

COURT PROCESS CHALLENGES

- Lack of easily available data to measure and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of court and jail operations and practices.
- Data is needed to be able to evaluate system outcomes and practices.
- People are staying in jail for longer periods of time.
- Court criminal case processing is significantly slower than the national model time standards developed from data on efficient court systems.
- The Criminal Courts do not have an effective or efficient method to measure and evaluate criminal case processing speed in comparison with time-efficient courts.
- The number of criminal case continuances granted for felony and misdemeanor cases is extensive.
- The high number of case continuances directly contribute to slow case processing, increased jail population and longer incarceration.

RECOMMENDATIONS: COURT PROCESSING

- Implement a Population Management Coordinator program to monitor and track inmate length of stay and implement case flow efficiency in the courts.
- Increase the office space for the probation pre-trial release unit.
- Refine the decision-making guidelines for pre-trial release.
- Provide weekend staffing for the pre-trial release program.
- Use software to monitor elapsed time from filing to disposition.
- The Criminal Court should analyze reasons for continuances and implement methods to control them.
- Referrals to specialty court need to be expedited.
- Differentiated case management is needed along with a process to control continuances.
- It is recommended that the county consider reduction or elimination of the pre-trial release supervision fees, especially for individuals whose case is dismissed or who is found not guilty.