



# CSSD Chronicle



A regular publication of information and news about Court Support Services Division

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## JAMS has Arrived

The new Judicial Administrative Monitoring System (JAMS) became fully operational as of December 21<sup>st</sup>, with all administratively monitored cases now being handled by the new system. With JAMS, supervision of these cases has been brought “in house” instead of being handled by an outside vendor. “As you read about JAMS” noted CSSD Executive Director Bill Carbone, “you will see that we have made important changes in the supervision of administrative level cases. These changes are designed to encourage services that support public safety and free officers to spend their time on more serious offenders. The development and implementation of JAMS is a result of the hard work and expertise of our staff and I believe that the system will provide great benefits as we go forward.”

**BACKGROUND:** In 1997, prior to the creation of CSSD, a decision was made to use private industry to help monitor administrative cases. General Security Services Corporation (GSSC) was awarded the contract to establish the Administrative Monitoring Program. Their bid involved the use of computer software along with a staff of case workers to monitor court conditions and report back to liaison probation officers if a client was not compliant. While supervision was enhanced, some problems did occur. Communication between GSSC and the probation liaison proved to be difficult. Many times a GSSC employee needed a quick answer on a case and couldn't reach the liaison officer by telephone in a timely manner (remember this was a time prior to officers having access to e-mail). GSSC also had to reduce their program staff due to a lower number of administrative probationers than was originally predicted. This created delays in responding to non compliance.

**ADMINISTRATIVE MONITORING IN CSSD:** After the creation of CSSD in 1999, Executive Director William Carbone decided to continue the GSSC program with some significant changes. A full time Adult Probation Officer was assigned to the GSSC location and quarterly reports were instituted to track contract compliance. Probation staff at GSSC started working more closely with the non-compliant probationers to prevent their cases from being returned to the field offices.

With this added oversight, the GSSC Monitoring Program improved in overall effectiveness and the caseload grew substantially. The effort was seen as a research based approach to the monitoring of low risk probationers. The basic philosophy behind the Administrative Monitoring Program was probation risk reduction theory and research that low risk probationers have more successful outcomes with less stringent supervision.

**PROBLEMS PERSISTED WITH THE GSSC SYSTEM:** However, there were still significant problems with the GSSC model. For one, officers, bail commissioners and others could not access GSSC notes on a probationer. Phone calls (or e-mails when available) had to be exchanged to gather information. Secondly, making changes in software or supervision standards for administrative cases involved rewriting the contract with GSSC which was costly and time consuming. With the advent of CMIS, and the commitment of CSSD to information based case management, the desire to incorporate all client related information in one accessible data base became more attractive. It was determined that the best solution was for CSSD to develop its own software for monitoring administrative cases that could become part of CMIS.

**JAMS UNIT CREATED:** In November 2005, a committee was formed to investigate the feasibility of creating software for CMIS to replace the GSSC model. Representatives from CSSD Information Technology, Judicial Information Services, Probation Officers and Softscape (the developer of CMIS) worked on the project. Within the first year a working model was developed and the JAMS Unit was born. This August, JAMS staff began migrating cases from the GSSC software into the new system and the field offices began sending new Administrative cases to the JAMS program. Over the next three months, 8,000 cases were migrated while hundreds of new cases were entered. As of December 21<sup>st</sup>, there will no longer be any cases at GSSC. Cases that were scheduled to end between December 21<sup>st</sup> and January 31<sup>st</sup> will be assigned to Chief Probation Officer I Tom Kulig who is heading the JAMS project.

**IMPROVEMENTS ALREADY SEEN:** Although the program is new and officers at the unit are still learning, some benefits have already been noticed. After a case is entered into JAMS, the software marks due dates for any verifiable condition. If that date passes and no verifying documentation is received a warning letter is automatically mailed to the probationer. Depending on the condition, the probationer may receive a second letter or the unverified condition goes directly to a call list that JAMS' officers review daily. Towards the end of probation, if the probationer continues not to supply documentation, the case will go on a queue to notify the field officer that a case is ending in 120 days with open conditions so that the situation can be addressed before case closing. Probationers who owe restitution are sent a monthly statement indicating their last payment and their balance. Those who do not make monthly payments are mailed warning letters. The system also stores AR and new arrest reports so they can be accessed by field officers as needed.

OR FURTHER INFORMATION ON JAMS contact Tom Kulig, Chief Probation Officer I at 860-548-2008 ext. 323.

Suggestions? Questions? Comments? Concerns? Contact us!

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