obtain
 11 results and signed removal orders. The WTS is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a
 12 week which allows after-hours processing by the Emergency Response Command Post
 13 (ERCP) resulting in no delays in obtaining urgently needed warrants. Over the past 5
 14 years, the department has had 32,579 Total warrant Consultations and 16,777 Removal
 15 Orders Served and estimates the WTS will save over 24,600 man hours annually.

(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
\$1,601,952.00	\$	\$	\$1,601,952.00	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Department of Children and Family Services 425 Shatto Place Los Angeles, CA 90020		TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 351-5601
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Catherine Dang		TELEPHONE NUMBER (562) 345-6617 EMAIL
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) Tricia J. Denson	DATE 7/15/15	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 739-6435 EMAIL densot@dcfs.lacounty.gov

Department Head Signature - next page

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DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

Philip L. Browning

DATE

7/15/15

TELEPHONE NUMBER

(213) 351-5601

SIGN HERE 

1st FACT SHEET – LIMITED TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **Challenge, Solution, and Benefits** of the project. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made. Use Arial 12 point font

Challenge:

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has a legal responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect of children by their caregivers, and to take protective action on behalf of the child when it is believed that a child is in danger of abuse or neglect as defined in the California Welfare and Institutions Code §§ 328, 1650(f) and 16504. In 1999, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals held that social workers conducting child abuse investigations needed a search warrant, parental consent, or exigent circumstances to enter a home.

The County has been subject to civil litigation related to warrantless actions taken by social workers and deputy sheriffs relating to child dependency investigations. Therefore, DCFS and County Counsel needed to create an efficient tracking system that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Prior to developing the web-based Warrant Tracking System, the entire warrant process was completed manually. Social workers communicated by phone or e-mail with County Counsel and the department's warrant liaison. This process could take hours or days; and in situations where the safety of a child is in question every passing minute and hour is critical. The tracking of the data was a labor-intensive process. Each month two staff would manually track data for each office and generate monthly warrant reports, which took up to two weeks to complete. Maintaining a 24 hour a day, 7 day per week operation was a challenge when transferring warrant requests for after-hours processing to the Emergency Response Command Post (ERCP) warrant unit as all documentation could only be forwarded by email or fax. The number of warrants has risen exponentially over the years making it impossible to continue operating on a manual system.

Solution:

The solution to the lack of an automated warrant tracking system was to use web-based technology to facilitate communication and information sharing among Social Workers, Supervisors, Warrant Liaisons at court, and County Counsel via one unified system that tracks the status of warrant requests at each stage of the process. The social worker completes a Warrant Consult Request using a Microsoft Word template in the statewide Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS), which initiates the Warrant Tracking System process.

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The Warrant Liaison monitors the Warrant Tracking System and processes all new requests within one hour. To maintain a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week operation is no longer a challenge as the system retains information and collects new information in real time; thus, permitting seamless transition between Intake Detention Control (IDC) and ERCP warrant desks. In addition, the Warrant Liaison and County Counsel review all pertinent documents and provide the social workers with assistance to complete and file the warrant request with the court. Social workers are able to log in and track the status of a current warrant consult, access county counsel recommendations, and assess the current situation at the individual, section, office, and regional level remotely and at any time.

Benefits:

The Warrant Tracking System allows social workers and County Counsel to perform their jobs more efficiently; enhances the services that are provided to children and families, and is an important tool in helping to ensure child safety. It allows social workers to generate warrant requests electronically, eliminating the telephone process, which saves social workers half the time formerly spent to request and process a warrant. The system is user friendly for the County Counsel and Warrant Liaison assigned to the Warrant Unit. Time spent manually recording consults and tracking data was immediately reduced by 50%. The finished product enables both DCFS and County Counsel staff to complete more consults in a timely manner and to track warrant outcomes. Some of the immediate and positive outcomes are:

1. Referrals are submitted electronically (eliminating the telephone process, which is a time saving for social workers);
2. The application tracks all warrants and outcomes and provides adhoc reports (eliminating the manual labor-intensive process);
3. The application created a seamless transfer of cases between Intake and Detention Control (IDC) and Emergency Response Command Post (ERCP) during shift changes (eliminating the delay in transferring cases); and
4. The application allows DCFS to provide timely and reliable data regarding warrant usage and outcomes to the Board of Supervisors and to County Counsel for cases pending civil litigation.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN (DETAIL IS REQUIRED FOR COUNTY DEPARTMENTS): Use Arial 12 point font

The Warrant Tracking System was built aligning with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors - approved County Strategic Plan Goals which are Operational Effectiveness and Integrated Services Delivery. The system is built user friendly and is an important tool in helping to ensure child safety. It allows both DCFS and County Counsel staff to perform their jobs more efficiently and thus enhances the services we provide to the children and families we protect. In addition, the system was successfully built with a team effort between DCFS (BIS, IDC, and ERCP) and County Counsel.

Warrant Data for 2010-2014

Year	Total Warrant Consultations (Child Count)	Removal Orders Served
2010	1645	272
2011	4973	1614
2012	7768	3477
2013	8836	5606
2014	9357	5808
Total	32,579	16,777

All data is based on a child count

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFIT): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. 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.

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.

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\$1,601,952.00	\$	\$	\$1,601,952.00	X

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The WTS saves approximately 24,600 Children Social Worker (CSW) man hours annually. Given that the fully loaded cost of a CSW is \$65.12 per hour, the total estimated cost avoidance is approximately \$1,601,952.00 annually.